A 14 DAY RESET | THE FULL SYSTEM

THE SLEEP FIX PROTOCOL

Fourteen nights to fix the worst bottleneck in your training.

You already have the free Sleep Fix Checklist. This is the full system behind it: a self assessment that finds your exact problem, four tracks so the plan fits your nights, the science in plain English, and a day by day companion for all 14 days.

Built for busy professionals who train. Just the nights, run better, in the right order.

WHAT IS INSIDE

1. My story, and the honest problem

2. The assessment: what is breaking your sleep?

3. Four tracks, one built for your problem

4. Why this works: the science, three lines at a time

5. The 5 daily anchors and the wind down sequence

6. The bedroom build out

7. The 14 day plan plus a companion page for every day

8. The 3am protocol, the honest supplement page, red flags

9. The Morning After Rule, tracker, and weekly scorecard

One change at a time. That is the whole method.

BONUS 1: THE TRAVEL SLEEP PLAYBOOK (PDF)

The full travel system: east vs west, light and caffeine aimed at the new time zone, the hotel room checklist, red eye tactics. It travels with this protocol.

BONUS 2: GUIDED NSDR AUDIO (MP3)

A 10 minute non sleep deep rest session in a calm voice, for the afternoons that need a reset. The full script is also printed in this protocol, so it works without the audio.

By Coach Mike Urso, Peak Experience Coaching. Sixteen years of coaching busy professionals, in Boston and online.

START HERE

MY STORY, AND THE HONEST PROBLEM

I coach sleep for a living, and I still averaged **5 hours 56 minutes a night for 9 straight nights**. That is not a guess. That is what my tracker said, night after night, while I was telling clients to protect their sleep.

My days start at 5 in the morning. I coach clients all day, I train, I teach and train jiu jitsu. Sleep was the one thing I kept putting last, because everything else had a person attached to it. The night was the only part of the day nobody was asking me about.

The first night I actually ran my own rules, I slept **7 hours 8 minutes**. Same bed. Same alarm clock. The only thing that changed was the night before it.

THE HONEST PROBLEM

Most busy professionals treat sleep like whatever is left over after work, family, and training take their share. Then they wonder why the training stalls, why the afternoon needs caffeine to survive, and why one bad night turns into a bad week.

The advice was never the problem. Doing it was.

HOW THIS PROTOCOL WORKS

First, you take the short assessment on the next page. Six questions sort you into one of four tracks, because the person who cannot fall asleep and the person who wakes at 3am do not have the same problem, and they should not run the same emphasis.

Then you run the 14 days in three blocks, and each block adds one layer. Days 1 to 3, the daytime anchors only. Days 4 to 7, the wind down joins. Days 8 to 14, you lock the lights out time and add the plan for waking up at 3am. The day by day companion pages tell you exactly what each day asks, and your track notes tell you where your days differ.

One change at a time is not the slow way. It is the way that is still standing on day 14. Track every night on the tracker at the back. Two minutes in the morning. That is how you will know this is working, instead of hoping it is.

This protocol is general education about sleep habits for healthy adults. It is not medical advice and it does not diagnose or treat any condition. If you snore heavily, stop breathing at night, or cannot stay awake in the day, that is a conversation for a doctor, not a checklist. There is a full red flags page later in this protocol. Read it.

BEFORE DAY 1

WHAT IS BREAKING YOUR SLEEP?

Six questions. Answer for your typical week, not your worst night. Each answer is a letter. Count your letters at the end: your most common letter is your track. Tied? Pick the problem that bothers you most. That one is yours.

1. Lights out. What happens most nights?

- **A.** Still awake 30 minutes later, brain running the day back.
- **B.** I fall asleep fine. It is later that goes wrong.
- **C.** I fall asleep and stay asleep. I just wake up tired.
- **D.** Depends on the day. My schedule decides.

2. It is 3am. Where are you?

- **A.** Still trying to fall asleep the first time.
- **B.** Wide awake, doing mental math about the morning.
- **C.** Asleep, as far as I know.
- **D.** Possibly not in my own time zone.

3. The alarm goes off. How do you feel?

- **A.** Wired but tired. Yesterday never really ended.
- **B.** Robbed. The second half of the night was the problem.
- **C.** Like I slept in a parking lot. Eight hours, zero credit.
- **D.** Depends which city, and which shift.

4. Your caffeine pattern looks like:

- **A.** Last coffee mid afternoon or later, most days.
- **B.** The cutoff is fine. My nights still break in half.
- **C.** Normal. One or two, in the morning.
- **D.** Caffeine is how I steer the day, whenever the schedule demands it.

5. Your evenings look like:

- **A.** Work and screens run right up to bed.
- **B.** Evenings are fine. It is the middle of the night.
- **C.** Evenings are fine. Mornings are the problem.
- **D.** There is no such thing as my evening. It changes weekly.

6. Travel and schedule:

- **A.** Rare, and not my issue.
- **B.** Rare. My problem is at home, at 3am.
- **C.** Some travel, but home nights are also unrefreshing.
- **D.** Constant. Flights, late nights, shifting start times.

