



SHE*T FOR BRAINS

**TALK IT OUT:
MANAGING
ENERGY AND
PREVENTING
BURNOUT**

Introduction: The She*t for Brains Initiative

In an era where mental health challenges touch every industry and role, the need for effective self-care strategies has never been more critical. This e-book stems from the groundbreaking “She*t for Brains” initiative, presenting insights from Chris Barez-Brown’s pioneering work on energy management and burnout prevention.

The scale of the challenge is significant:

- Over 60% experienced burnout last year
- \$250 billion annual cost to organizations
- Two-thirds of people won’t talk to another person about mental health
- Current health systems cannot keep up with growing needs

Understanding Resilience

Resilience isn’t about never experiencing stress or challenges. Instead, it’s about how quickly and effectively we can recover from difficulties. Glenn illustrates this with a poignant story about Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, the former Chief Rabbi of the British Commonwealth:

Understanding Our Design Challenge

Chris opens with a fundamental insight about the modern workplace: “Business needs everything 24/7. It’ll take everything that you have. If you try and keep up, you’d have nothing left to give and you will be a shallow husk of a human.”

The solution, however, is counterintuitive. Instead of trying to fit ourselves to business demands, we need to make business fit with our human design. As Chris explains, “We are the more ancient design. And actually when we do that, we’ll have better energy, we’ll deliver better results, and then business wins too. But it takes a different approach.”

The Power of Experimentation

Chris illustrates this approach through the story of Ben and the “Code of Pots and Pans”:

A boy named Ben wanted to learn drums. His parents were really smart. They said, “Here are some pots and pans from the kitchen, here are some drumsticks. If you play on those every day for three months and at the end of it, you’re still passionate and you’re showing a sign of talent, we will buy you a set of drums.” Ben was like a jazz percussionist after three months.

Years later, Ben applied this same principle as a graphic designer. Needing balance from screen time, he began making knives. His first took 55 hours, but this hobby led to Block Knives, a prestigious brand with a three-and-a-half-year waiting list.

The lesson? Finding what works for our wellbeing doesn’t require massive investment – it requires experimentation and commitment to process.

The Human Design Challenge

Our modern challenges stem from two fundamental aspects of our gatherer-hunter design:

1. Negativity Bias

- Evolutionarily programmed to look for danger
- In gatherer-hunter days, a rustling bush meant potential threat
- Today, change and uncertainty trigger same response
- Results in fight/flight/freeze responses never fully discharging
- Leads to hyper-vigilance and constant stress

Exercise: Experiencing the Bias Chris demonstrated this with a simple exercise during the webinar:

"We're going to choose one of you by random... and the person that we're gonna choose is gonna come on screen with me and sing a duet."

This mere suggestion triggered stress responses in participants - a small but clear example of how easily our threat detection system activates in modern contexts.

2. Autopilot Mode

"We spend huge chunks of our life on autopilot," Chris explains. Research shows:

- 80% of life spent on autopilot
- Subconscious constantly scans for familiar patterns
- Energy efficient but disconnecting
- Makes days feel repetitive and draining

The challenge is that while autopilot served us well as gatherer-hunters conserving energy, today it can disconnect us from meaningful experiences and reduce our ability to respond to what's actually needed.

Exercise: Checking Your Autopilot Consider these questions:

- When did you last consciously experience your morning routine?
- Can you remember details of your regular commute?
- How often do you end a day feeling it was "just another day"?

Understanding Energy Impact

Our energy is affected across multiple dimensions:

1. Physical Energy

- Foundation for all other energy types
- Influenced by sleep, movement, nutrition
- Requires intentional breaks and recovery

2. Mental Energy

- Only 5–15% conscious processing
- Rest is subconscious
- Needs regular “downloading”

3. Emotional Energy

- Heavily impacted by unexpressed thoughts
- Benefits from regular processing
- Requires safe outlets for expression

The Talk It Out Method

The development of Talk It Out exemplifies how sometimes the most powerful solutions emerge accidentally. As Chris explains:

“I accidentally invented a way of helping people deal with stress and burnout. It was a fluke. I’d spent about 30 years helping some of the biggest and best companies innovate. I came up with a tool called Talk It Out – a very simple tool where if you’re working on a project, you grab a buddy and go for a walk and talk flat out about the brief.”

The Discovery Process

Our energy is affected across multiple dimensions:

“I taught thousands of people this technique and people kept coming back going, ‘You know, I’ve got way better insights, I got way better ideas.’ But the number of people that came back and just said, ‘You know what, Chris, a bit weird, but I just feel a lot better now.’ You hear that a few times, you go, there’s something going on here. You hear that a hundred times, you know there’s something going on.”

