Is your energy and passion running on empty? Have you lost touch with why you started your PhD in the first place?

Do you feel like you’re climbing a mountain and you can’t see the top?

Finishing a thesis can be similar to climbing a mountain. Initially you feel fresh, maybe even a little naive and years later after exploring many dead ends you begin to wonder why you ever thought that embarking on this climb was a good idea.

You’re tired of:

• trying to please supervisors who have contradictory views
• the thesis dominating every waking thought
• feeling that every minute needs to be devoted to the thesis.

Tips

• Set a deadline for submission in collaboration with your supervisor.
• Make a plan of how you will meet the submission deadlines by using your time management skills.
• Buy a diary and keep a record every day of what you have done so there is a sense of satisfaction in your accomplishments for the day.
• Start writing, anything! The first drafts will be inadequate but they are a start and better than blank paper.
• Keep a list of things that you need to do – don’t waste your brain power by trying to keep track of them in your head.
• Don’t follow tangents and break up your concentration - quickly put them on your list and come back to them later.
• Write the easier bits first - methods and results – and leave the harder bits for later. This will give you a feeling of accomplishment and build your confidence.
• Take breaks from tasks – make regular break times in your schedule and also remember to take larger breaks to refuel. Remember it’s not the quantity of the time spent working but the quality.
• Seek support from others in the same or similar position – sharing the load can help ease the burden.
• Don’t ignore all other aspects of your life – remember to still have fun, socialise, eat regularly, go for walks or exercise and get plenty of good sleep.
• Be prepared for the feedback and changes that will come when you submit your thesis regardless of how much time you spend on it and how perfect you think it is.