# FOUNDER_BURNOUT_PROTOCOL

## // hOS v1.1

A 50-question deep-dive to locate the burnout loop crashing your system.

Print-friendly • Self-paced • Intensity I2–I3 • Runtime ~45–60 minutes

# PROTOCOL_01 // USER_GUIDE

Execution parameters for the Founder Burnout Deep-Dive.

## 1) THE FRAME

You are not here to vent. You are here to locate the specific lines of code (habits, beliefs, biological debts) causing your system to crash.

- Total Runtime: ~45–60 minutes.
- Depth: High. This protocol accesses kernel-level drivers (Identity & threat responses).
- Requirement: Do not multitask. Treat this like a production deployment.

## 2) THE SEQUENCE (4 BLOCKS)
### This protocol follows a specific neurobiological arc. Do not skip ahead.

### BLOCK I: START (Q1–10) // The Hardware Layer
Focus: Sleep, stimulants, and somatic signals.
Why: Why: You cannot fix your mindset if your nervous system is in freeze. We start with the body because the body doesn't lie.

### BLOCK II: DEEP (Q11–38) // The Operating System
Focus: Cognitive distortions, identity fusion ("I am my company"), relational debts.
Why: Why: This is where the burnout script lives. We examine your certainty addiction and impostor patterns.

### BLOCK III: ACTION (Q39–47) // System Output
Focus: Busywork, avoidance loops, and recovery deficits.
Why: Why: Insight without behavior change is entertainment. These questions force a stop/patch decision.

### BLOCK IV: CLOSE (Q48–50) // The Toolkit
Focus: Resilience and agency.
Why: Why: We never leave a system open. We close by identifying the resources you already have to rebuild.

## 3) EXECUTION RULES

### The "5% More" Rule:
After each answer, ask: "What is the 5% truer version of this that I'm afraid to write?" Write that.

### Data > Story:
Don't write "I work too hard." Write "I worked 14 hours yesterday to avoid feeling lonely."

### The Stop Rule:
If you feel dissociation (zoning out, numbness) or acute panic, STOP. Switch to regulation and support.

## START BLOCK

### Q01  [BIO.SLEEP]

Over the past 14 days, how consistent is your wake time (± minutes), and what is the pattern when it breaks?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                         Data Point: _____

### Q02  [BIO.SLEEP]

What is the earliest time you can realistically be in bed on weekdays without resentment? What blocks it?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                         Data Point: _____

### Q03  [BIO.CAFFEINE_NICOTINE]

What is your caffeine/nicotine signature (timing + dose)? What symptom does it temporarily solve?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                         Data Point: _____

### Q04  [BIO.RHYTHMS]

When do you feel your first real drop in energy each day? What are you doing right before it?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                         Data Point: _____

### Q05  [BIO.BREATH_SIGNATURE]

Under pressure, do you hold your breath, go shallow, or speed up? What trigger reliably flips it?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                         Data Point: _____

### Q06  [BIO.TENSION_PATTERNS]

Where does stress land first (jaw/chest/gut/neck)? What are you usually thinking in that exact moment?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                         Data Point: _____

### Q07  [BIO.SENSORY_OVERLOAD]

Which sensory inputs (noise, lighting, texture, crowds) spike your irritability fastest—and what do you do next?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                         Data Point: _____

### Q08  [BIO.INTEROCEPTION]

How often do you override hunger/thirst/toilet/rest signals for 'just one more task'? What does it cost you later?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                         Data Point: _____

### Q09  [BIO.DISSOCIATION_TELL]

What is your shutdown tell (zoning out, blank mind, heavy limbs)? How early can you catch it?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                         Data Point: _____

### Q10  [BIO.MOVEMENT]

When was the last time your body moved hard enough to change your mood within 20 minutes? What stopped you recently?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                         Data Point: _____

## DEEP BLOCK

### Q11  [PERF.DECISION_FATIGUE]

Which decision are you deferring because it will create conflict, loss, or identity discomfort?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                         Data Point: _____

**Q12 [PERF.COG_LOAD]**

How many open loops are you carrying right now (tasks, messages, promises)? Which 3 are draining 80% of your RAM?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

**Q13 [M.CONTROL_STRATEGY]**

Where do you demand certainty that reality cannot provide—and how do you punish yourself for not having it?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

**Q14 [M.COG_DISTORTION]**

What fear are you disguising as logic this week?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

**Q15 [PERF.IMPOSTOR_PATTERN]**

Before high-stakes meetings, what does your mind assume others will discover about you?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

**Q16 [M.COG_DISTORTION]**

What scenario does your brain replay when idle or waiting—and what emotion is it trying to avoid?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

**Q17 [PERF.METRICS_OBSESSION]**

Which metric controls your mood more than it should—and what does that metric symbolize to you?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

**Q18 [PERF.FOCUS]**

What does your mind do when forced to wait (traffic, loading, delays): rage, scroll, plan, numb out, or rehearse?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

**Q19 [M.PERFECTIONISM]**

What standard are you using that no human could meet—yet you treat it as 'baseline'?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

