

THE 7-DAY CYCLE

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

*Please note that the information provided in this chapter is for educational purposes only. It is important to seek the advice of a **qualified healthcare professional** before making any lifestyle changes, particularly in the following areas:*

- *Stopping or reducing alcohol consumption.*
- *Using hypnosis for behavioural change.*
- *Making changes to your diet, nutrition, or supplementation.*
- *Adjusting any exercise and fitness practices.*
- *Addressing mental health concerns.*

A full disclaimer can be found at the beginning of this book.

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Aims

- Two consecutive alcohol-free weekends.
- Continue to improve physical state.
- Turn focus to mental state.

The next major breakthrough after your first day and week is two consecutive weekends. This is a significant milestone for several reasons. Firstly, you have broken through the 'live for the weekend' cycle. We often see the weekend as the time for 'fun' because we are generally free from other responsibilities. In reality, the weekend becomes the time we double down on damaging our mind and body. Breaking this pattern for one weekend is an achievement. Doing it twice marks **a new beginning**.

Secondly, it's a time period that has a significant, noticeable impact on health and well-being. When stuck in the 7-day cycle, at best, we have a break from drinking from Sunday to Friday. That's assuming we are disciplined enough to avoid alcohol during the week. We never go more than four or five days without alcohol in a best-case scenario. This just isn't enough time to even partially recover from the stress and strain we subject ourselves to. And this has probably been the case for years.

Breaking through two consecutive weekends means pushing towards and above ten days without alcohol. That's when vitality starts to return. When vitality returns, it does so quickly. Results become noticeable just because you are no

longer poisoning yourself, and positive decisions begin to feed back on themselves. This will put wind in your sails, so be sure to use it well. **Keep doing what you're doing.**

With clarity returning, you can now start to turn your attention to the next front slowly: your mental state. Just like you are taking ownership of what you're consuming for your physical state, you do the same again for your mental state. Or, in other words, feed it healthier 'mind foods.' Again, don't force anything if it feels arduous; at this stage, it's just about kindling mental curiosity.

READ

For many reasons, reading in sobriety is highly beneficial. Initially, you might find it hard to focus or muster the mental energy, but as clarity improves, reading can become a cornerstone of your progress. Of course, it isn't for everyone, but I recommend that you at least give it a try. If reading isn't for you, then you can opt for audiobooks and podcasts, as described in the following section. Both reading and listening can achieve the same ends.

When you stop drinking, you'll quickly realise how long a day actually is and how much you can accomplish in what would otherwise seem a short amount of time. Alcohol distorts your perception of time, making it easy to waste hours watching TV. Without alcohol, this changes. Sitting without your usual crutch to pass the time can make an evening feel endless. When time drags, it amplifies anxiety, boredom, and restlessness. And as the saying goes, an 'idle mind is the devil's workshop.'

These states increase the likelihood of engaging in destructive behaviour. Early on, you might seek cheap dopamine fixes, and that's fine, but it's not a long-term solution. You can either sit there, bear it, and let your mind wander to places you can't risk, or you can allocate that time to productive use.

Books are ideal for this purpose because you can read them anywhere, at any time, without needing anything or anyone else. They are relatively inexpensive compared to alcohol and can be free if you borrow them from a library. Initially, you can start with books that are entertaining, distracting, or amusing. Be sure that they don't include elements of negative self-programming, though. If possible, choose inspiring books; they're often light and easy to read. They'll also involve positive programming with traits like tenacity, hard work, perseverance, endurance, and cooperation.

Choosing a book is the first step. Visit a bookshop or library and choose something that catches your eye and perhaps represents the person you want to become. It doesn't matter if it remains unread for a few weeks; it's a placement of intent in your environment. It represents change, and its purpose is to move you in the right direction. Place it where you'll see it often. When you're ready, you'll pick it up. Until then, its presence will impress its intent on your subconscious every time you encounter it.

After reading, keep it somewhere highly visible. It will continue to influence you, even if it's just somewhere in the background. Your subconscious will notice it even if 'you' don't. And every time you do, it'll trigger recall of its positive content. It'll

also become a symbol of your first book in sobriety. This subsequently creates an emotional attachment coupled with positive content. That's powerful.

As clarity increasingly returns and you become used to this new pastime, you can start to expand the depth and scope of content in line with whichever area of your life you are focusing on: motivation, health, nutrition, fitness, and so on. Over time, you can progress onto more challenging material involving personal growth, self-fulfilment, philosophy, and so on. Every time you finish a book, again put it on a visible shelf. With each new book, the content cascades into both your conscious and subconscious, reinforcing new ways of being. All the while, this work affects you in several other ways, too. That's what makes it such a valuable activity.

Reading helps you to do the following:

- Accumulate knowledge that benefits your immediate and future circumstances.
- Shift perspectives to a more positive, constructive, and helpful worldview.
- Improve your focus, attention, and memory.
- Engage, stimulate, and activate your brain.
- Promote emotional well-being.
- Regulate your thoughts.
- Avoid rumination and negative thinking.
- Promote and restore cognitive health.
- Enhance your vocabulary and general language ability.
- Align with the ideals of your future self.

Progress quickly becomes tangible, and tangible results **generate momentum**. Eventually, you'll start to make connections between different ideas and accumulated knowledge. Connections then open up new possibilities and perspectives that you would otherwise never have encountered. Dopamine will draw you in. What starts out as distraction and relief from boredom morphs into a brand-new landscape of creativity and potential.

