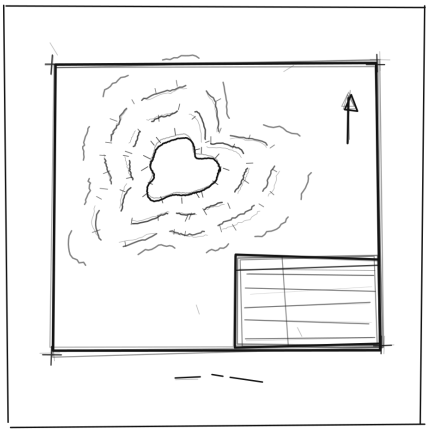


THE ADHD BURNOUT RECOVERY SYSTEM

THE PRINTABLE TOOLKIT

The Receipt — CH. 23
The ruled sheet, a worked fortnight, and the sort.

The Thermostat — CH. 24
Setting a ceiling and a floor, the week, and the season.

Fake Rest — CH. 25
The sort, with the three questions printed on it.

The Pilot Light — CH. 26
One page of things that cost almost nothing to be near.

Before the appointment — CH. 4, 7, 10, 11
What to walk in with, in the order to say it.

Print as many copies as you need, whenever you need one. There is no signup, no list, and nothing to buy at the end of this. Missing days are data, not failure. Blank weeks count.

PRINTS ON A4 AND US LETTER · CHOOSE ACTUAL SIZE OR 100%

If you are in crisis, this is not the page for it. US and Canada: call or text 988. UK and Ireland: Samaritans, 116 123.

INSTRUMENT ONE · THE RULED SHEET

The Receipt

FROM CHAPTER 23



At the end of the day, or the next morning if the end of the day is beyond you, write one line. The biggest thing you did. And what did not happen after it.

Measure what did not happen next, not how you felt. You do not have to feel anything to see it. A day you could not write a line was an expensive day.

DAY	THE BIGGEST THING I DID	WHAT DID NOT HAPPEN AFTER IT

INSTRUMENT ONE · A WORKED FORTNIGHT

The Receipt

FROM CHAPTER 23



An illustration, not a real person's fortnight. Every pattern in it is one the book describes.

DAY	THE BIGGEST THING I DID	WHAT DID NOT HAPPEN AFTER IT
Mon	*Team meeting, 10:00 to 11:30*	*Did not cook. Cereal at nine. Lost the evening.*
Tue	*Phone call to the bank. Nine minutes.*	*Nothing else happened that afternoon.*
Wed	*Four hours on the report*	*Fine, actually. Walked after.*
Thu		*Could not write a line. Expensive day.*
Fri	*Leaving drinks for a colleague, one hour*	*Saturday gone.*
Sat	*Recovering*	*Did not answer anybody.*
Sun	*Food shop*	*Sat in the car outside for twenty minutes.*
Mon	*Doctor's appointment*	*Did not go back to work. Slept.*
Tue	*Two short calls, cameras on*	*Could not start the email I have been avoiding.*
Wed	*Home, no meetings*	*Cooked. Called my sister.*
Thu	*The email I avoided for a month*	*Forty minutes. Cost almost nothing.*
Fri	*Family dinner*	*Friday night and most of Saturday.*
Sat	*Nothing planned*	*Scrolled. Came out worse. (See Fake Rest.)*
Sun	*Long walk. Chose it.*	*The evening was fine.*

WHAT THIS FORTNIGHT SHOWS

The expensive items were short and had other people in them. The nine-minute call, the one hour of drinks, the dinner. The four hours of work cost almost nothing. The email avoided for a month took forty minutes. Nobody could have told you any of that in advance, including you.

INSTRUMENT ONE · AFTER TWO WEEKS

The Receipt: the sort

FROM CHAPTER 23



Two weeks is enough, ideally with one bad stretch in it, because a fortnight of good days prices nothing accurately. Take the expensive items and put each one in a box.

KEEP

A job, a child, an appointment. You are not going to stop buying these. But now you know the price, stop stacking three of them on one day.

MAKE CHEAPER. THIS IS WHERE MOST OF THE GAIN IS.

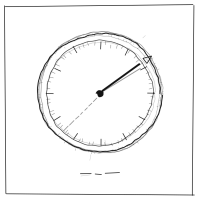
Same thing, different format. A message instead of a call. Delivered instead of in person. The obligation for one hour, with the exit arranged before you arrive.

STOP BUYING

Expensive, recurring, and for nothing. You kept these because you never saw the price.

The Thermostat

FROM CHAPTER 24



Decide two numbers in advance, on a day when you are thinking clearly. Then hold both, regardless of how any particular day feels. Set the thermostat. Stop reading the thermometer.

THE CEILING

How many expensive things in a week. Expensive means whatever your own Receipt says it means.

Find a recent week that did not end in a crash. Count its expensive items. That number, or slightly under, is your ceiling.

Set it after a crash, not during a good stretch. During a good stretch nothing looks expensive.

Set it lower than feels reasonable. The number that feels slightly insulting is usually right. Raise it in three months, from evidence.

My ceiling: expensive things a week. Set on: _____

THE FLOOR

How many genuinely restorative things you protect in that week, including the weeks you do not feel like it. Not a minimum of work. A minimum of the walk, the game, the thing you were absorbed in. Use the Fake Rest sort to know which of yours are real.

My floor: real rest things a week. _____

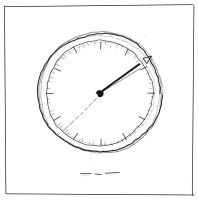
IF CHAPTER 7 WAS YOURS

If your crashes arrive a day or two after the effort, wildly out of proportion to it, with a recovery that drags on far too long, the rules are different for you. Take the ceiling. Leave the floor. Do not hold a minimum on a bad day, and do not do the thing anyway. The guidance for your situation is more specific than any book can give. It exists in current clinical guidance and it is worth asking for by name.

