

FEM



**COULD BOREDOM
BE BLEEDING YOU
DRY?**

**HOW A TIME BUDGET
HELPS YOU REACH
MORE OF YOUR GOALS**

30 **Tips to Keep
Burnout at Bay
& Your Business on Fire!**

WHAT'S INSIDE



**HOW A TIME BUDGET HELPS YOU
REACH MORE OF YOUR GOALS**

02

**30 TIPS TO KEEP BURNOUT AT BAY
AND YOUR BUSINESS ON FIRE!**

06

**YOUR STORY IS YOUR GREATEST AND
MOST UNIQUE SELLING POINT!**

13

**COULD BOREDOM BE BLEEDING YOU
DRY?**

14

**SKYROCKET YOUR BUSINESS BY
BECOMING A BEST-SELLING AUTHOR**

17

MAINTAINING BOUNDARIES AT WORK

18

**HOW TO RELIGHT YOUR FIRE AFTER
BURNOUT**

24

WORKING FROM HOME MADE EASY

28

**DROP THE MOTHERF*CKING
STRUGGLE**

31

WELCOME.

This month it's been burnout galore over at FEM! Not because I felt particularly stressed or worn down, but because I decided to tackle this important topic in the July edition of the magazine.

I am glad to see this topic is getting more attention and recognition. It is certainly something we need to address while considering how we want our work life to be, in the future. And it's not just our employees we need to protect.



As solo entrepreneurs and small business owners, we are also at risk of running our engine dry. And when we do, that can be quite a tricky situation to navigate. So, let's talk about burnout and explore ways to keep ourselves fueled up and excited to keep going.

Would you like to be featured in a future edition, just get in touch!

Have fun!

Mags Thomson

Editor In Chief

HOW A TIME BUDGET HELPS YOU REACH MORE OF YOUR GOALS

I had the pleasure to sit down with Melitta Campbell, a Business and Communication Coach, best-selling author of 'A Shy Girl's Guide to Networking', public speaker and host of the Driven Female Entrepreneurs podcast.

By Mags Thomson

Melitta is passionate about using her 25 years of experience in marketing, communication, leadership and entrepreneurship, to help more women build a profitable business that enables them to engage in work they love, create a balanced lifestyle and feel proud of the difference they are making.

What inspired your business?

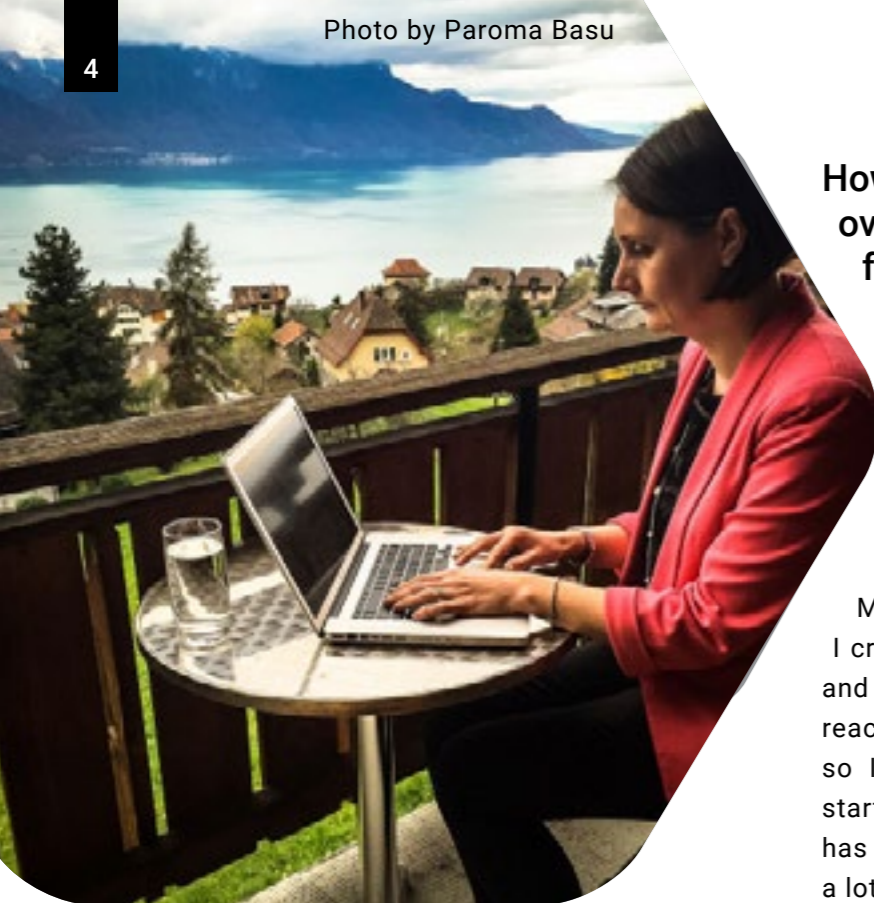
At first, my business filled a need. I loved my corporate job, but once I had my first daughter, I realised that I wanted more flexibility to be the Mum I wanted to be, whilst still doing the work I loved.

I started working as a corporate communication consultant. It gave me full control of my hours and having worked in marketing communications for 15 years, it was work I could do well and with relative ease around a young family. However, after seven years I was ready for a fresh challenge and to use my skills and experience in a

way that could create a greater difference.

I wasn't sure how at first, but while networking I started to meet women who had started a business, but they weren't sure how to communicate their value, market and sell their products or services, manage their time or charge their worth. I saw that this was where I could bring all of my prior experience to help more women to do the work they loved and make a difference for more of their clients. So I made a pivot and became a business coach for women. That was six years ago now, and I'm still in love with the work I do and the women I support.

Photo by Nora Quillian



How do you manage stress or overwhelm, and prevent yourself from burning out?

Full disclosure, the lack of balance in my communication consultancy, brought me very close to burnout. As hard as that was, I'm grateful for that experience as it taught me that balance isn't something that just happens, it's something we have to consciously create and actively manage.

My pivot was the opportunity to do just that. I created a Time Budget to help me design, test and build my ideal day, with clearer boundaries. I reached out and asked for help with the children, so I could have some time for myself. And I started to plan my goals in 90-day blocks, which has helped with my focus and enabled me to get a lot more done.