YOUR TRACK

Mostly A: Track A, Trouble Falling Asleep. **Mostly B:** Track B, The 3am Waker. **Mostly C:** Track C, Wakes Up Unrefreshed. **Mostly D:** Track D, Schedule Chaos.

Same 14 days for everyone. Your track sets the emphasis. Read your track page next.

TRACK A

TROUBLE FALLING ASLEEP

WHAT IS LIKELY GOING ON

Your problem is at the front of the night. Two things usually drive it. First, your sleep pressure is getting spent before bed: late caffeine, a long afternoon nap, or sleeping in on weekends all pay out the tiredness you needed at 10pm. Second, your brain treats the bed like a second office. If work, screens, and problem solving run right up to lights out, the bed becomes the place you think, not the place you sleep. Your body is tired. Your brain never got the memo.

WHAT MATTERS MOST FOR YOU

The caffeine cutoff and the morning light anchor matter most for you, because together they rebuild real sleep pressure by night. The wind down matters almost as much: phone down, work closed, the same order every night, so your brain starts shutting down an hour before the lights do. The 3am protocol is a backup skill for you, not the main event.

YOUR 14 DAY EMPHASIS

Blocks 1 and 2 are your whole game. Do not rush them. Days 1 to 3, the anchors rebuild your sleep pressure. Days 4 to 7, the wind down teaches your brain that the bed is for sleeping. If you are still lying awake past about 20 minutes on a block 3 night, use the same get up rule from the 3am page: up, low light, boring room, back when sleepy. It works at 11pm exactly like it works at 3am.

TRACK B

THE 3AM WAKER

WHAT IS LIKELY GOING ON

Your first half of the night is usually fine. It is the second half that breaks. The common drivers: alcohol earlier in the evening wearing off, a stress loop that starts the moment you surface, and the bed slowly becoming the place where you lie awake doing math about the morning. Every night you lie there arguing with yourself, the association gets stronger. The waking is normal. The lying there is the problem.

WHAT MATTERS MOST FOR YOU

The alcohol rule and the 3am protocol matter most for you. Alcohol fragments the second half of the night even when it helps the first half, and the science page shows the receipts. The 3am protocol is your core skill: get up when you are awake and arguing, keep it boring, go back when you are sleepy. It feels wrong the first two times. By the fifth time, most people are back asleep faster than they ever were lying there.

YOUR 14 DAY EMPHASIS

Blocks 1 and 2 set the table: anchors steady, wind down clean, no alcohol for the full 14 nights, no exceptions for good days. Block 3 is where your work is. Run the 3am protocol exactly as written, every time, without negotiating at 3am. Tired people make bad decisions, so the decision is already made. Also: no clock watching. Turn the clock around tonight, before day 1.

TRACK C

WAKES UP UNREFRESHED

WHAT IS LIKELY GOING ON

Your hours look fine on paper and you still wake up feeling like you lost. That points at quality, not quantity. The usual suspects: a warm or bright room chipping away at deep sleep, alcohol flattening the night, irregular times that keep your clock guessing, or a breathing problem at night that no habit change can fix. Read that last one again. If the red flags page sounds familiar, the most valuable page in this protocol for you is that one.

WHAT MATTERS MOST FOR YOU

The bedroom build out and the regularity anchors matter most for you: cool, dark, quiet, and the same wake time every day, weekends included. The alcohol rule matters too. Even two drinks measurably cut the restorative part of the night, and you are the track that feels that cut most. Track your readiness score honestly every morning. It is your best instrument.

YOUR 14 DAY EMPHASIS

Your emphasis is the environment and the clock. Do the bedroom build out on day 1, not day 9: temperature set, light killed, phone out. Hold the wake time like it is a session with a client. And run the red flags check on day 1 as well. If you snore loudly, if a partner has seen you pause or gasp, or if morning headaches are normal for you, book the doctor conversation in week 1. Habits and medicine are not enemies. Sometimes the habit work is what gets you to the appointment.

TRACK D

SCHEDULE CHAOS

WHAT IS LIKELY GOING ON

Your clock never gets to anchor, because your life keeps moving it. Travel, late nights, shifting start times, caffeine used as a steering wheel. Nothing is wrong with your sleep machinery. It just never gets two days in a row pointing the same direction, so every night is a negotiation. Your fix is not a perfect schedule. Your fix is a small set of anchors that survive any schedule.

WHAT MATTERS MOST FOR YOU

The anchors matter most for you, pointed at whatever today actually is: light within 30 minutes of waking, wherever you woke up; caffeine early in your day and cut off 8 hours before your planned bedtime, whenever that is; and protecting the first night anywhere new. Your lights out time will flex. Your wake anchor and your light do not. The Travel Sleep Playbook bonus was built for you. Read it before your next trip, not on the plane.

YOUR 14 DAY EMPHASIS

Your 14 days: pick a home base wake time for the days you are home, and hold it. On travel days, run the playbook and let the home routine go without guilt. The Morning After Rule does heavy lifting for you: score the night, scale the session, keep the day. Your goal by day 14 is not 14 perfect nights. It is proof that one trip or one late week no longer costs you the four days after it.

