

Switching Off After Work

Leave work at work, so you come back to it rested

Being unable to switch off is one of the most common complaints in demanding jobs. The phone is always within reach, and the mind keeps rehearsing tomorrow's problems or replaying today's. Without real recovery time, people start each day already tired.

Switching off is a skill. Like most skills, it gets easier with a routine.

IF SOMEONE NEEDS HELP NOW

If there is an immediate risk to life, call **999**. Samaritans are available free, 24 hours a day, on **116 123**. In England, NHS 111 (option 2) connects to an urgent mental health service.

01

What keeps you switched on?

How often does this happen in a typical week?

0 = never, 1 = sometimes, 2 = often, 3 = most evenings

	0	1	2	3
I check email or messages in the evening	☐	☐	☐	☐
I lie awake thinking about work	☐	☐	☐	☐
I finish the day with no clear sense of what is done and what is next	☐	☐	☐	☐
I replay conversations or mistakes from the day	☐	☐	☐	☐
I work late because I lose track of time	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel guilty when I am not working	☐	☐	☐	☐

02

Build a shutdown routine

A short, consistent routine at the end of the day tells your brain the working day is over. Choose two or three of these, and do them in the same order every day.

- Write down what you finished today, however small.
- Write tomorrow's top three priorities, so your mind does not have to hold them.
- Park any unfinished worries on paper, with a time to come back to them.
- Close every work tab and app, and turn off notifications.
- Mark the transition: a walk, a change of clothes, a particular piece of music.

MY ROUTINE, STEP BY STEP	WHEN

03

Protect your evenings

EXERCISE

Agreements with myself

1. The time after which I will not check work messages:

2. Where my work phone or laptop will go in the evening:

3. What I will do if a work thought arrives late at night:

If your role genuinely requires being available out of hours, agree with your manager what that means in practice: which hours, for what, and how quickly you need to respond.