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INSIGHTS FROM CHRIS BAREZ-BROWN ON HUMAN DESIGN AND MENTAL WELLNESS

How It Works

The method operates on several key principles:

1. Physical Movement

- Walking increases creativity by 60%
- Movement helps process emotions
- Physical activity supports mental processing

2. Continuous Talking

- Start with conscious narrative
- Keep talking past conscious story
- Allow subconscious thoughts to emerge

3. Safe Space

- No judgment
- Complete privacy
- Freedom to express anything

did in this other season. I'm going to have to change the way I'm working."

The Psychology Behind It

Chris explains the deeper mechanics:

"What you think is what you feel, but 95% of your processing is subconscious. So most people have no idea why they feel the way they do. When they do talk it out, they start to understand because things bubble up from the subconscious."

Research Results

The method has shown remarkable results:

- 37% reduction in anxiety through regular use
- 94% improvement in wellbeing for at-risk individuals
- NHS Innovation approval received
- Singapore government plans nationwide implementation

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Practical Application: The Firebreak

Chris has refined the method into a specific weekly practice called the “Firebreak”:

Core Components

1. Time: 10 minutes every Friday afternoon
2. Activity: Walking while talking
3. Focus Areas:
 - Week’s learnings
 - What worked/didn’t work
 - Weekend preparation
 - Monday planning

Implementation Steps

- 1. Preparation**
 - Choose consistent time
 - Select walking route
 - Download Talk It Out app
 - Complete initial survey
- 2. During Session**
 - Walk at steady pace
 - Talk continuously
 - Note insights as they arise
 - Allow natural flow of thoughts
- 3. After Session**
 - Review captured insights
 - Take any needed actions
 - Clear mental space for weekend
 - Set Monday intentions

The Morning Protocol

Chris emphasizes the importance of how we start our day:

- 1. No Phone First Thing**
 - “Do not look at your phone, okay, really important”
 - Keeps you off autopilot
 - Preserves conscious awareness
- 2. Hydration**
 - “Drink a pint of water because you wake up massively dehydrated”
 - Energizes body and mind
 - Supports clear thinking

3. Outside Time

- Get outside briefly
- Set clear intention for the day
- Identify key priority

Exercise: Design Your Morning Create your personal morning protocol by answering:

- What time will you wake up?
- Where will you keep your phone overnight?
- What outdoor space will you use?
- How will you identify your daily priority?

Learning Through Experimentation

Chris emphasizes the importance of experimentation through a powerful story about a first aid trainer:

"I used to have about 50 people in my team... I remember getting a phone call on Friday night from one of my team going, 'So Chris, team loved it and they trained them really well. They got loads from it, but I just thought we should let you know, we broke the CEO.' And what do you mean you broke the CEO? 'Well, we did this exercise outside. He had his CMO on his shoulders and he's on the grass and there's a bit of dew, bit wet. He slipped and he broke his collarbone."

This led to requiring first aid training for all trainers, where they encountered an unexpected teacher:

"The first aid trainer was totally different from our usual facilitators - grey suit, grey tie, slightly grey skin, with a pilot case with colored tabs. But his commitment to demonstrating real scenarios - even choking demonstrations - made the learning unforgettable."

Prevention Over Cure

Chris emphasizes a crucial shift in approach to mental health:

"Mental health is a massive topic. It's huge. There's a billion people with a mental health challenge right now on this planet. That ranges from 'I'm a bit blue' to psychosis, suicidal tendencies, etc. Those aren't anywhere near the same things."

The Prevention Focus

Chris explains his focus on prevention:

“What I’ve realized is I can help much better at helping people not suffer, get into the danger zone. So I’m all about self care and I’m all about prevention because actually if we do that, we are going to be a much better planet.”