READ THIS ONCE

WHY THIS WORKS

Six findings run this whole protocol. Each one gets three lines: the finding, what it means for you, and what we do about it in the plan. The sources are printed on the last page.

1. CAFFEINE IS STILL IN YOUR NIGHT

The finding: In a controlled trial, 400 mg of caffeine taken a full 6 hours before bed cut measured sleep by more than an hour, and the sleepers barely noticed it happening.

What it means for you: Your afternoon coffee is in your night whether you feel it or not. Feeling fine is not the same as sleeping fine.

What we do: Noon cutoff during the protocol. Once sleep is stable, last caffeine about 8 hours before bed.

2. ALCOHOL TRADES THE NIGHT IN HALF

The finding: A 2025 review of 27 studies found alcohol helps you fall asleep faster, then suppresses REM sleep and fragments the second half of the night, even at around two drinks.

What it means for you: The nightcap buys the front of the night with the back of it. You wake up at 3am or wake up flat, and both are the same trade.

What we do: Alcohol is out for the 14 nights. Clean data for the experiment.

3. BEHAVIOR BEATS PILLS, FIRST

The finding: The American College of Physicians recommends CBT-I, a behavioral therapy for insomnia, as the first treatment for chronic insomnia, ahead of medication.

What it means for you: The strongest tool in sleep medicine is not a supplement or a prescription. It is a set of behaviors, run consistently. This protocol is built from those behavioral pieces.

What we do: Run the system first. Note: this protocol is education, not therapy. If insomnia runs your life for months, a clinician trained in CBT-I is the right next step.

4. MORNING LIGHT SETS TONIGHT

The finding: Light is the strongest signal that sets the body clock. Light in the morning shifts the clock earlier and anchors it, which is when you will feel tired that night.

What it means for you: Tonight's sleepiness was decided this morning. Indoor light is a weak version of the signal. Outside is the real one.

What we do: Outside light in your eyes within 30 minutes of waking, every day of the plan.

5. SAME TIMES BEAT MORE HOURS

The finding: In a study of about 61,000 adults with wrist trackers, how regular people's sleep timing was predicted their health outcomes more strongly than how many hours they slept.

What it means for you: A steady 6.5 hours at the same times can beat a scattered 8. The wake time is the anchor you control, because sleep pressure builds from the moment you get up.

What we do: Same wake time every day, weekends too. Let the lights out time follow it.

6. A COOL ROOM IS A SLEEP TOOL

The finding: Falling asleep requires your core temperature to drop roughly 1 to 2 degrees. Sleep researchers converge on a bedroom around 65 to 68 degrees Fahrenheit to support that drop.

What it means for you: A warm room fights the drop, and the fight shows up as light, broken sleep.

What we do: The room gets set at wind down: cool, dark, quiet. Full build out on its own page.

BLOCK 1 | RUNS ALL 14 DAYS

THE 5 DAILY ANCHORS

Your night is decided during your day. These five anchors run every day of the protocol, starting on day 1. Nothing at night changes until block 2.

1. **Light in your eyes within 30 minutes of waking.**
   Outside beats a window. Five minutes counts. On a cloudy morning, stay out a little longer. This sets the clock for the whole day, including what time you get tired tonight.

2. **Caffeine has a cutoff: none after 12pm.**
   While you are fixing sleep, this one is not negotiable. Let the first coffee wait 60 to 90 minutes after you wake up, so your body does its own waking up first. Once your sleep is stable, the standing rule is last caffeine about 8 hours before bed.

3. **Alcohol is not a sleep aid.**
   It knocks you out and fragments the night. Worst trade in recovery. For these 14 nights, skip it. You are running an experiment. Give it clean data.

4. **Finish the last hard session 2 to 3 hours before bed**
   when the day allows it. Train hard, just not wired at midnight. If a late session is the only option, keep it technical or easy, and protect the wind down even harder.

5. **Naps: 20 minutes or skip it.**
   A long afternoon nap steals the night that follows. If you need to lie down, keep it early in the afternoon and short. Ten to twenty minutes with your eyes closed, no phone, does the job. Never late in the day.

WHY ANCHORS FIRST

Most people try to fix sleep at 11pm, in bed, tired. That is the hardest possible place to fix it. The anchors move the work to the morning and the afternoon, when you still have willpower left.

Win the day, and the night gets much easier.

BLOCK 2 | JOINS ON DAY 4

THE WIND DOWN SEQUENCE

Five rules, run in the same order every night. Work backwards from your lights out time. The example below uses 10:00pm. Move the times, keep the gaps.

1. **Set a lights out time and keep it like a session.**
   Mine only worked when it stopped being a suggestion. Pick it by counting back 7.5 to 8 hours from your wake time. If you are up at 5:30, lights out is 10:00. It goes on the calendar like everything else that matters.

2. **Last real meal 2 to 3 hours before bed.**
   Done by 7:00 to 8:00 in the example. A small snack beats a feast if you are hungry. Going to bed stuffed and going to bed starving both cost you sleep.