Finally, reading is also something you can do in pleasant environments: coffee shops, libraries, bookshops, parks, and so on. These environments are mainly free from alcohol and more likely to reinforce positive behaviours; the people there are usually reading, studying, or engaged in some other kind of productive or creative endeavour.

You may feel like you don't fit in these places. Don't. That's your programmed subconscious talking. It's just a perspective that's conditioned within you. If you do have this reaction, recognise it for what it is. Bring it into your conscious awareness and understand how self-sabotaging this is. It's trying to repel you from what is good.

LISTEN

Podcasts, audiobooks, and music are excellent alternatives that you can use to flood your subconscious with positive content. With podcasts and audiobooks, you can learn new things, develop new perspectives, and gain knowledge. Music especially has a very powerful impact on the subconscious; it's more emotional and cerebral, though, which makes for a different time and place. In either case, just make sure you

choose appropriate content.

In the case of podcasts and audiobooks, your stage of recovery can dictate the subject matter. Unlike books, you don't need the same level of focus for these types of media. You can listen while commuting, walking, or even falling asleep. The algorithms on most platforms will continue feeding you more of the content you like, and if you steer them in a positive direction, your outlook will follow. Just be careful not to get sucked down doom-and-gloom routes.

Podcasts can also provide a sense of community and connection; you'll quickly find topics that you really care about. Being part of a collective that shares your interests is far more fulfilling than associations centred around drinking and enabling activities. Best of all, podcasts are largely free, and you can take them anywhere.

Music, on the other hand, is a more powerful and immediate modulator of emotion. By its very nature, it taps into emotions, and behaviour follows emotion. If you listen to motivational music, you'll feel motivated. Feel motivated, and you'll take action. Feeling down? Play some uplifting music. Struggling to sleep? Try something peaceful. Can't get out of bed? Put on something high-energy.

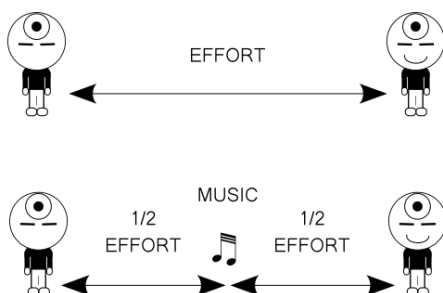
If you ever find yourself procrastinating, just put on some music. Don't focus on the task—just play the music. That's easy. The gap between avoiding a task and starting it can seem huge, but the gap between avoiding the task and putting on music is small. Likewise, the gap between listening to motivational music and

taking action is small. It's far easier to overcome two small hurdles than one large one.

EFFORT BRIDGES

PROCRASTINATION

TASK COMPLETION



I like to call this approach ‘using an effort bridge.’ The easy step in the middle gets you to the other side. In this case it’s music, but it can be anything you make it, though. Let’s say that you need to do lots of chores. Resistance to doing them all is probably high, but resistance to doing one is relatively lower. Do one, and you might do the next. Do the next, and you might do them all.

BLUE LIGHT

Note that I emphasise listening—**not** watching—in the previous section. Exposure to blue light from screens may already be interfering with your sleep cycle. This is because blue light is

the refined sugar of the light world. Stripped of what makes it whole, it can wreak havoc on the unaware. To understand it, we need to start with the basics.

As you may know, your sleep cycle is regulated by your circadian rhythm. This, in turn, is regulated by light. In the absence of technological intervention, the cycle wakes you up at sunrise and brings you down toward sleep with sunset. It does this through the release of melatonin. Melatonin promotes sleep and is secreted from the pineal gland as the amount of light begins to decrease.

With the introduction of artificial light, we can and do interfere with this natural process: the production of melatonin, the circadian rhythm, and the regularity of sleep. This alone isn't great for achieving good quality sleep, but there's more.

The visible light spectrum comprises various electromagnetic wavelength ranges for each colour. To cut a long story short, blue light is the most energetic of these visible light ranges. As such, it has the largest impact on your circadian rhythm due to its effect on melatonin production.

In an ideal world, it's balanced out by the other colours, but with most electronic devices, it's just a heavy dose of blue. Red and orange light has the least effect on melatonin production, so these are ideal—in decreasing levels—towards the time you want to sleep. If you're beaming blue light into your eyes from a few inches away, that's a recipe for disaster as far as sleep is concerned. It probably has consequences beyond sleep, too—if not directly, then indirectly as a knock-on effect of disrupted

sleep patterns.

This is why it's so important to be conscious of your blue light consumption. During the day, it's at least balanced out by the other wavelengths from natural light, but when it's otherwise dark, it's mainly blue.

You can employ various mitigating strategies such as blue light glasses and such, but a sure way to deal with it is to put the devices down and do so early. It's not just the devices, either; it's all the harsh lighting around you, too. It's a little beyond the scope of this book, but if you're having sleep problems, it's definitely an avenue to pursue and investigate.

STAGE ACTION PLAN

GENERAL

- Continue suggestions from previous stages.

READ

- Choose a book.
- Place it in your environment with intention.
- Over time, expand the scope and depth of reading content.
- Go to supportive environments to read.

LISTEN

- Flood your subconscious with positive audio content.
- Select appropriate podcasts, audiobooks, and music.
- Use audio platform algorithms to find more.
- Use music as a behavioural motivator.

BLUE LIGHT

- Minimise your exposure to blue light.
- Mitigate your exposure where it can't be avoided.

DOPAMINE WORK

- Seek and explore mental novelty and possibility.

SUBCONSCIOUS WORK

- Continue hypnotherapy.
- Engage in alternative activities.
- Expose yourself to positive programming repeatedly.

HIGHER BRAIN

- Consider how you can improve your 'mind food.'