I have also created a daily planning system that helps me focus on 1-3 priorities per day, ensure that everything I do is linked back to my business and personal growth goals and that I make time for my mind (personal development), body (healthy habits) and soul (joy) every day.

How do you hope your work will impact the world?

Throughout my work, in my community, podcast, and books, my goal is to give women the structure and self-belief they need to achieve more of their goals.

I believe that when women everywhere feel empowered to fulfil their potential and use their talents to make the difference they feel passionately about, we'll live in a world where possibility is open to everyone.

What advice would you give to a new entrepreneur setting up their first business?

Starting a business can feel extremely fast, as there are so many new experiences and things to learn. And extremely slow, as it can take time to build the momentum needed to fulfil your goals. Sometimes months, sometimes years. But if you believe in your vision, trust the process and ask for help when you need it, it will all come together. I would highly recommend that all new business

What is your favourite quote?

This is a hard question to answer, as I love quotes. But if I had to pick just one, I'd have to choose this one:

**“IF IT'S NO LONGER FUN, STOP DOING IT”
-RICHARD BRANSON**

That was the quote that prompted me to pivot from my communication consultancy to business coaching. I was putting everything into my client work, and into my family, but leaving no time for myself or **my** wellbeing. I was also saying 'yes' to too many projects that I wasn't passionate about, so my work was no longer providing me with joy and growth.

owners—and established ones too—surround themselves with inspiring people who believe in them and their ideas, and who will encourage them to keep dreaming bigger. I share advice on how to build this 'success circle' in my book, [A Shy Girl's Guide to Networking](#).

How do you define success?

It's important to recognise that success is personal to everyone. We each need to take the time to identify what success means to us, and then get intentional about making it happen.

For me, it's about having the freedom to continually grow, to share my knowledge and experiences with others to support their growth, and doing so in ways that give me plenty of quality time with my family.

Where can people find you?

You can find me on my website: www.melittacampbell.com, on [LinkedIn](#), in my Facebook Group [The Driven Female Entrepreneur Club](#), or talking business out with a range of inspirational guests on my weekly podcast [The Driven Female Entrepreneur](#).

And for anyone who has resonated with my story and is looking for support to grow their business, I invite them to reach out. I'd love to invite them for a discussion and to see where I can share some insights to help them move forward: www.melittacampbell.com/call



Photo by Marta Villacampa

30 TIPS TO KEEP BURNOUT AT BAY AND YOUR BUSINESS ON FIRE!

As busy business owners, it can be all too easy to get lost in the to-do lists and endless client demands. Especially when working from home, or using your personal devices the lines between work and downtime can start to blur. That can easily become a spiral down the burnout hole.

By Mags Thomson

Between the demands of work, possible anxiety about stepping away from your business, this can be a tricky balance to strike. That's why I asked 30 busy entrepreneurs and business owners their best tips to keep burnout at bay and your business on fire!



#1. Ask for help!

Being business leaders, we often put too much weight on our own ability to control things. When something goes south, it can be easy to look back and dwell on how we could have “controlled” that too. But this can actually do more harm than good, as it can cause us to take on too much responsibility and forget to draw on the collective power of our team. Try to redirect your energy, time, and focus to figuring out the next step that is going to help you move closer to your goal, even if that means asking for help.

Matthew Paxton, Founder at Hypernia ([website](#))

#2. Have a clear daily routine

I don't work crazy hours and think it's often anxiety or ego that keeps people working long hours. What I find really helpful is to keep a good daily schedule. I exercise a few times a week, eat healthily, make sure I take a lunch break and that I am staring at a screen all day. I go to bed quite early, around 10 pm and then I'm up early.

Kieran O'Neill, CEO & Founder at Thread ([website](#) / [Twitter](#))



#3. Sleep!

Getting a full eight hours of sleep makes all the difference to me in terms of focus and productivity. Starting the day groggy and lethargic makes the entire day difficult - especially as we age.

Jay Jermo, Owner at Hey Honey ([website](#) / [Instagram](#))



#4. Set yourself a curfew

My go-to strategy is to set yourself a personal curfew when it comes to checking emails and social media. For example, from 7 pm I will lock my phone away and spend time with my family, so I can unwind and not dwell on the events that have happened at work that day.

Robin Waite, Founder and Fearless Business Coach at Fearless Business ([website](#) / [LinkedIn](#))



#5. Don't hate your clients

A huge red flag for burnout is when you start to resent your clients or the people you help. As a stylist behind the chair, I started recognizing that, instead of being happy for my clients when they got to go on trips or do fun things, I would secretly resent that they had the time and energy for it. This is a huge signal that it's time to change course.

Kelsie Bentley, Cosmetologist and Entrepreneur at Simply Bentley ([website](#) / [Instagram](#))



#6. Be aware of the small mistakes

Some of the first signs of burnout are simple, daily mistakes I make. I am usually very precise at work and don't usually overlook things. However, when I'm tired, my focus drops and I make very simple, even stupid mistakes. As soon as I notice being tired, I immediately take a day off. It's much better to “waste” one day of work in order to rest than keep making mistakes. In reality, the problem doesn't go away unless I rest, so the sooner I do it, the better it is for everyone.

Navarre Trousselot, CEO at Navexa ([website](#) / [LinkedIn](#))



#7. Create a 24-hour personal retreat

Plan an entire day dedicated to self-care, rest and recharging. Wake without an alarm, take a walk, use essential oils, teas and music to create a calming environment. Do some reading, go for a walk and do some stretches. Get some nice spa items and enjoy some pampering time in your bathroom. Try to keep your phone and other screens off for the day.

Upuia Ahkiong, Founder and Owner at Kua Body and WELA ([website](#) / [Instagram](#))



#8. Use a journal

Using a work journal can help recognise the early signs of burnout and put in measures to stop harm from happening. It's all about taking 15 minutes a day to write down how you're feeling, what happened during the day, and your general mood about the work you're doing. By writing short entries and checking in on your past writings, you can get a good look at your work life. I've been able to recognise the need for a break and have put some of my successes into perspective!