3. **Phone down 30 minutes before bed.**
   9:30 in the example. Charge it across the room or outside the door. The scroll is the leak. Whatever is on that screen will still be there at 6 in the morning.

4. **Room cool, dark, and quiet.**
   Set the room when the phone goes down. Blackout the light. Your standards stay. If the room is warm, bright, or loud, fix the room before you blame yourself.

5. **Same wake time every day, weekends too.**
   The wake time sets the sleep time, not the other way around. Sleeping in on Sunday feels like a reward and bills you on Monday. Keep the wake time, and let the lights out time do the work.

THE POINT OF A SEQUENCE

A sequence means you never have to decide anything at night. Tired people make bad decisions. The order makes them for you: eat, phone down, room set, lights out.

Same steps, same order, every night.

SET IT UP ONCE

THE BEDROOM BUILD OUT

You cannot willpower your way past a bad room. Fix the room once, and it works for you every night without asking anything. Work through this checklist, ideally on day 1.

TEMPERATURE

- ☐ **Set the room to 65 to 68 degrees**
  about an hour before bed, so it is cool when you get in, not cooling down around you.
- ☐ **No thermostat control?**
  A fan pointed across the bed and one layer less of bedding gets most people most of the way there.
- ☐ **Warm hands and feet, cool room.**
  Warm feet help your core temperature drop. If your feet run cold, wear socks to bed. It sounds backwards. It works with the biology, not against it.

DARKNESS

- ☐ **Blackout the windows.**
  Curtains or shades that actually close. If you can see your hand in front of your face at night, it is not dark yet.
- ☐ **Kill the little lights.**
  Tape over charger and device LEDs. Turn the alarm clock face away. Small lights add up.
- ☐ **No blackout option?**
  A plain sleep mask does the same job for a few dollars. Keep one in the nightstand, and one in your travel bag.

SOUND AND THE PHONE

- ☐ **Steady sound beats silence**
  if your street or your house is noisy: a fan or white noise covers the spikes that pull you up.
- ☐ **The phone sleeps in another room.**
  Charge it in the kitchen. Buy a simple alarm clock. This one change removes the scroll, the 3am news check, and the work email in bed, all at once.

PARTNER SNORING, HANDLED HONESTLY

Earplugs or white noise on your side first. Separate blankets stop most of the wake ups that come from movement and cover stealing. And if the snoring is loud, nightly, and comes with pauses or gasping, that is not a comfort problem, it is the red flags page in this protocol. Saying that to a partner is not an insult. It might be the most useful thing anyone tells them this year.

THE STANDARD

Cool, dark, quiet, phone gone. Four fixes, done once, working every night.

THE PLAN

14 DAYS, THREE BLOCKS

DAYS 1 TO 3: ANCHORS ONLY

Run: the 5 daily anchors. Morning light, caffeine cutoff, no alcohol, last hard session finished early, naps short or skipped. Nothing at night changes yet.

Expect: not much, and that is fine. You are setting the clock. Most people notice the morning light and the caffeine cutoff first, usually as a flatter, calmer afternoon.

DAYS 4 TO 7: ADD THE WIND DOWN

Run: the anchors, plus the full wind down sequence. Pick your lights out time on day 4 and hold it all four nights.

Expect: falling asleep gets easier in this block for most people. One or two nights will still be bad. A bad night inside a good week is data, not failure. Score it in the morning, use the Morning After Rule, and keep going.

DAYS 8 TO 14: LOCK IT IN

Run: everything, with the lights out time fixed. Add the 3am protocol on any night you wake up. Fill in the tracker every morning.

Expect: by the end of this block, most people fall asleep faster and wake up closer to the alarm instead of hours before it. The goal is not a perfect score. The goal is a week that looks like your new normal.

THREE RULES FOR THE 14 DAYS

1. Do not start a block early because the first day went well.

2. Do not restart the count after a bad night. There is no day zero.

3. Missed a day? Pick up the next day, right where the plan is.

Consistency at a lower level beats a perfect start that quits.

The next seven pages are your day by day companion: one block per day, with today's focus, tonight's target, what normal feels like, and a note for your track on the days your track runs differently.

DAY BY DAY

DAY 1: LIGHT FIRST

Today's focus: Morning light. Outside within 30 minutes of waking, five minutes minimum, longer if it is cloudy. That is the whole assignment today, plus reading your track page.

Tonight's target: Nothing changes tonight. Sleep like you normally do, and notice what normally actually looks like. Write down your wake time. That is your anchor for the next 14 days.

What normal feels like: Nothing feels different yet, and that is correct. Day 1 is a baseline, not a breakthrough.

> **TRACK NOTE. C:** do the bedroom build out today, not day 9. **D:** anchor the light to whenever you woke up today, wherever you are.

DAY 2: THE CAFFEINE CUTOFF

Today's focus: Caffeine timing. First coffee waits 60 to 90 minutes after waking. Last caffeine before noon.

Tonight's target: Lights out at your usual time. The win tonight is that nothing with caffeine happened after 12pm.

What normal feels like: A flat or headachy 2pm is common today. That is the old schedule complaining. It passes in two or three days.

