

# The Grounding Circle

Real people. Real conversations.

Guide No. 01 · Burnout · 2026

# Running on Empty

When caring turns into depletion — and finding your way back

Most of us do not notice depletion until it has been going on for a long time. Not because we are not paying attention — but because we are paying attention to everyone and everything else first. It does not always look like a breakdown. More often it looks like someone who is still showing up, still getting things done — but who has quietly lost access to themselves.

### DOES THIS SOUND FAMILIAR?

*“I’m just tired. I’ll rest when things slow down.”*  
*“I don’t have time to fall apart right now.”*  
*“Other people have it harder. I’ll be fine.”*  
*“I just need to push through a little longer.”*

These are not signs of strength. They are signs that something real has been going unacknowledged for too long.

### THREE FORMS OF DEPLETION

#### Emotional

Giving care without enough coming back. Feeling everything and carrying it alone.

#### Identity

Playing roles — caregiver, fixer, provider — until you lose the thread back to yourself.

#### Relational

Present with everyone around you but not really there. A function, not a person.

### WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE DAY-TO-DAY

<b>In your body</b>	Tired in a way sleep doesn’t fix. Overriding signals that used to stop you.
<b>In your emotions</b>	A flatness where feeling used to be. Joy takes more effort than it should.
<b>In relationships</b>	Going through the motions of connection without really feeling it.
<b>In your identity</b>	Not sure what you want anymore, separate from what everyone else needs.
<b>In your rest</b>	Stopping brings guilt, not relief. Feeling like you must earn the right to pause.

*Depletion arrives quietly — in the gap between who you are and who you have been pretending to be.*

### UNDERSTANDING BURNOUT

Depletion is not just tiredness. It develops slowly, in people who care deeply and have learned to treat their own needs as secondary. Researchers call it **burnout: the result of giving consistently more than you receive, long enough that your body, emotions, and sense of self begin to quietly collapse inward.**

It is not a character flaw. It is a very human response to carrying too much, for too long, without enough support.

### FINDING YOUR WAY BACK

- 1 Name it.** Saying “I am depleted” is not weakness — it is the beginning of something real.
- 2 Stop earning rest.** Rest is not a reward for productivity. It is something you are allowed simply because you are human.
- 3 Get honest with yourself.** Who am I when I am not performing? That question is worth sitting with.
- 4 Let go of the story.** Many of us carry a story that says we are only valuable when we are useful. Recovery means building a new one.
- 5 Find a room.** Depletion heals in community — in spaces where honesty is safe and you are genuinely seen.

### BRING THIS TO OUR SESSION

*Take a few quiet minutes before we meet. Honest answers are the only ones that matter.*

- 1** Where do I feel most depleted right now — body, emotions, relationships, or sense of self?  
**Your thoughts:**
- 2** What have I been calling “fine” that is actually not fine?  
**Your thoughts:**
- 3** What is one thing I keep giving that I have nothing left to give?  
**Your thoughts:**
- 4** When did I last feel like myself — not a role, not a function, just me?  
**Your thoughts:**
- 5** What would being honest look like for me — even for just one hour?  
**Your thoughts:**

*You do not have to have it figured out. You just have to be willing to be honest.*

**FREE.** Open to everyone. Space is limited.

Thursdays · 5:30–7:00 pm · Starting June 25, 2026  
EMG · 324 E Street, Marysville, CA 95901  
(530) 770-1658 · [espindolaconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:espindolaconsulting@gmail.com)

The House of Grace Wellness™  
POWERED BY ESPINDOLA MANAGEMENT GROUP