Lindsey Allard, CEO and Co-Founder at PlaybookUX ([website](#) / [LinkedIn](#))



#9. Schedule time for rest

In my experience, once you start recognising signs of burnout, it's already late. The idea is not to get there at all. I advise all entrepreneurs to literally schedule time to rest. It's important to do it regularly and not only when you recognise signs of exhaustion. This was really hard for me at first - I kept feeling I was missing out on the work. However, once I realised my productivity was much better when I was fresh and energised, it was much easier to set aside some time to relax.

Malte Scholz, CEO at Airfocus ([website](#) / [Facebook](#))



#10. Unplug

When we spend all of our time in front of a screen, it eventually takes its toll. I like to turn off all devices for at least one or two hours every day. This is a chance for me to connect with people or spend some time in nature. Sometimes just half an hour offline helps me fully re-energise.

Nick Chernets, CEO at Data for SEO ([website](#) / [Twitter](#))



#11. Value your mental health

Values are an unconscious pattern that we are all uniquely coded with. They are ‘what is important to us’, such as family, freedom, health, free time, wealth growth etc. The fascinating thing about our values is that we can choose to change our values.

Leila Khan, CEO at Life is Today Academy ([website](#) / [Instagram](#))



#12. Learn some new skills

The enthusiasm for learning something new, and the happiness with the results achieved, will do wonders for you. Learn a new language, or start cooking, the possibilities are endless!

Saurabh Jindal, Founder at Talk Travel ([website](#) / [Twitter](#))



#13. Take time away from social media



Business owners often find themselves obsessing over their social media engagement. Going down the rabbit hole of whether your content is impressive enough to attract the interest of potential customers can take away essential time for relaxing with family and friends. However, to give the best service to customers, you need to be feeling your best. Therefore, unplugging from social media in the evening so you can connect better with family and friends lets your loved ones know that you're always here for them, too.

Jared Pobre, Co-Founder at Caldera + Lab ([website](#) | [Instagram](#))

#14. Change your work environment

By changing your work environment, you may also increase productivity. Most times, I work from my home office, and now and then, so I don't lose the passion for my business; I change up my workspace. I will add a new gadget, or buy a new desk.

David D. Simons, Coach, Professor, Public Speaker, Author, Entrepreneur at Kingdom Social Media ([website](#))



#15. Multitask the right way!



Find creative ways to multitask that incorporates work and exercise. Can you take a walk (in-person or with headphones) so you can catch up while you are getting some exercise too?

Paige Arnof-Fenn, Founder and CEO at Mavens & Moguls ([website](#) | [LinkedIn](#))

#16. Celebrate your progress

Focusing on unfinished business made it impossible for me to think about anything else, and I'd head into the weekend feeling stressed and defeated. Rethink to-do lists, set manageable goals, and sit down on Fridays to make a list of everything accomplished that week.

Kate De Palma, Owner at Scented Designs ([website](#) | [Instagram](#))



#17. Take that lunch break!



It's crucial that you take a few minutes away from your desk or workspace throughout the day. In fact, take a break from sitting every 30 minutes, do some stretches, take a walk for meetings rather than sitting in a conference room, and perhaps trying a standing desk if possible.

Arika Trimnell, Spiritual and Mindfulness Expert at Prism Vibes ([website](#) | [Twitter](#))

#18. Turn off your social media notifications

I made it my new year's resolution to turn off my notifications in 2017, and I haven't looked back. I don't get Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, or any other notifications from social media, and I honestly don't need them. They steal my focus from things that I'm working on, and it's not like those notifications are going anywhere. Trust that your notifications will still be there when you log deliberately onto your social accounts and that you don't need to drop everything to check your phone.

Andréa Jones, Social Media Strategist at OnlineDrea Inc. ([website](#) | [Instagram](#))



#19. Remember the journey is more important than the destination

Understanding your drivers helps you to change your behaviours and actions. Nurture your soul, licking your wounds and releasing anything that does not serve your purpose. By purpose, I mean living a life of joy and abundance. We all deserve that. Only then can you create the right boundaries and a life plan that incorporates more than the business. This is where you get to appreciate your efforts and develop gratitude for what you have.

Angela Ward, Managing Director at Angela Ward Consultancy Ltd ([website](#) | [LinkedIn](#))



#20. Get your processes clear



Record the steps of everything you do, this is so valuable at the beginning of your journey. It allows you to identify what tasks to delegate and you will have the bones of your operations manual starting to form.

Sian Young, Sustainable Success Coach ([website](#) | [LinkedIn](#))

#21. Allow your inner introvert to recharge

I have come to realise that allowing external stimulus to get past comfortable, leads to stress and burnout. Knowing how to maintain balance to manage your energy levels is vital. Give yourself permission to say, "I have had enough", take the time to recharge.

Patience Ogunbona, Corporate Trainer and Transformational Coach at ATI Coaching, Consulting and Training Ltd ([website](#) | [LinkedIn](#))



#22. Not every client is YOUR client



Your boundaries may be related to your work schedule, the type of projects you'll take on, or the clients you're willing to work with. When you first start your business, you may be tempted to take every client who walks in the door, but bad clients can be a huge drain on your time, energy, and finances.

Megan Hodgkiss, CEO & Principal Writer at Hodgkiss Consulting LLC ([website](#) | [Facebook](#))

#23. Delegate what stresses you out

I think one of the most valuable courses of action that small business owners and entrepreneurs can do is to delegate things that are either outside of their zone of genius, things they don't enjoy, or especially both! Hiring a virtual assistant can make a huge difference in productivity, energy, and overall happiness.

Laura Rike, Pinterest Expert ([website](#) | [Pinterest](#))



#24. Combat toxic productivity



As a founder and ex-burnout researcher, I want to make sure to combat toxic productivity. I deliberately schedule time off in order to rest and recuperate. I know I can be much more productive after resting. A quick 20-minute break, such as a walk outside, gives me the energy to dedicate another six hours to work.

Eropa Stein, CEO at Hyre ([website](#) | [Facebook](#))



#25. Connect with nature

Contact with nature and going inwards through yoga or meditation is a great way to relieve and prevent burnout as well. That's what I do every morning to make sure exhaustion, stress and frustration stay as far from me as possible.