> **TRACK NOTE. A:** the afternoon dip is not a reason for a 3pm coffee. That coffee is your 11pm problem wearing a disguise.

DAY BY DAY

DAY 3: CLOSE OUT THE ANCHORS

Today's focus: The last two anchors: no alcohol tonight, and finish the last hard session 2 to 3 hours before bed if the day allows it.

Tonight's target: A normal night, run clean: no nightcap, training done early. Notice how the first half of the night feels without alcohol in it.

What normal feels like: Some people fall asleep a little faster tonight. Some notice nothing. Both are fine. Block 1 was about the clock, not the pillow.

> **TRACK NOTE. B:** tonight is your first clean read on the second half of the night. If you wake at 3am, stay drowsy, roll over, and do not start the math.

DAY 4: THE WIND DOWN JOINS

Today's focus: Pick your lights out time and write it down. Count back 7.5 to 8 hours from your wake time. Then run the full wind down sequence for the first time: meal done early, phone down 30 minutes before, room set, lights out on time.

Tonight's target: Lights out at your chosen time. On time counts more than perfect.

What normal feels like: The evening may feel strangely empty without the phone. That empty feeling is the space sleep was supposed to live in.

> **TRACK NOTE. D:** if you are on the road today, run the sequence in the hotel, same order. The routine is the familiar thing.

DAY BY DAY

DAY 5: ROOM AND MEAL

Today's focus: Two wind down details get your attention: last real meal 2 to 3 hours before bed, and the room set when the phone goes down: cool, dark, quiet.

Tonight's target: Lights out on time, in a room that was ready before you were.

What normal feels like: Falling asleep often gets a little easier in this stretch. Enjoy it without grading it.

> **TRACK NOTE. B:** turn the clock around tonight if you have not yet. If you wake, the rule is drowsy and boring, not checking how much night is left. **C:** tonight, notice whether the cooler room changes how the morning feels.

DAY 6: THE WEEKEND TEST

Today's focus: Same wake time, even if today is a day off. This is the day the whole plan either becomes a system or stays a weekday hobby.

Tonight's target: Lights out at the usual time, even though tomorrow might allow a lie in. Keep the pair matched: wake time and lights out move together or not at all.

What normal feels like: Mild resistance is normal. By tonight, real sleep pressure shows up and does your work for you.

> **TRACK NOTE. A:** sleeping in is the most common way this track spends tonight's sleepiness. Hold the wake time and collect at 10pm instead.

DAY BY DAY

DAY 7: FIRST SCORECARD

Today's focus: Review your tracker week. Fill in the first half of the weekly scorecard at the back: average hours, nights under target, cutoff streak, readiness trend.

Tonight's target: A normal block 2 night. Hold the lights out time. You are halfway, and the system is mostly built.

What normal feels like: One bad night in the week is expected. Score the pattern, not the worst night. Most people see the trend before they feel it.

> **TRACK NOTE. C:** compare this morning's readiness to day 1's. Same hours, better credit is a quality win. That is your track working.

MIDPOINT: READ THE WEEK BEFORE YOU JUDGE IT

What to look at: your average hours against day 1, your readiness trend across the seven mornings, and your caffeine cutoff streak. One number moving in the right direction is a working system. All three moving is a new normal forming.

What to ignore: your single worst night. Every honest tracker has one. It is data about a day, not a verdict on the plan.

The one adjustment allowed: none. Block 3 runs the system as written. Changing the plan at the halfway point is how plans die at the halfway point.

DAY BY DAY

DAY 8: THE 3AM PROTOCOL GOES LIVE

Today's focus: Everything stays, and one skill joins: the 3am protocol. Read the full page again today so the steps are loaded before you need them at 3am.

Tonight's target: Lights out locked. If you wake and you are arguing with yourself, the plan is already written: up, low light, boring room, back when sleepy.

What normal feels like: Knowing the plan exists changes the night even on nights you never use it. The bed stops being a courtroom.

> **TRACK NOTE. B:** this is your core skill, starting tonight. No negotiating at 3am. The decision was made today, by rested you.

DAY 9: BEDROOM AUDIT

Today's focus: Run the bedroom build out checklist top to bottom and fix the one thing you have been tolerating: the light leak, the warm room, the phone on the nightstand.

Tonight's target: Lights out on time in the fixed room.

What normal feels like: Small fixes feel bigger than they are, because they work every night after tonight without asking you for anything.

> **TRACK NOTE. D:** build the travel version today too: mask, earplugs, and tape for hotel LEDs live in your bag from now on.

DAY BY DAY

DAY 10: THE AFTERNOON RESET

Today's focus: If the afternoon needs a reset, use the tool that does not steal the night: 10 to 20 minutes of NSDR, eyes closed, before 3pm. The guided audio is one of your bonuses, and the full script is printed near the back of this protocol.

Tonight's target: Lights out locked. No nap after 3pm, no exceptions in block 3.

What normal feels like: A reset that works feels like a quieter, heavier version of awake, not like a nap you have to recover from.

> **TRACK NOTE. A:** NSDR is not a nap and does not spend sleep pressure. It is safe for your track on a wired day.

