

# How To Avoid Burnout This Summer: Know Your 3 Zones



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In order to be your best - hitting your targets, meeting your goals, creating the vision you want for your life - you need to be able to stretch yourself just enough so that you are moving forward with enthusiasm and momentum. As always, though, balance is key: Too much stretch and you might stress yourself out, too little stretch and you might not be challenging yourself enough.

You can think about your limits in three different zones. Your comfort zone, your stretch zone and your panic zone.

**Your comfort zone** is where everything feels just right. When you're in this zone, you can do well at your job and meet your targets reasonably so you can go home with plenty of time to spare, but you don't necessarily feel challenged.

**The stretch zone** is the optimum measure of stretch. It's where you do feel challenged, where you have to step up just a little bit, enough to get the enthusiasm going, and you have energy and feel excitement about what's to come.

**The panic zone** is where there too much to do, too little time to do it and you're not able to get it all done. It's where you start to panic because you know you're never going to make your deadlines, and you're not going to be able to finish what you need to do because you're too stretched.

Can you define the perfect stretch zone for you? Where do you want things to ease up to keep you out of the panic zone, or where can you step things up to move out of the comfort zone and into the stretch?

Each of the three zones may be right for you at different times in your life. There are times that you need to stretch yourself. On the other hand, maybe you have been stretching yourself, challenging yourself and stepping up enough, and you need to back off a little bit and retreat to your comfort zone.

There even maybe times when the panic zone is actually what's right for you. When you have a big opportunity, a short deadline and the opportunity to deliver, you might want to push yourself into the panic zone where the energy is high and you can get things done and done quickly.

Find the zone that's right for you to accomplish more - you're going to feel more excited about your work, and you'll avoid burning out.

Ask yourself:

- Which zone are you in right now?
- Where do you want to be?
- What would it take to get there?
- What decisions do you need to make?
- What conversations do you need to have?

Keeping track of what zones you're in this summer will help you avoid burnout while challenging yourself in new ways, which will ultimately help you to succeed as a leader.

*For more advice for balancing your work and refining your personal leadership skills, see Joelle's books [The New Advantage](#) and [The Inner Edge](#).*

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