Dorota Pawlak MA, MSc at DP Translation Services ([website](#) / [Instagram](#))

#26. Master the art of listening to yourself

By their nature, business owners are passionate and driven individuals who want to make something great. It is crucial to get back into the habit of listening to what your body is trying to tell you. By being kind to yourself and listening to your own needs now, you can help ensure you'll be able to lead your business in the long term.

Linn Atiyeh, Founder and CEO at Bemana ([website](#) / [LinkedIn](#))



#27. Have a hobby

Dedicate time to what you love apart from work. Having a hobby that you are passionate about can help you have quality rest and give you lots of inspiration.

Tytus Golas, CEO at Tidio ([website](#) / [LinkedIn](#))

#28. Consider new perspectives

Try to do things and see life from a different perspective. Try talking to someone and ask for help from people, indulge in reading books. Reassess your goals and priorities in life. Identify the underlying cause of stress in your life and start to work on possible ways to change that. It is important to accept the issues, embrace the emotions and process them properly.

Cody Crawford, Co-Founder at Low Offset ([website](#) / [LinkedIn](#))



#29. Identify where you spend your most valuable asset - your time

When my wife launched her private speech therapy practice, SpeakIndy, she spent an inordinate amount of time restocking supplies and searching for items from Amazon to run her business. So, I created Axenomic.com (free to use) to enable small businesses to curate a custom purchasing library of items typically ordered from Amazon.

Cory Nation, Owner at Build TBD ([website](#) / [Facebook](#))

#30. Connect with your fellow entrepreneurs

I have other small business owners in my circle of close friends, this allows us to talk to one another and relate to the trials and successes that we are both currently experiencing.

Brandin Johnson, Broker and Owner at Incisive Realty ([website](#) / [Instagram](#))



Your story is your greatest and most unique selling point!



I help heart-centred entrepreneurs like yourself, cut through the noise and overwhelm of social media by tapping into their most unique selling point, their personal story. By working on collaborative publications together with like-minded entrepreneurs and with the support of my team and me, you will create authentic quality connections to new audiences.

I'll help you move through the writing process with ease, support you with limiting beliefs around visibility and empower you to fully develop your voice of credibility, establish yourself as the go-to authority in your field and grow your business exponentially.

SHARE YOUR STORY

CLAIM YOUR AUTHORITY

BOOST YOUR BUSINESS

BOOK A CALL
to explore the possibilities



SANDRA TEN HOOPE

COULD BOREDOM BE BLEEDING YOU DRY?

Today I had the pleasure to talk with Sandra ten Hoope, a successful corporate lawyer, toxic relationship recovery expert and author, who is using her experience of surviving not one, but three abusive relationships, to help other professional women re-write their stories.

By Mags Thomson

In her book called *Do Not Try HIM At Home*, Sandra recalls her near-death experience at the hands of her then-partner, (The Abuser), who unleashed a brutal and sustained attack lasting six hours. In this honest and compelling account, Sandra reveals the extent of living her double life. Sandra spent years hiding the truth of what was happening to her colleagues, friends and family, like many professional women in toxic relationships. By day she would be closing multi-million-pound deals in the boardroom, but once she left the office - at home, she would barely look up for fear of what would happen.

But Sandra wants other women to know, there absolutely is a way out, where they can be themselves again. She is helping to raise vital funds for UK charity Women's Aid (for which organisation she is also a media spokesperson) with one pound from every book sold being donated to them. Sandra is now using her experience and extensive corporate mentoring and coaching skills to help women recognise the patterns of abuse, and re-build themselves one step at a time.

What inspired you to join a co-authored book about burnout?

For most of my corporate career, I have suffered from a boreout. A lesser-known phenomenon than burnout, yet the effects are equally as devastating. Having contributed to a co-authored book before, and having written a solo book last year, I discovered that I truly enjoy writing.

So, contributing to this book allows me to combine my bore-out experiences and passion for writing.

So, you talk about boreout more than burnout. What's the difference exactly?

A bore-out is the result of being under-challenged over a long period of time. You feel bored to death in your job. The tasks are way too simple for you, and you spend most of your time at the office just staring at your screen. You become a master at presentismo: being at the office, just for the sake of being seen there.

Little by little you lose your zest for work. Worse, your zest for life. Every task is getting harder to complete. Which makes you feel like a loser – and that reduces your chances of daring to change your situation (seek another job, venture out into your own business). A bore-out is not an official diagnosis as yet, and often those who are bored-out are labelled as burned-out (which happened to me recently).

ALWAYS DARE TO STEP AWAY FROM AN EERIE SITUATION, BE IT WORK-RELATED OR PERSONAL



Do you have a “business pet peeve”?

What makes my blood boil, is the “overnight success” fantasies that we see all too often on social media. Coaches seemingly effortlessly turning over thousands, hundreds of thousands or even millions of euros. Nobody gets to that point overnight. It takes a long time to build an audience, comprise the perfect offer for that audience, and launch it in a big way.

It takes a team and a lot of support. It makes a difference if you have a partner that can support you (financially and/or emotionally) or whether you are a single mum, juggling a job, a family and a new business. We can all get there – but not all at the speed of lightning. Also, at the basics of economics, turnover is not the same thing as profit. Always consider the costs for a team, the money to be spent on promotion (adverts) and our all-time favourite: taxes.

Be proud of your achievements, rejoice in every step taken towards your goal, even if it seems like just a baby step.

Do you have one practical tip from your experiences to help people empower themselves?

As cliché as it may sound: listen to your gut. If something feels off, it for sure IS. Always dare to step away from an eerie situation, be it work-related or personal.

You can trust yourself to do the right thing, even if many others tell you that you are wrong.

Where can people find you?

You can find out more about the book on [my Facebook page](#), or [get your copy from Amazon](#). You can also connect with me on [LinkedIn](#).

What change would you like to see in the world of work and business?