INSTRUMENT TWO · TWO WEEKS PER PAGE

The Thermostat: the week

FROM CHAPTER 24



Week of: _____ Ceiling: Floor: _____

DAY	EXPENSIVE THINGS TODAY	REAL REST TODAY
Mon		
Tue		
Wed		
Thu		
Fri		
Sat		
Sun		

Week total. Expensive: of a ceiling of Real rest: of a floor of _____

Week of: _____ Ceiling: Floor: _____

DAY	EXPENSIVE THINGS TODAY	REAL REST TODAY
Mon		
Tue		
Wed		
Thu		
Fri		
Sat		
Sun		

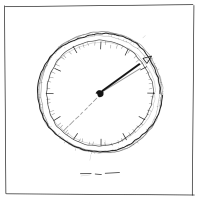
Week total. Expensive: of a ceiling of Real rest: of a floor of _____

Going over the ceiling is data, not failure. A week that ran four over tells you something specific about that week. Look at what made it four. Do not reset the number during a crash. That is a mood making a decision.

INSTRUMENT TWO · FOR THE LONG ONE

The Thermostat: the season

FROM CHAPTER 24



If Chapter 19 was yours, the interval is not the day or the week. It is the season. Not what you are doing before lunch. What you are doing this month. That sounds absurdly slow, and it is the correct speed for something that has been running for two years.

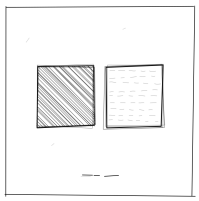
Monthly ceiling: _____ Monthly floor: _____

MONTH	EXPENSIVE THINGS	REAL REST	WHAT I NOTICED

INSTRUMENT THREE · THE SORT

Fake Rest

FROM CHAPTER 25



Write down what you actually did with your non-obligation time last week. Not what you meant to do. What happened. Then ask three things about each one, and put it in a pile.

WHAT I DID	CHOSE IT, OR LANDED IN IT?	HOW DID IT END?	20 MIN LATER: MORE OR LESS?	REAL / FAKE

THE TELL

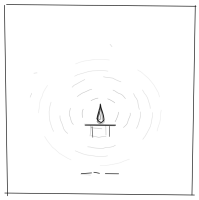
If it ended with you discovering what time it was, it was not rest.

The same activity can land in both piles. Two hours in a game you sat down to on purpose is real. The same game at ten past one because you could not face getting up is fake. Nothing here is banned, only reclassified. And if you genuinely need sleep and stillness, stillness is real rest for you, and the sort will say so.

INSTRUMENT FOUR · THE ONE PAGE

The Pilot Light

FROM CHAPTER 26



Do not do the thing. Be near it. Then stop there. Stopping there is not a failed attempt at the activity. Stopping there is the activity.

Pick something you do not much care about. The thing you most want back is the most expensive thing you own, and it is the last one you approach, not the first.

NEAR SOMETHING YOU USED TO DO

- ☐ Open a book on the arm of the chair. Do not read it.
- ☐ Take the instrument out of its case. Stand it in the room.
- ☐ Leave the sketchbook open on the table, on a blank page.
- ☐ Put the running shoes by the door.
- ☐ Leave the game on its menu screen.

NEAR THE OUTSIDE

- ☐ Put your shoes on. Stand outside the front door for a minute.
- ☐ Open the window and stand at it.
- ☐ Sit on the step.
- ☐ Walk to the end of the street and back.

NEAR SOMETHING BEING MADE

- ☐ Stand in the kitchen while the kettle boils.
- ☐ Sit in the room while someone else cooks.
- ☐ Sit in the room while someone else plays music.

NEAR SOMETHING SLIGHTLY EMBARRASSING

- ☐ Color something in.
- ☐ Sort a drawer of small things.
- ☐ Play the game you played at twelve.
- ☐ Build something out of whatever is on the table.

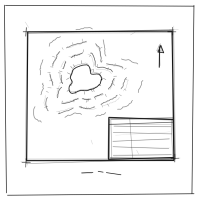
MINE

I'm on pilot light right now.

Say that to somebody. It is more accurate than fine, and easier than not okay.

WHAT TO WALK IN WITH

Before the appointment



A ten-minute appointment runs on whatever you say first, and tired is the single most common thing anybody says in one. Lead with the specifics. Write them here, because you will not remember them in the room, and that is not a personal failing.

THREE OBSERVATIONS CH. 4

Does enjoyment survive anywhere at all right now? When did something last land?

Has this eased, even briefly, on a genuinely obligation-free day?

Is it reliably worse in the morning?

THE LOOK BACK CH. 7

My last few worst stretches, and what happened in the 24 to 72 hours before each one:

THE REQUEST, SAID PLAINLY CH. 10

"I have been exhausted for months. I would like my thyroid, iron, B12 and folate checked."

SAY THESE FIRST, IF THEY APPLY CH. 6

Multi-day stretches of elevated or irritable mood, with a reduced need for sleep rather than an inability to sleep:

Mood episodes anywhere in my family:

IF I TAKE MEDICATION CH. 22

What improved and stayed improved:

What never moved:

What changed about my load since I started:

If it goes badly, that is a reason to go back or go elsewhere. It is not a verdict on whether this is real.

In crisis, not in need of an appointment? US and Canada: call or text 988. UK and Ireland: Samaritans, 116 123.