**Q20 [PERF.SCOPE_CREEP]**

Where does your work expand because stopping would force you to feel something?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

**Q21 [PERF.CONTEXT_SWITCH]**

How many times per hour do you switch contexts? What is the hidden trigger for each switch?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

**Q22 [M.THREAT_RESPONSE]**

When you receive unexpected bad news, what is your first internal sentence?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

**Q23 [M.IDENTITY_FUSION]**

If your company disappeared tomorrow, what would be the first identity sentence you'd say about yourself?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

### Q24 [M.COG_DISTORTION]

What criticism hits you deepest—and what does it 'confirm' about you?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                              Data Point: _____

### Q25 [M.IDENTITY_FUSION]

What do you believe you must achieve to finally feel 'enough'?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                              Data Point: _____

### Q26 [M.CONTROL_STRATEGY]

What emotion shows up when you cannot control outcomes (grief, anger, fear, shame)?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                              Data Point: _____

### Q27 [M.AVOIDANCE_LOOP]

If you stopped trying to 'win' at work, what emotion would you be forced to feel?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                              Data Point: _____

### Q28 [M.VULNERABILITY_DEFENSE]

What do you hide behind competence (need, sadness, fear, longing)?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                              Data Point: _____

### Q29 [M.VALUE_CONFLICT]

Where are you betraying your own values to keep momentum—and how do you justify it?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                              Data Point: _____

### Q30 [M.COG_DISTORTION]

What story do you tell yourself to make rest feel 'unsafe' or 'undeserved'?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                              Data Point: _____

### Q31 [M.ISOLATION_STRATEGY]

Where do you feel most alone in your life right now—even when surrounded by people?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                              Data Point: _____

### Q32 [M.BOUNDARY_LEAKS]

What boundary do you set too late (or not at all) because you fear consequences?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                              Data Point: _____

### Q33 [M.ATTACHMENT_STRATEGY]

Do you trust people until they give you a reason not to, or mistrust until proven? What did that strategy cost you?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                              Data Point: _____

### Q34 [M.AVOIDANCE_LOOP]

Who reliably calms your nervous system—and why aren't they scheduled into your week?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                              Data Point: _____

### Q35 [M.THREAT_RESPONSE]

Under conflict, what is your default move (pursue/withdraw/freeze/fawn/attack), and what is it protecting?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                              Data Point: _____

### Q36 [M.PRIDE_DEFENSE]

After a rupture, do you repair quickly or let distance calcify? What story justifies your choice?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

### Q37 [M.CONTROL_STRATEGY]

Where are you carrying emotional labor that should be shared—and what prevents you from delegating it?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

### Q38 [M.VULNERABILITY_DEFENSE]

Which relationship has become purely transactional—and what would it take to make it human again?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

## ACTION BLOCK

### Q39 [PERF.BUSYWORK]

What do you call 'productivity' that is actually avoidance?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

### Q40 [M.AVOIDANCE_LOOP]

What important thing are you 'almost starting' all the time?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

### Q41 [PERF.RECOVERY_DEFICIT]

Which recovery input are you under-investing in by 30%+ (sleep, movement, connection)?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

### Q42 [PERF.OVERCOMMIT]

What commitment should be downgraded, delegated, or deleted this week?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

### Q43 [M.SCARCITY_SCRIPT]

Does spending money make you feel safe, powerful, or guilty—and what belief drives that reaction?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

### Q44 [PERF.LATE_NIGHT_GRIND]

What are you buying with late-night work (certainty, relief, control, worth)? Did you get it?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

### Q45 [M.THREAT_RESPONSE]

In crisis mode, what do you neglect first: sleep, food, relationships, or honesty? Why?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

### Q46 [PERF.SYSTEMS]

What system would remove the most repeated effort from your week if you built it once?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

### Q47 [PERF.DEEP_WORK]

What is the smallest 'deep work' block you can protect daily without negotiation—and what will you delete to fund it?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                    Data Point: _____

## CLOSE BLOCK

## CLOSE BLOCK

### Q48  [M.SKILL_TRANSFER]

Name 3 past situations where you were under pressure and still performed well. What did you do that worked?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                              Data Point: _____

### Q49  [M.RECOVERY_AVERSION]

What is one recovery behavior that has reliably worked for you before—and why did you stop doing it?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                              Data Point: _____

### Q50  [M.IDENTITY_FUSION]

What would it look like to be 10% less heroic and 10% more sustainable this month?

PASS [ ]   FLAG [ ]   FAIL [ ]                              Data Point: _____

# POST_RUN // NEXT_STEPS

After you complete the protocol, identify the dominant bottleneck category (Hardware, OS, Network, Output). Choose ONE lever: one behavior to stop and one resource to activate for the next 7 days. Re-run quarterly.

## Safety Notice

This document is for educational and self-development purposes only and does not constitute medical or mental health advice, diagnosis, or treatment. If you are in acute crisis, experiencing frequent panic attacks, or at risk of self-harm, seek qualified professional support immediately.