

AM I MELTING DOWN OR JUST OVERSTIMULATED?

Checklist




A Clinically-Informed, Slightly Sarcastic Checklist for
the Neurospicy and Emotionally Exhausted




WELCOME TO THE CLARITY YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU NEEDED.

Let's face it—modern life is basically a gladiator pit for your nervous system. If you've ever found yourself sobbing into your steering wheel or rage-eating chips at 2 p.m., you might be wondering: Is this burnout, sensory overload, or an emotional hurricane?

 **Burnout**
(aka: You've been running on fumes since last September)


Checklist:

- I feel detached from things I used to love. Like friends. And also cheese.
- Every task feels Everest-level hard, even brushing my teeth.
- I feel emotionally flatlined—like, even cat videos aren't working.
- I've had "nothing left to give" since Tuesday... two months ago.
- I keep saying "I just need to make it to the weekend," but the weekend shows up like a deadbeat dad: empty-handed and late.
- **Clinical Nugget:** Burnout stems from sustained stress and emotional exhaustion—not laziness, not weakness, not your moral failing. Your nervous system needs rest, not more self-improvement podcasts.

 **Sensory Overload**
(aka: The lights are too bright, that sock seam is attacking, and you can hear electricity)

Checklist:

- I feel like every sound is a scream and every light is an interrogation lamp.
- My clothes are betraying me (tags, seams, bras—pick your fighter).
- Crowds? Hard pass. Fluorescent lighting? Who approved this war crime?
- Touch feels itchy or painful, even from people I love.
- The dishwasher, the TV, the microwave beep—all too loud. All at once.
- **Clinical Nugget:** Sensory overload is your body's way of saying "TOO MUCH." It's neurological, not behavioral. No, you're not dramatic. You're literally being pelted by stimuli.

 **Emotional Dysregulation**
(aka: Crying over a dropped spoon and then spiraling into a shame-nado)

Checklist:

- My emotions are coming in hot, and I don't have the remote.
- I keep flipping from numb to sobbing to rage-y in under 30 minutes.
- The phrase "overreacting" haunts me like a poltergeist.
- I feel completely overwhelmed, and it's hard to explain why.
- I want connection and comfort but also no one look at me right now.
- **Clinical Nugget:** This is a hallmark of both trauma and neurodivergence. Emotional dysregulation isn't a choice—it's the nervous system hijacking your logic and rerouting all traffic to Panic Town.



SO, WHAT DO I DO WITH THIS?

If it's burnout...

- Cancel something. Anything. Do it now.
- Eat a real meal, drink water, and nap without guilt.
- Unplug for an afternoon. The world will go on (badly, but still).
- Seek support: therapy, group coaching, or a trauma-informed friend who gets it.

► If it's sensory overload...

- Dim the lights. Noise-canceling headphones are a lifestyle.
- Change into comfy clothes. (RIP, jeans.)
- Retreat to a soft, quiet corner with a weighted blanket and zero expectations.
- Use a sensory kit: essential oils, fidgets, soft textures, etc.

If it's emotional dysregulation

- Pause. Breathe. Seriously, inhale like your sanity depends on it (because it does).
- Journal or voice note what you're feeling.
- Give yourself grace. You're not failing; you're processing.
- Text a safe person. You don't have to carry it alone.

🧠 Final Thoughts

You're not "too sensitive." You're not "crazy." You're living in a world designed for linear thinkers and emotional robots, and your body is responding exactly as it should in chaos. Identifying what you're feeling is the first step toward navigating it with compassion. Print this, keep it in your bag, tape it to your fridge—whatever helps.

Your nervous system isn't overreacting. It's trying to tell you something. Maybe... it's time to listen.



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