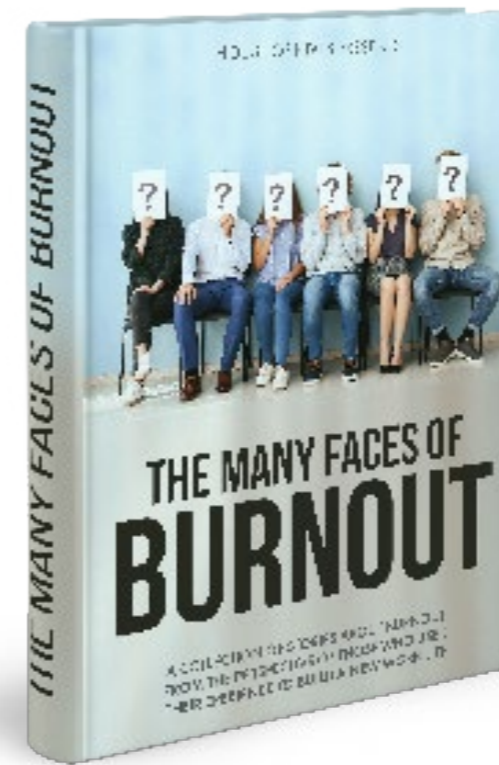
I would love for people to be judged on the outcome of their work, not on the number of hours that they spent on it. Allow everybody as much freedom as possible to complete their tasks.

Listen to employees’ needs for education and entertainment. Work should be something that we enjoy doing and that allows us to grow as a person, not just as an employee.

What is your favourite quote?

THIS TOO SHALL PASS.

I have found myself in peril many times, citing this quote has truly kept me alive. It has given me the inspiration to get up from my bed in the morning and to take steps, small and bigger ones, to better my situation.



SKYROCKET YOUR BUSINESS BY BECOMING A BEST-SELLING AUTHOR

Becoming a best-selling author will transform your business in countless ways. It will open many doors for you and establish you as an expert and authority in your field. This helps you reach new audiences and enable you to make more money.

The good news is, I’ve taken all the hard work out of it for you! Together with my team, I’ll help you move through the writing process with ease, support you with limiting beliefs around visibility and empower you to fully develop your voice of credibility, establish yourself as the go-to authority in your field and grow your business exponentially.

THE MANY FACES OF BURNOUT

Are you ready to share your story about burnout, your recovery and the way it has inspired you to change your life, career or business?

Now is the time to join this book and start the amazing journey to becoming a best-selling author.

✓ Being able to call yourself a best-selling author will open doors for you that you haven’t even thought of yet!

✓ You get to work through your story and limiting beliefs that may be tied into it (I’ve seen it with all the authors I’ve worked with)

✓ Working with an editor will help you improve your writing for this book, but also for other projects in the future.

✓ You get to work closely with the team and your peers to create a book, a marketing campaign and create momentum and engagement in your audiences. Leading up to your book launch and continuing after.

✓ We’ll even coach you on the vulnerability, imposter syndrome and other mindset challenges that you may meet on the way.

✓ **The first 5 people to sign up will receive a free 1:1 session with award-winning Business Coach Susanne Grant to clear any limiting beliefs and claim your best-selling status with ease (valued at € 997)**



MAINTAINING BOUNDARIES AT WORK

A little while ago I heard on the news that the French government had passed legislation that gives French employees the right to ignore phone calls and emails regarding their work after office hours. It was legislation aimed to help reduce stress among the country's work force ([more on that here](#)). It made me think about previous jobs I have been in, and how boundaries were regarded there.

By Mags Thomson

In a world where we are hardly viewed as people, and more as the embodiment of whatever job we have (how often has 'what do you do?' been the first question you are asked when meeting someone?), we may need to ask ourselves: what are workplace boundaries anyway?

WE ALL NEED TO BE HUMAN-BEINGS FIRST. WE NEED REST AND RELAXATION TO STAY HEALTHY, MOTIVATED, CREATIVE.. AND ALL THE OTHER THINGS THAT WE NEED TO DO OUR JOBS.



With email, mobile phones, What's App groups... the ways for our employers to keep in touch with us after hours are endless. But really, do we never get to unplug? Do we never really get to leave our work behind?

I remember when I was off work (again) with stress related health issues (working for a narcissist has that effect on a person) and my boss kept calling me. I would receive countless messages with questions about the visa application procedures I had been managing for our customers. You may think that it is 'fair enough' that he is calling to ask questions about my work, which he now has to do. The thing is though that the detailed instructions and all my notes and correspondence with all 27 embassies was clearly organised in a binder on my desk. There was no reason to bother me, everything he could ever need was on my desk. He was either being lazy or -more likely- wanted to keep the pressure on.

In the end I went over his head and called his boss, the chairman of our board, to ask for support. He gave me permission to ignore any and all messages from my boss.

We all need to be human-beings first. We need rest and relaxation to stay healthy, motivated, creative.. and all the other things that we need to do our jobs. When we are ill, we need time and space to get better. When we are off, we need the time and space to recharge.

How to Maintain Boundaries at Work

Whether you are dealing with a workplace bully or not, here are some tips to deal with boundaries in the workplace.

#1 Work and Private Do Not Have to Mix

Yes, I have made friends at work too. It is important to remember however that your co-workers do not HAVE TO become your friends. You are in no way obliged to add them to Facebook (or whatever other social media platform you prefer).

If you do want to add them, consider using the tools Facebook has in place to group certain contacts together, so you can be careful about what you share. Especially when you are dealing with a workplace bully, who will be on the hunt for any information they can use against you.

Every glass of wine you have can become 'a drinking problem'.

Any mention of being 'tired after a long day of work' can become 'publicly slugging the boss'.

Well, it can in the rumours a workplace bully may decide to start about you... Trust me, I have been there.

#2 Be Clear About Your Boundaries, Right From the Get-Go

A lot of problems start when we over-extend ourselves in the first weeks or months of getting a job. We want to make a good impression after all, especially when we are still in a probationary situation. It is hard though to tighten our boundaries when we allowed people to tread on them freely before.

Besides, you don't have to be rude about it, just make sure you communicate clearly.