DAY 11: PROTECT THE FIRST HALF

Today's focus: Nothing new today. The focus is protection: cutoff kept, alcohol still out, wind down run in full, because the first half of the night is where deep sleep lives.

Tonight's target: Lights out locked. Full sequence, same order.

What normal feels like: By now the routine should feel less like a project and more like just what evenings are. That feeling is the goal of the whole 14 days.

> **TRACK NOTE. B:** if the second half still breaks most nights, do not add supplements. Re-read your track page and run two more block 3 nights exactly as written.

DAY BY DAY

DAY 12: MORNING AFTER FLUENCY

Today's focus: Score this morning honestly and scale the session by the Morning After Rule without negotiating with yourself. Green, yellow, or red, called in two minutes and honored.

Tonight's target: Lights out locked. If today was a red day, the early night is part of the training, not a reward for it.

What normal feels like: The rule gets faster with reps. Most people stop arguing with the score around now.

> **TRACK NOTE. C:** your readiness trend across 12 mornings is the clearest picture you have. Bring it to the scorecard on day 14.

DAY 13: REHEARSE THE HARD WEEK

Today's focus: Pick the next hard thing on your calendar, a trip, a late night, a shifted week, and write your plan for it from the travel page and the bonus playbook. Rehearsed beats improvised.

Tonight's target: Lights out locked, one more time. Tomorrow is the last scored night of the plan.

What normal feels like: Confidence is the normal feeling today. Not because every night was good, but because bad nights now have a procedure.

> **TRACK NOTE. D:** this is your day. Write the travel plan while you are home and rested. On the road you execute, you do not design.

DAY BY DAY

DAY 14: THE FINAL SCORECARD

Today's focus: Fill in the second weekly scorecard completely. Average hours, nights under target, cutoff streak, readiness trend, green yellow red mornings. Then pick exactly one fix for next week and write it down.

Tonight's target: Lights out at your locked time. After tonight, the anchors and the wind down are not a program anymore. They are just how your nights run.

What normal feels like: Sleep will not be perfect, and it does not need to be. It should be predictably, measurably better than day 1, and you should be able to prove it from your own tracker.

> **TRACK NOTE.** All tracks: keep your track emphasis as your standing rule. It was built for your problem, and your problem is the one that comes back first.

LOOKING AHEAD: AFTER DAY 14 (PREVIEW)

Today's focus: The after day 14 page at the back covers what to keep, what to rerun when a bad stretch returns, and when to get more help. Read it tomorrow morning with your finished scorecard next to it.

Tonight's target: Your normal night, run your normal way. Notice that it has a way now.

What normal feels like: Trying to be good consistently is better than trying to be great inconsistently. That line runs this whole protocol, and it is how the next month goes too.

THE 3AM PROTOCOL

You wake up at 3am and your brain starts the workday early. Everyone who works hard and trains hard knows this night. Here is exactly what to do with it.

1. **Do not start counting the hours left.**
   Four hours left, three hours left. That math has never put anyone back to sleep. It just turns a wake up into a worry.

2. **Give it a short window.**
   If you are drowsy and half asleep, stay where you are. Rolling over is fine. Most short wake ups end on their own.

3. **If you are awake and arguing with yourself, get up.**
   That is the signal. Lying there having the argument is what trains your brain to treat the bed like an office. Get up, keep the lights low, go to a different room if you can.

4. **Keep it boring.**
   No phone, no email, no news. Sit. Breathe. Read something dull if you read. You are not starting the day. You are waiting for sleep to come back.

5. **Back to bed when you feel sleepy.**
   Heavy eyes, not the clock, tell you when. Then lights out, same as the start of the night.

6. **The wake time does not move.**
   Get up at the normal time, get your light, and run the day on the Morning After Rule. One short night is a scaled training day, not a lost week.

THE NOTEBOOK MOVE

If the same thought keeps pulling you up, keep a notepad and a pen in the room you sit in when you get up. Write the thought down in one line, leave the paper there, and go back when you are sleepy. You are not solving it at 3am. You are proving to your brain that it is written down and safe to let go of.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Do not fix a bad night with a long afternoon nap. Twenty minutes early in the day, or skip it. And do not move tomorrow night's lights out earlier to pay the debt back. Keep the times. Let the system absorb the bad night. That is what it is for.

A 3am wake up is a skill problem, and skills get easier every time you run them.

READ BEFORE YOU BUY ANYTHING

THE STACK, HONESTLY

Supplements are the last 5 percent. The protocol is the other 95 percent. Every line below is graded on what the evidence actually shows, not on what a label promises. Most of these are decent at best, from small trials. That is the honest grade, and it is why none of them is a reason to skip the real work.

