

Unfinished, After Hours

Digital Toolkit · \$7

Productivity Guilt Survival Kit

For the days when resting feels like failing.

“You are not a machine that slipped into standby. You are a person who needs rest.”

6 guided exercises

10 journal prompts

A soft reset plan — not a challenge

Use this alongside the platform, or on its own. There is no right way.

BEFORE YOU START

How to use this kit

You don't have to do all of this. Pick one thing. Come back another day for the rest. There is no order. There is no grade. This is not a productivity tool about productivity guilt — that would be absurd. It's a set of prompts and exercises to sit with when the guilt gets loud.

EXERCISES

1.

Name the guilt without arguing with it

Productivity guilt is loud and fast. It tells you that you're wasting time before you've even decided how to spend it. This exercise slows it down.

1. Write the guilt thought exactly as it appears. Don't paraphrase. Don't soften it.
 2. Read it back. Does it sound like something a friend would say to you?
 3. Write one sentence that's simply true — not reassuring, just accurate. (e.g. "I sat still for 20 minutes. That happened.")
 4. Stop there. You don't need to resolve it.
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2.

Separate output from worth

Somewhere along the way, the equation became: productivity = value as a person. This exercise doesn't argue with that equation — it just interrupts it.

1. List 3 things you did this week that had nothing to do with output. They don't have to be meaningful. (Ate something. Looked out a window. Existed.)
 2. For each one, write: "This counts." That's it.
 3. Notice if you want to qualify it. Notice it — and don't.
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3.

Find where the pressure is coming from

Guilt feels internal but it often isn't. Understanding its source doesn't dissolve it, but it changes how you relate to it.

1. Finish this sentence: "I feel like I'm not doing enough because _____."
 2. Ask: whose voice is that? A parent? A workplace culture? Social media?
 3. Write: "That voice belongs to _____. It is not the whole truth."
 4. You don't have to agree with yourself. Just write it.
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4.

Define "enough" for today – right now

The finish line keeps moving because it's never been defined. This exercise pins it down.

1. Write: "Today, enough would be _____." Keep it small. One thing.
 2. If you do that one thing, the day counts.
 3. Tape it to something or set it as a note on your phone.
 4. At the end of the day, look at it. Did you do it? Then it was enough. Even if you did nothing else.
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5.

Rest without earning it

This is the hardest one. Most people believe, somewhere underneath, that rest has to be deserved. It doesn't.

1. Choose one form of rest you've been denying yourself. (A nap. A walk. Doing nothing.)
 2. Before you do it, say or write: "I'm doing this because I'm a person who needs rest. Not because I earned it."
 3. Do the rest.
 4. After: resist the urge to justify it. It needed no justification.
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6.

Write a permission slip

You are allowed to write yourself permissions. They're more powerful than you think.

1. Write: "I give myself permission to _____ without guilt."
 2. Fill it in with something specific. (Rest. Ask for help. Do less. Say no.)
 3. Sign it. Date it.
 4. Keep it. Come back to it when the guilt returns.
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JOURNAL PROMPTS

Use these when you have a few minutes, or when you can't sleep, or when you need somewhere to put the feeling.

"What am I afraid will happen if I stop?"

"What would I tell a friend who felt guilty for resting?"

"When did I first learn that being busy meant being worthy?"

"What is the cost of the pace I'm keeping?"

"What would "a good day" look like if no one was watching?"

"Is there anything I'm actually proud of this week, even if it seems small?"

"What would I do with tomorrow if productivity didn't count?"

"Who benefits from me feeling like I'm never enough?"

"What does rest feel like in my body, before the guilt arrives?"

"What would I do differently if I fully believed I was already enough?"

SOFT RESET PLAN

When the guilt is louder than usual

This is not a challenge. There is no timer. It's a sequence you can follow when you don't know where else to start.

Step 1 Acknowledge the feeling without trying to fix it. Say it aloud or write it down: "I feel guilty for not doing more." You don't have to argue with it.

Step 2 Set the smallest possible task. Not the most important – the easiest. Something you could do lying down, if you had to.

Step 3 Do only that. If you do more, that's fine. If you don't, that's also fine.

Step 4 Take a deliberate pause. 5 minutes. No screen. Stare at a wall. Let your brain be bored.

Step 5 Check in. Are you actually tired, or does the guilt just feel like tiredness? They are not the same thing.

Step 6 Choose one thing that has nothing to do with productivity. Do it without apologising.

Step 7 End the day by noting one thing that went okay – not one thing you achieved.