“IT’S ESPECIALLY HARD FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE ON PROBATION [THREE MONTH PERIOD OF A NEW ROLE] WHERE THEY GENUINELY WANT TO MAKE A GOOD IMPRESSION. BUT YOU SHOULD START AS YOU MEAN TO CONTINUE BECAUSE ACTING AS THOUGH YOU’LL WORK AFTER 5PM OR 6PM SETS AN EXPECTATION AND IN THE LONG RUN IS NOT SUSTAINABLE. [...] “SETTING IT RIGHT AT THE START [AT YOUR INTERVIEW] IS GOING TO BE THE MOST IMPACTFULL. IT’S ABOUT ASKING THOSE QUESTIONS EARLY ON: ‘WHAT TIME DO PEOPLE LEAVE HERE?’ ‘WHAT EXAMPLES DO YOU HAVE OF SUPPORTING YOUR EMPLOYEES THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES?’ THOSE SORTS OF QUESTIONS WHICH ARE REALLY INFREQUENTLY ASKED AT INTERVIEW. “DON’T BE AFRAID TO INTERVIEW THE JOB, COMPANY AND THEIR CULTURE AS WELL.”

(FROM HOW TO ASSERT HEALTHY BOUNDARIES AT WORK BY ANNA O’DEA)

#3 Ask for Help

Are you dealing with a bully, or maybe you are overwhelmed, or your private life is affecting you at work? Try and find someone to talk to. Not for gossiping or complaining, but someone who can help you remedy the situation.

Remember the chairman of the board I talked about earlier? I did not contact him to complain about my boss. I contacted him to ask him to help me deal with the situation. Sometimes the difference is subtle, but there is a difference. Sometimes it is just about asking for someone to back you up, sometimes it is to ask for a buffer.

Like when I asked our controller to help with a manager who was refusing to comply with regulation and just did not take the feedback from me (a lowly project officer). I discussed the issue with the controller and I asked him if it was okay to refer each and every toe out of line to him. He was only too happy to help, and it did not take very many interventions from him to get the manager to comply with regulation. He was also very good at keeping me out of the firing line, which was crucial to the success here.

The point I am making is that you need to figure out who you can approach to help you, and how you can approach them.

#4 Make Toxicity Visible

In an article I wrote specifically about workplace bullies I said: document, document, document.

One of the ways in which I did that, was to email my boss after every meeting we had. My emails would go something like: *“In our meeting of date & time we discussed the following: I will do a,b and c. You will make sure d is prepped for me by the end of the week. If you have anything to add, please let me know.”* He never responded to my emails, but they gave me a shield. If (or rather when) he would come charging down at me for doing something he ‘never told me to do’, I could produce the email and ask him why he did not correct me about it then. It did not help very much in the actual situation (he was after all a narcissist and did not have a very close relationship with facts and truth), but at least when he would complain to the board, I had documentation to back up my story.

That is just one way to make toxicity visible, but there is more you can do. Rather than helping the workplace bully hide their bad behavior, call them out. Not in a confrontational manner. By picking public fights, you will likely make your co-workers feel like you are the one with the problem. What worked well for me was to play dumb. Workplace bullies (like all abusers) are likely changing their story about 7 times an hour. So I would ask a lot of questions, at team meetings. *“I don’t understand, yesterday you gave me this note asking me to do the opposite of what you are saying now. Should I still do this work, or should I leave it?”*

Abuse and bullying needs secrecy to be effective and enjoyable for the perpetrator. Where you can, shine a light on the behaviour. Find ways to create paper trail. Figure out how you can make co-workers take notice of odd behavior. Make sure you do **not** do this in a confrontational manner though, you will surely trigger the wrath of the bully (and you really do not want to do that).

#5 Make Mental Space for Solutions

If you are experiencing issues at work, you need to create some head-space for problem solving. Whether figuring out who and how to ask for help, how to bring the problem to light without looking like an idiot... or even how you are going to find a new job.

Whatever you feel is the right way to go, you need time and mental energy to make it happen. Confide in your partner or a close friend. Vent some of the frustration, so you can approach the challenge more level-headed.

Sometimes just updating your CV will give you some peace of mind, and some air to breath. It may make you feel that there is a life beyond your current situation.

Keep Asking the Questions

After the lunar eclipse a few years ago (or some such astrological “the world is going to end” event) I read a number of tweets that all boiled down to:

Oh no, the world didn’t end last night! Now I have to go to work #IHateMondays.

I was shocked that there were people who seemed to feel death was preferable to heading to work. Do you feel like that? Or are you frequently upset at the prospect of going to work? I had times where I would break down in tears as soon as I walked down the stairs. That is no way to live!

One of the reasons workplace bullying can be so very difficult to deal with, is because we are afraid to lose our jobs and our livelihood. I get it! I had mortgage payments too when I was dealing with

the narcissistic boss, it adds a lot of stress to an already stressful situation. Simply walking out, is not an option many of us can afford. Workplace bullies know that (trust me, they do) and count on it.

Read up on toxic behavior, abusive strategies and their effects. You may find many articles referring to abusive parents and spouses, but have a good look at how those behaviours and attitudes translate to a workplace bully.