SUPPLEMENT	DOSE IN TRIALS	GRADE	WHAT THE EVIDENCE ACTUALLY SHOWS
Glycine	3g before bed	DECENT	Small trials found better subjective sleep quality and less next-day fatigue. Cheap, and low risk for most people. The most boring pick on this page, which is a compliment.
L-theanine	100 to 200mg	DECENT	An amino acid from tea. Small studies show it takes the edge off a racing mind. The relaxation evidence is stronger than the sleep evidence itself.
Magnesium glycinate	200 to 400mg	DECENT	Helps most when intake is low. Trials are small and mixed. Glycinate is the gentle form. Threonate is the other common form, marketed for the brain, with thinner sleep evidence.
Tart cherry	Juice or concentrate, evening	DECENT	A few small trials found modest gains in sleep time and quality, likely from a small amount of natural melatonin in the fruit. The effect is small. It is a food, not a drug.
Myo-inositol	900mg	WEAK	Used in practice for waking in the night, but human sleep trials are very thin. Honest grade: not proven. Do not let this one carry your plan.
Apigenin	50mg	WEAK	A chamomile compound. Most of the evidence is animal or indirect. Human sleep data is minimal. Chamomile tea is the honest version of this idea.
Melatonin, low dose	0.3 to 1mg	STRONG FOR JET LAG ONLY	It shifts the clock across time zones, which is why it lives in the travel playbook. For everyday insomnia it buys you about 7 minutes faster sleep onset on average across trials. That is not a nightly solution.

THE RULES FOR ANY TRIAL

One change at a time, two full weeks per trial. Score it on your tracker. If it does not move your numbers, drop it and keep the protocol.

Check with your doctor first, especially if you take medication, are pregnant, or have a medical condition. Supplements are real substances with real interactions.

No peptides. Nothing exotic. If a sleep supplement needs a sales page to sound good, it is not good enough.

READ THIS PAGE TWICE

RED FLAGS

A protocol is for habits. Some sleep problems are not habits, and no wind down fixes them. If anything below sounds like you, the most valuable thing in this protocol is this page. Read it, then book the appointment.

SLEEP APNEA: THE BIG ONE

Apnea is common in people who train hard and carry muscle, and it is the most missed sleep problem in the room. Look for it honestly.

- ☐ **Loud snoring most nights,**
  especially if it is loud enough to bother someone in another room.
- ☐ **A partner has seen you stop breathing, gasp, or choke at night.**
  This is the sign that matters most.
- ☐ **Morning headaches or a dry mouth on waking,**
  most mornings.
- ☐ **Waking up unrefreshed despite 8 hours in bed.**
  Track C, this one is aimed at you.
- ☐ **Falling asleep in meetings, at red lights, or on the couch before 9pm.**
  Daytime sleepiness is not a willpower problem.

RESTLESS LEGS

An urge to move your legs in the evening that eases when you move, a crawling or pulling feeling in the legs, or a partner who reports kicking through the night. If that sounds familiar, it is a conversation for a doctor too.

ALSO GET CHECKED IF

Sleep problems run most nights for 3 months or more even though you ran the system. Or your mood is on the floor for weeks. Or sleepiness makes driving risky. Any one of those is enough.

WHAT TO DO

Book a doctor visit and ask about a sleep study: a home test or a night in a lab. Bring your tracker and your scorecard. You will walk in with two weeks of data instead of a vague complaint, and that is exactly what a good clinician wants to see.

There is no shame in a sleep study. There is only a fix you were not going to find from a wind down.

EVERY MORNING

THE MORNING AFTER RULE

This is the rule that connects your nights to your training, and it is the reason this protocol survives real life. Sleep will not be perfect. Training does not need it to be.

SCORE THE NIGHT IN 2 MINUTES

Three numbers, every morning, written on your tracker: **hours slept**, **morning readiness, 1 to 5**, and **soreness anywhere**. Then the day adjusts. You are not guessing how you feel. You scored it.

GREEN: TRAIN AS PLANNED

You slept near your target and readiness is a 4 or 5. Full session as planned. These are the days to do the hard work.

YELLOW: SAME SESSION, TRIMMED

A short night, or readiness is a 3. Same session, load and finisher trimmed. You still train. You just do not pretend the night was better than it was.

RED: CHANGE THE SHAPE

A very short night, readiness is a 1 or 2, or you are sore everywhere. Technique, mobility, easy conditioning, and an early night. The day is training. It is just the right training for that morning.

THE RULE, IN ONE LINE

The plan changes shape. The day is not cancelled. That is the whole system.

This is how I coach it with my clients. Nobody's life gives them 14 perfect nights in a row. The people who keep progressing are not the ones who sleep perfectly. They are the ones whose plan knows what to do the morning after.

ON THE ROAD

TRAVEL RULES

Travel does not have to cost you three nights. The protocol travels. Same anchors, same wind down, pointed at the new time zone. The full system, with east and west rules, melatonin timing, the hotel checklist, and red eye tactics, is your bonus PDF: The Travel Sleep Playbook.

1. **Aim light and caffeine at the new time zone from day one.**
   Morning light where you are, not where you live. Caffeine early in the new day, and the cutoff still holds: none in the last 8 hours before the new bedtime.

2. **Protect the first night.**
   The first night sets the trip. Get in, eat a normal meal 2 to 3 hours before bed, phone down, room cool and dark. Do not spend the first night catching up on your phone in a bright hotel room.

3. **Run the same wind down in the hotel.**
   Same steps, same order, different room. The routine is the familiar thing, even when the bed is not yours.

