

5 ways to combat the mid-year blues

 By [Anja van Beek](#)

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As we find ourselves in the middle of the year, many individuals that I speak to, both leaders and team members, experience a sense of fatigue.



Supplied image

Do you ever feel like the fatigue is an unending cycle, hoping that by conquering your to-do list, you'll finally find a moment to exhale and relax?

In this technologically advanced age, where the speed of "now" dominates our lives, it's crucial to recognise the toll it takes on our energy levels and overall well-being. Exhaustion rates in South Africa have risen significantly, with a large percentage of individuals feeling tired and overwhelmed.

According to the [Global Workplace Burnout Report](#), workplace burnout around the world reached a record high in 2020, with 43% of people from more than 100 countries claiming to have experienced workplace burnout. Furthermore, 70% of people experienced burnout in the last year, according to a [study by Asana](#) which examined 10,000 knowledge workers across seven countries.

As the demands of our schedules keep piling up, it's easy to resort to an extra shot of coffee in the morning and that extra glass of wine at night, hoping to find solace from the day's chaos.

Mid-year fatigue encapsulates that peculiar sensation of feeling simultaneously wired and tired, caught in the whirlwind of responsibilities and exhaustion.

Here are 5 reminders and tips to restore your energy and combat mid-year fatigue.

1. Embracing meaningful breaks

Revitalising your energy requires embracing regular breaks throughout the year. Studies have consistently shown that individuals who utilise their leave days are more productive, engaged, and loyal. Instead of waiting until the end of the year, plan shorter yet meaningful breaks that excite you. Whether it's a family camping trip, an invigorating hike, or simply quality time at home (unplugged!), prioritise your own well-being by proactively booking time off.

This also applies to scheduling more regular breaks throughout your day. Experiment with what works best for you; play around with taking a short break every 30 – 90 minutes. Find an accountability partner at work that will keep you accountable for taking these or, even better, schedule it in your calendars and stick to it.

Remember, managing stress and exhaustion requires giving yourself permission to rest and recharge, free from the weight of consequences or leave-related burdens.

2. Don't do it alone

When you find yourself feeling stuck or overwhelmed, having a trusted thinking partner, coach or mentor can make a world of difference. Seek out someone who can lend a non-judgmental ear, offering valuable insights and a safe space for you to be heard. Consider forming a "vent buddy" system, where you can combine exercise with an open conversation to keep cortisol levels in check. By joining a walking club or engaging in regular physical activity, you can support each other's well-being while fostering lasting connections.

Furthermore, mentoring can serve as a powerful catalyst for career growth. Schedule consistent sessions with a coach or mentor, ensuring ongoing support, guidance, and accountability on your personal development journey.



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3. Discovering meaning and purpose

Combatting exhaustion begins with finding genuine meaning in your work.

Get a clear picture of your strengths and passions and find the link to your day-to-day job. Further, reflect on your perception of work. Is it merely a means to an end or an opportunity to create a quality life for yourself and your loved ones? By understanding the deeper meaning of your work, you can establish healthier boundaries.

Research shows that individuals who cultivate happiness and fulfilment outside of work, experience greater satisfaction in their professional lives. Get clarity on your bottom line, the reason why you get up in the morning.

You can build on this by considering all aspects of life, not only work, and find a goal for each of those areas you

want to develop over the next few months.

4. Focus on the basics

We all know the importance of taking care of our bodies to enhance our brain capacity and increase our high-performance energy levels. Regular exercise, sufficient water intake, the right nutrients, a consistent sleep/wake cycle and a solid mindfulness routine is all common knowledge.

Unfortunately, common knowledge is not always common practice. Or, perhaps you may find it challenging to know where to start.

Choose one area and start by making small tweaks to your daily habits. Focus on being 1% better than the previous day. You will be surprised to see how your energy levels increase by taking better care of your body.

5. Fostering mental health conversations

In the ever-evolving landscape of work, it is crucial to create an environment where mental health discussions are welcomed. According to the Microsoft Worktrends Report, unmanageable workloads and a lack of empathy from employers led 41% of employees to contemplate leaving their jobs.

Acknowledging the impact of unmanageable workloads on your mental health is important. Also, don't see limitations as a sign of weakness. Initiate an open dialogue about mental health, especially if this starts impacting your results and the quality of your work. If you feel you can't open up to our manager, reach out to your HR department to explore employee assistance programmes or other available resources to support your mental health.

ABOUT ANJA VAN BEEK

Anja van Beek is an independent leadership consultant, talent strategist and coach.

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