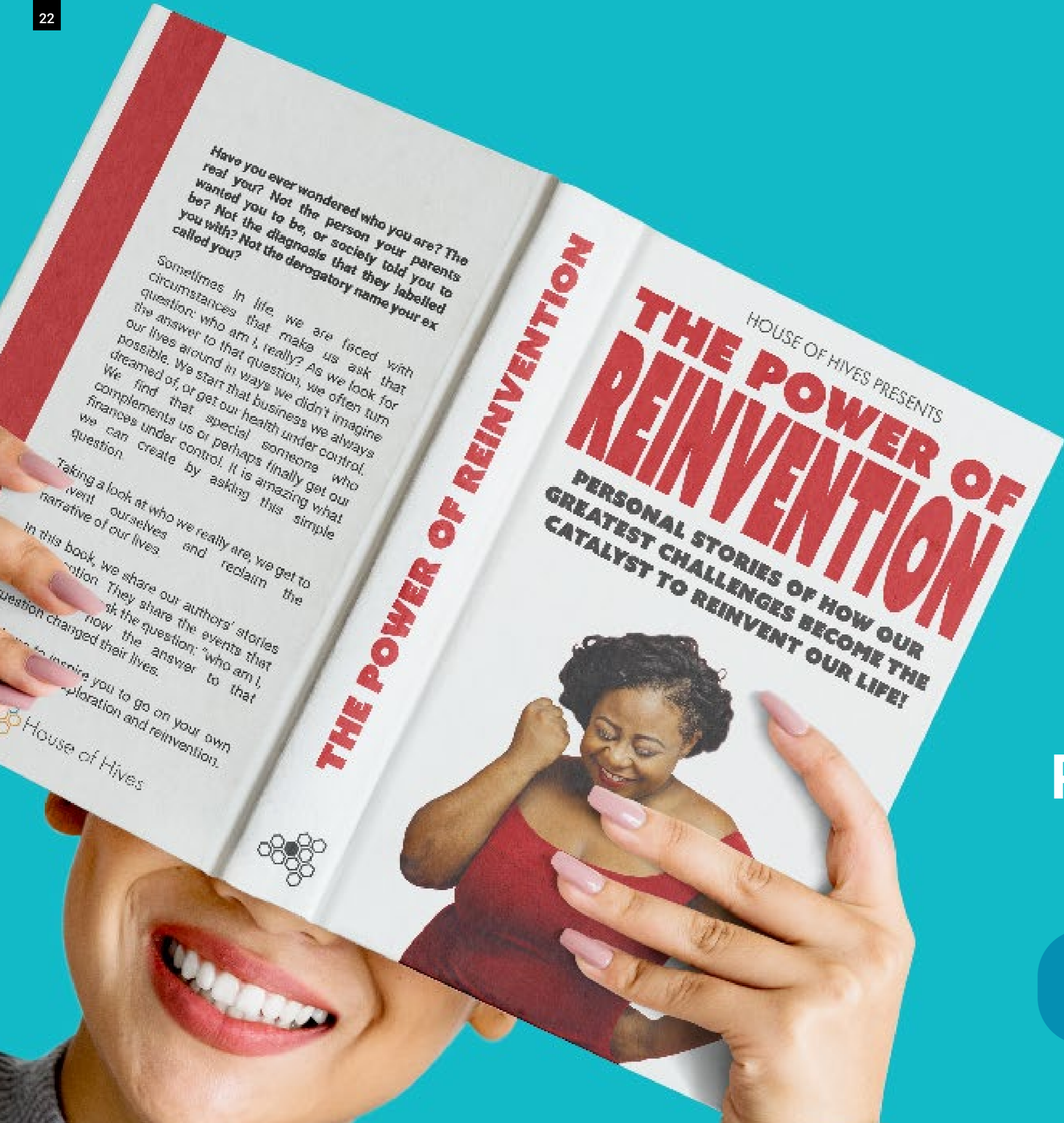
And if you are not dealing with a bully (or even an abusive corporate system, those exist too), then ask yourself the question: what is really going on? Are you just bored because the work is too easy? Are you feeling under appreciated?

Are you really dealing with a personal issue that is bleeding into or presenting itself as a professional one? (For example, are you working late so often because you have too much work, or because you would rather not go home?)

Keep asking yourself questions. Keep wondering what is going on, what is making you feel like this?

Self-reflection is crucial in figuring out what is going on, as well as for finding the solution and healing required to build a life you love!





Have you ever wondered who you are? The real you? Not the person your parents wanted you to be, or society told you to be? Not the diagnosis that they labelled you with? Not the derogatory name your ex called you?

Sometimes in life, we are faced with circumstances that make us ask that question: who am I, really? As we look for the answer to that question, we often turn our lives around in ways we didn't imagine possible. We start that business we always dreamed of, or get our health under control. We find that special someone who complements us or perhaps finally get our finances under control. It is amazing what we can create by asking this simple question.

Taking a look at who we really are, we get to invent ourselves and reclaim the narrative of our lives.

In this book, we share our authors' stories and the events that shaped them. They share the question: "who am I, now?" and the answer to that question that changed their lives.

Now it's your turn to go on your own journey of exploration and reinvention.

House of Hives



**"IN ONE WORD:
INSPIRATIONAL"**



**"I CAN'T EVEN EXPRESS
HOW MOVING THESE
STORIES ARE"**



**PUBLICATION DATE
16 AUGUST 2021**

RESERVE YOUR COPY

How to Relight Your Fire After Burnout

This week I had the distinct pleasure to talk to The Burnout Alchemist and Pyrography Artist, Natalia Palikova from Bulgaria. She uses her own experiences and passion to support women with burnout to claim back their power and control over their life.

By Mags Thomson



NATALIA PALIKOVA

In the last 3 years, Natalia has fully shifted from her corporate career after dealing with a fair share of burnout and stress. First, she finally embraced her passion for beauty through the art of pyrography. Now, she is tapping into her experience with burnout and recovery to provide personalised support for other women going through the same.

Can you tell us a little of your origins story?

I am a pretty regular middle-aged woman, who has found a pretty irregular way to walk my path of the heart. I have spent most of my working life in corporate surroundings. I had what many

would call a dream life: decent well-paid jobs, free weekends and paid annual leave. I have a wonderful husband and we have been together for 10 years now. What more could one want from life, you would ask? So, I couldn't understand why "living the dream" left me empty, bitter, and in a trap that I seemed to have devotedly built, all by myself. I came to a point where I wondered in despair, "Is this all to have until I grow old and die?"

The answer was "No", but it took severe burnout, quitting my seemingly perfect corporate jobs for good, establishing my own small business, and three years of trial and error to discover my path of the heart.

Many women come to a point in their lives where they have achieved the standard social requirements for a "successful woman". A decent career; a family, kids, a pet; a well-set home. They go to the gym, spend their annual leaves travelling with their family. They look good, have their nails done, and their clothes fit the workplace and social dress codes.

All of this looks so perfect that nobody would assume such a woman is on the verge, or already in burnout. Exhausted, overwhelmed, trapped in the daily hamster wheel. She has lost her true self and feels utterly alone. Not daring to share with anyone how desperate and drained she feels, because she has such a "perfect life" that she is not allowed to complain. Nobody would believe her anyway or would instantly judge her impertinence for complaining about a life that thousands could only dream of having.

On top of this is the process of spiritual awakening that happens to an increasing number of "successful women". Be it a sudden shock, or something they've already been trying to tap into for some time while striving to keep the balance with her "perfect life." In both cases, she is looking for clarity, but receiving bits of often contradictory information is overwhelming. Besides, there is never enough time to put that information puzzle together. Especially with nobody to turn to and ask for help or further insight.



