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Recover & Restore: A Sustainability Worksheet

Sustainability, one of the [three dimensions of effective management](#), requires us to manage our time and energy well in the short run so that we can stick around for the long run. We may not be able to change the context we work in or adjust the pace, volume, or weight of our responsibilities—but we do have [control](#) over how we recover from sprints and restore our energy to last through marathons (and support our staff to do the same!).

Recovery looks different for everyone. **What practices help you recover and restore after intense or prolonged activity?** Use our worksheet below to reflect on these practices and make a plan to use them.

Here are some suggestions for using the worksheet:

- **First, consider the “why”** behind any sustainability practices you want to try. Is there an issue you’re trying to solve, a challenge you’re facing, a goal you want to meet, or an intention you want to commit to? Note it in the “[Reflection](#)” table.
- **Identify practices** that will help you address your “why.” Write them down in the “[Recovery & Restoration Practices](#)” column. **Need inspiration?** Reference the [Recovery and Restoration Practices: Examples](#) chart.
- **Decide how often** you’ll do them in the “Frequency” column.
- **Identify a support network to help you stay accountable.**
 - Who’s in your corner? **Jot down a list of people** you might call on for support. Consider colleagues, managers, mentors, friends, family, and healers.
 - **Ask for concrete and specific support.** You might say, “Hey Jordan, this year, I’m making sustainability a priority. I know I’m more likely to follow through if I have support. One of my goals is to eat lunch every day. Will you check in on me once a week to see if I’m meeting my goal?”
 - **Write down** the supports you’ve gathered in the “Support and Accountability” column.
- **Schedule it.** Slot your practices into your calendar and [to-do list](#), so that you’re more likely to follow through.
- **For managers: encourage your staff to do this too!** Create space for staff to implement their own recovery and restoration practices, including those on the margins. Systematize any practices that might benefit your whole team and make accommodations where possible.

Template

Reflection

Consider the “why” behind any sustainability practices you want to try, in your personal and/or work life. Is there an issue you’re trying to solve, a challenge you’re facing, a goal you want to meet, or an intention you want to commit to? Jot down 1-3 bullet points below.

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	Recovery & Restoration Practices	Frequency	Support & Accountability
Work		Choose one ▾	
		Choose one ▾	
		Choose one ▾	
Personal		Choose one ▾	
		Choose one ▾	
		Choose one ▾	

Sample

Reflection

Consider the “why” behind any sustainability practices you want to try, in your personal and/or work life. Is there an issue you’re trying to solve, a challenge you’re facing, a goal you want to meet, or an intention you want to commit to? Jot down 1-3 bullet points below.

- Too many priorities and meetings, with limited time to do it all. I either feel too overwhelmed to focus on my big rocks, or get caught up in the day-to-day and lose sight of the bigger “why.”
- I know genuine connection helps me relieve stress, especially when times are tough. I want to lean on my colleagues and loved ones for encouragement and support, and offer them the same.
- Sustainability is a must-have, not a nice-to-have. I want to feel more balanced, focused, and well, in all parts of my life.

	Recovery & Restoration Practices	Frequency	Support & Accountability
Work	Identify work that can move from “gold star” to “good enough” (see How to Actually Reprioritize , tip #3). Encourage my direct reports to do the same.	Weekly ▾	Test my thinking with my manager to make sure we’re aligned.
	Audit the meetings on my calendar. Can any hour-long meetings be shortened to 45 or even 30 minutes?	Monthly ▾	Set a monthly coworking block with Linh to do this together.
	Send out a team-wide email with wins I want to celebrate (including my own, other teammates’, and team-wide successes). Offer specific gratitude to teammates to celebrate their contributions.	Monthly ▾	Invite Jac to try this out with me next month.
	Write sustainability into my annual goals: “Plan recovery time following each sprint.”	Yearly ▾	Ask my manager for support in managing my workload and reprioritizing when needed.
	Hold “1:1 sharing sessions” for Fatima and me to speak openly about work obstacles, especially during stressful periods. We’ll take turns sharing and listening, and offer support and thought partnership when we can.	As needed ▾	Reach out to Fatima to set agreements beforehand (e.g. Say the truth with grace; Reserve judgment; Our goal is to release some stress).
	Journal about my personal connection to this role and the organization’s mission and values.	Quarterly ▾	Put journal time on my calendar

	Recovery & Restoration Practices	Frequency	Support & Accountability
Personal	Take a short walk 2x a day (before work, between meetings or workblocks, and/or after work).	Daily ▾	Repeat to self: remember the benefits of breaks ! They can help prevent burnout, reduce stress and anxiety, and boost creativity.
	Schedule time to be in nature.	Monthly ▾	Recruit Adrian to be my hiking buddy.
	Make time to chat with at least one person who supports me (via text, phone call, or in person).	Weekly ▾	
	Pause or take work email and calendar off my phone when I go on vacation.	2x a year ▾	
	Try one emotional first aid practice (courtesy of TMC coach Cicely Horsham-Brathwaite!) when I'm feeling ungrounded.	As needed ▾	Update my therapist regularly on my progress and discuss any challenges I am having.
	Reflect on the intentions behind my recovery and restoration routines, and update this chart if needed.	2x a year ▾	

Recovery and Restoration Practices: Examples

Work Planning	Mental & Emotional	Physical	Social & Connection	Reflective & Spiritual	Sensory & Environmental
Identify work that can move from “gold star” to “good enough” (see How to Actually Reprioritize , tip #3). Encourage my direct reports to do the same.	Try one emotional first aid practice (courtesy of TMC coach Cicely Horsham-Brathwaite) when I’m feeling ungrounded.	Take walks or short movement breaks between meetings.	Hold “1:1 sharing sessions” for a colleague and I to speak openly about work obstacles. Take turns sharing and listening, and offer support and thought partnership when we can.	Practice breathwork, meditation, or journaling.	Adjust lighting to facilitate a calm, focused workspace.
Audit the meetings on my calendar. Can any hour-long meetings be shortened to 45 or even 30 minutes?	Limit news and social media intake to set times.	Eat nourishing meals, away from screens.	Make time to connect with one person who supports me and/or check in on someone I want to support.	Reflect on my personal connection to this role and the organization’s mission and values.	Reduce desk clutter to minimize visual overload.
Write sustainability into my annual goals: “Plan recovery time following each sprint.”	At the end of each day, answer the question “What went well?”	Get 7-9 hours of sleep.	Send out a team-wide email with wins I want to celebrate (including my own, other teammates’, and team-wide successes). Offer specific gratitude to teammates.	Dedicate time to be in nature and re-ground.	Change my working environment once a week (e.g. library, park, cafe, coworking space, etc.).

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