Key reasons for this approach:

- Health systems are overwhelmed
- Professional help shortage growing
- Two-thirds won’t talk to another person
- Prevention more effective than cure

The Technology Bridge

Research shows people are five times more likely to talk to a machine than a person. This led to the development of the Talk It Out app, which provides:

- Private space for processing
- No judgment
- Complete honesty
- Practical tools for insight capture

Team Implementation

Creating Cultural Change

Chris emphasizes several key aspects for organizational implementation:

1. Leadership Example

- Leaders must demonstrate practices
- Share personal experiences
- Normalize emotional processing

2. Generational Awareness As noted in the webinar, different generations approach wellbeing differently:

- Younger team members often want more frequent feedback
- Some prefer digital tools
- Others need more structured approaches

3. Regular Check-ins

- Implement frequent one-on-ones
- Especially important with younger team members
- Focus on energy and wellbeing, not just tasks

Real-World Impact

Chris shares impacts from organizations implementing these practices:

1. Reduced stress-related absence
2. Improved team communication
3. Better work-life boundaries
4. Enhanced innovation and creativity

The Research Journey

Chris's work is supported by significant research:

Initial Discovery

"We tested this with the National Health Service in the UK. And Unilever is our research partner. We've got people to use it for a week and it dropped anxiety by 37 percent."

Ongoing Development

- British government grant for AI version
- Singapore government adoption plans
- NHS Innovation approval
- Multiple corporate partnerships

Personal Application Framework

Based on Chris's guidance, here's a framework for individual implementation:

1. Start with Awareness

- Notice energy patterns
- Identify trigger points
- Track autopilot moments

2. Establish Foundations

- Morning protocol
- Weekly firebreak
- Regular movement

3. Build Support Systems

- Download Talk It Out app
- Set regular check-ins
- Create accountability

Exercise: Weekly Energy Audit Track your energy patterns across different dimensions:

Energy Type	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Triggers
Physical				
Mental				
Emotional				

Reflection Questions

1. How often do you find yourself on autopilot during the day?
2. What current practices help or hinder your energy management?
3. Where do you notice negativity bias affecting your decisions?
4. How could the Firebreak ritual fit into your weekly schedule?
5. What experiment could you try this week to enhance your wellbeing?

Conclusion: The Journey to Better Energy

The journey to enhanced wellbeing and sustained energy isn't about dramatic changes or complex systems. As Chris emphasizes throughout his work, it's about understanding our human design and working with it rather than against it.

Key Principles

- 1. Prevention First**
 - Focus on self-care before crisis
 - Regular processing prevents buildup
 - Simple practices create significant impact
- 2. Human Design**
 - Work with rather than against our nature
 - Understand subconscious influences
 - Respect natural rhythms and needs
- 3. Consistent Practice**
 - Small, regular actions
 - Experimentation to find what works
 - Build sustainable habits

Final Message from Chris

"Prevention is where we need to focus. Over 60% of us experienced burnout last year. If we can take some of the pressure off by looking after ourselves better, not only do companies do better, but we have better lives, better relationships, better futures, and everyone wins."



About Chris Barez-Brown

Chris Barez-Brown is a globally recognized expert in organizational energy and innovation. As the founder of Upping Your Elvis and creator of the Talk It Out methodology, he has transformed how companies approach wellbeing and performance.

Professional Impact

Chris has worked with some of the world's leading organizations:

- Nike
- Unilever
- Coca-Cola
- Diageo

His accidental discovery of the Talk It Out method has led to breakthrough research showing:

- 37% reduction in anxiety through regular use
- 94% improvement in wellbeing for at-risk individuals
- NHS Innovation approval
- Singapore government endorsement for nationwide implementation

Innovation History

- Designed Coca-Cola's global innovation process
- Trained thousands of facilitators worldwide
- Pioneered energy-based approach to organizational development
- Created multiple methodologies for sustainable performance

Research Collaborations

Chris's work is supported by partnerships with:

- UK National Health Service
- Unilever Research
- Roche Pharmaceuticals
- Multiple academic institutions

Current Focus

Chris currently dedicates his time to:

- Developing AI-enhanced wellbeing tools
- Speaking globally on energy management
- Writing about human-centered business practices
- Consulting with organizations on sustainable performance

Educational Influence

His methodologies are taught at:

- Leading business schools
- Corporate leadership programs
- Innovation workshops
- Wellness seminars

Published Works

- Upping Your Elvis: The Rise of a Better You
- Multiple articles in Harvard Business Review
- Research papers on organizational energy
- Upcoming book on AI and human wellbeing

Ways to Connect

For speaking engagements, consulting, or more information:

- Email: chris@uppingyourelvis.com
- Website: www.uppingyourelvis.com
- LinkedIn: [/in/chrisbarezbrown](https://www.linkedin.com/in/chrisbarezbrown)
- Talk It Out App: Available on iOS and Android

Resources and Next Steps

- Download the Talk It Out app
- Join weekly practice sessions
- Access implementation guides
- Connect with the community

Remember Chris's core message: "When your energy is right, life is easy and fun. And when you don't, it's quite the opposite." Start your journey towards better energy today.



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