Some examples of Natalia's pyrography and art work

I have faced these challenges for decades, and I have spoken with many women who have been there or are still undergoing the process. Then it clicked for me; I know the ways out! I know how to turn the tide, and I want to help my soul sisters around the world do the same. It takes time. It might be challenging. But I am ready to share the steps I have already walked, and the new knowledge I keep discovering, with all who need it.

What is your favourite quote?

"There are at least three ways out of an impossible situation." Most "impossible" situations we are faced with, are nothing more than our mind being stuck on autopilot for too long. Social and familial conditioning as well as diminishing childhood statements are stuck in our subconscious. We tend to repeat these stories to ourselves as adults, thus blocking access to our own innate skills.

I have discovered three areas where some "magical" tweaks can help ditch the burnout and tap into our hidden potential.

What are you working on right now?

I call my new series of coaching services "Personal Alchemy: from burnout to breakthrough". It will include three packages containing a deep-dive analysis of the reasons for your burnout, building an individual action plan for finding your way out of it, and continuous coaching support while you implement these changes. Both the coaching and the action plan are based on the three magical areas of your life:

- Healthy personal boundaries and self-care;
- Tapping into your spirituality;
- Turning your home into a sanctuary of comfort, to help you recharge and keep your inner balance.

How do you hope your work will impact the world?

Sometimes all it takes to get out of the black hole of burnout is to have someone listen to you, and tell you that you are not going crazy. Someone to make you feel heard, understood, and supported. Someone to guide you through the first frightening steps from burnout to owning your power, potential, and creating a better life.

I hope that this will be my two cents towards helping women really tap into their inner balance, true power, self-confidence and spirituality. The next generations will certainly feel this change too and have amazing, empowered role models to follow. Which, in turn, will create sustainable change in the world.

What are some of your daily practices to maintain your work-life balance?

This was the hardest part for me to learn, and to be honest, I am still doing so. The main one is claiming my morning me-time with coffee and our cat, Empress FluffAss. Having a couple of hours to myself helps me get up to speed for the day without getting overwhelmed.

The other is to consciously slow down every time I feel I am speeding up and heading toward hamster-wheel mode. As impossible as it sounds, it does work miracles for my balance and to-do list.

**SOMETIMES ALL
IT TAKES TO GET OUT
OF THE BLACK HOLE OF
BURNOUT IS TO HAVE SOMEONE
LISTEN TO YOU, AND TELL
YOU THAT YOU ARE NOT
GOING CRAZY**

Your business centres around burnout, what is something you wish people knew about burnout that most people don't?

Most burnouts come from the discrepancy between what we truly want and what we have been guided or forced to do with our lives.

What most people don't know, and this included me for decades, is that the world won't end when we follow our intuition and our heart more often in our life choices.

Where can people find you?

The project will officially launch later this month and the details will be available at my website: <https://nat-craft.com>.

In the meantime, get in touch with me for more info and a preliminary talk on how the project could serve your needs, at my [personal Facebook profile](#).



WORKING FROM HOME MADE EASY



Many of us are struggling to find a balance between work and home right now. The increasingly demanding pressure on families shouldn't be ignored. But what can you do if you are struggling with your work-life balance?

By Susanne Grant

Whether you've always struggled or only found yourself in this situation in more recent times, there are things you can start doing today to improve your situation drastically. These are five easy tips to increase your well-being whilst working from home.

Tip 1 – Communicate

It sounds so simple, yet this is the biggest one I see my clients struggle with. You have to start communicating your needs with those living with you. Many times, I see the women automatically put their business on hold so they can take care of the children at home. At first, it was just for a few weeks which was "fine" but now as we are months into the pandemic, this is not working at all. Talk to

your partner(s) and discuss what you need in this situation. Make sure the conversation is solution orientated and you are not just venting on each other.

Tip 2 – Get everyone on board

Especially working from home, it can feel like it all lands on your shoulders. In fact, it is not your responsibility alone. So, as you communicate your needs and requirements get every other member of the household on board. If you have older children or other housemates, include them too. With everyone living together in small spaces, you need to make sure the basics get done for example laundry, dishes, food, fresh air and general wellbeing. Divide the tasks and rotate. Everyone can do their share.



Tip 3 – Set boundaries

It is so easy to fall into the trap, when we are home we are always available. But the two aren't the same thing. If you need to work, and so does your partner, but someone also needs to look after the children and the thousands of questions, you've got to set firm boundaries. If you are working, block out 1 or 2 hours at a time and switch so everyone gets their work done and the children are taking care of as well. Communicate these times clearly and set firm boundaries, such as "I cannot be interrupted for the next 2 hours". Use these hours to your full advantage: turn off your phone and social media, and focus on the tasks at hand.

Tip 4 – Plan ahead but be flexible

Making a plan and setting firm boundaries is important. BUT, working from home is NOT the same as working at the office. Sometimes plans go completely down the drain and that is absolutely ok! However, if you cannot get anything done, go back to tip 1 and express what you think is needed so you can.

Tip 5 – Forgive yourself

Life is messy. Sometimes a little, sometimes a lot! Whether you are self-employed or working for someone else, you are not going to get this perfect 100% of the time. Give yourself a break and love yourself through this challenging time. Remember, slow but steady progress is still progress. There is no need to crash and burn.

The way we are working is changing for good. With many of us now forced to work from home in full or partial capacity, it is becoming clear that continuing as we used to is NOT working at all. The boundaries between work and life are blurring and we discover we all just have "life". I believe it is time to open up the dialogue and discuss what is needed from work 2.0. I hope these five tips, will help you in your current situation. And remember, you've got this!

Connect with Susanne Grant on [LinkedIn](#). You can find out more at [grantmethod.com](#). Curious about creating a work-life balance that actually works? Take Susanne's fun & free 60-second quiz and discover your unique success strategy. Visit her website [now](#).



PRE-ORDERS NOW AVAILABLE

In this inspirational and practical how-to-guide, best-selling author and award-winning business coach, Susanne Grant, shares her best tips, tools and tricks to help you uncover and transform your life by dropping the motherf*cking struggle and replacing it with ease, fun, joy and flow!

ORDER NOW

Click here to pre-order yours



**FEM IS A HOUSE OF HIVES
PUBLICATION.**

Editor in chief: Mags Thomson

Contact FEM by [email](#).