4. **Wake at the new zone's time and get outside.**
   Light within the hour of waking, every morning of the trip. Your clock moves at the speed of your mornings.

5. **Late flight or red eye: nap short, early, or not at all.**
   Twenty minutes early in the afternoon if you need it. A two hour arrival nap eats the first night, and the first night is the one you needed.

6. **One bad travel night is a yellow morning.**
   Scale the session, keep the day moving, and run the next night by the book. Trips are where the Morning After Rule earns its keep.

THE TRAVEL STANDARD

You will not sleep on the road like you sleep at home. That is not the standard. The standard is that one trip no longer costs you the whole week after it.

Same system. New zip code.

GUIDED NSDR, PART 1

Find a place to lie down. On your back if you can, arms resting open at your sides, legs uncrossed. Cover yourself if the room is cool. Let your eyes close. For the next ten minutes there is nowhere to go, nothing to fix, and nothing you need to hold in your head. This is non sleep deep rest. You are not trying to fall asleep. If sleep comes, let it. If it does not, the rest still counts.

Start with your breath. Breathe in slowly through your nose. And let the breath out even slower, like a quiet sigh. Again. Breathe in. And let it go, a little slower than feels natural. One more time. Breathe in. And out, long and easy. You do not need to force anything. The out breath is the signal. Every slow exhale tells your body that it is safe to stand down.

Now let the breath find its own rhythm. Do not control it. Just notice it. Air moving in. Air moving out. If your mind starts making lists, that is normal. Notice the thought, and come back to the breath. You will do that many times in the next few minutes. Every return is the practice. There is no failing at this.

Bring your attention to your feet. Notice the soles of your feet, your toes, the tops of your feet. Whatever you find there, warmth, coolness, tingling, heaviness, or nothing much at all, is fine. Let your feet be heavy. Let them sink a fraction deeper into the surface under you. Breathe in, and as you breathe out, let the feet soften.

Move your attention up to your lower legs. Your calves and shins hold more tension than you would guess. You do not have to fix it. Just notice it, breathe out, and let them grow heavier. Now your knees. Now your thighs, front and back. These muscles work for you all day. For these few minutes, they are off duty. Let them be dead weight. Heavy and warm.

Let your attention rest on your hips and your lower back. If you notice you are holding your stomach tight, let it go on the next out breath. Your belly can rise and fall on its own. Nothing here needs bracing. Breathe in slowly. And out, slower. With every exhale, you sink a little deeper.

Now your hands. Notice your palms, your fingers, the backs of your hands. Let your fingers uncurl on their own. Let your hands be heavy, like they are filled with sand. Move up through your forearms, your elbows, your upper arms. Let your shoulders drop away from your ears. Shoulders carry the day for most people. Set the day down here. Breathe out, and let them fall.

Bring your attention to your chest and your upper back. Notice the rise and the fall without changing it. Your breath is doing its job without your help. Notice your neck. Notice the small muscles at the base of your skull. Let your head be fully supported. It weighs more than you think, and right now something else is holding it.

Now your face. Let your jaw unclench. Teeth slightly apart, tongue resting soft. Smooth the space between your eyebrows. Let the small muscles around your eyes let go. Your forehead, your scalp, the very top of your head. Breathe in. And let the whole face soften on the way out.

GUIDED NSDR, PART 2

Now take in the whole body at once. Feet to scalp, one heavy, quiet system. Scan slowly from the bottom up, and anywhere you find a spot still holding on, breathe out and let it soften. There is no score for this. Some days the body settles in two minutes. Some days it argues for nine. Both days count the same.

For the next little while, count your breaths. Count the exhale as one. The next exhale, two. Up to ten, then start again at one. If you lose count, and you will, start again at one without any commentary. The counting is just something gentle for your mind to hold, so it stops holding everything else.

If a thought about work, or training, or something you said today pulls you away, picture it arriving and passing like a car on a road in front of the house. You do not have to get in. Watch it pass. Come back to the breath. Come back to the count. Heavy body, slow breath, quiet road.

Now do one more slow pass through the body, this time on the back side. Start with the back of your head where it meets the pillow. Let the surface hold all of it. Down through your neck and across your shoulder blades. The muscles between your shoulders work hard all day, holding you up at desks and under bars. Let them spread and soften against the floor. Breathe out, and feel the whole upper back get wider and warmer.

Move down to the middle of your back, then your lower back. If there is an ache there, do not fight it. Breathe toward it, and let the muscles around it stop guarding. Down through the backs of your thighs, your calves, your heels. The back of the body rarely gets your attention. Give it this minute. Everything heavy. Everything warm. Everything allowed to stop.

Rest now in the whole picture. A heavy body. A slow breath. A mind with one small job, counting exhales to ten, and starting again. If you drift toward sleep, that is fine. If you stay in the quiet in between, that is the practice itself. There is science behind this state and there is also just this: ten minutes where nothing is asked of you, in a life where everything asks.

Keep counting if counting helps. Or drop the count and simply listen to the breath arrive and leave, the way you would listen to rain without needing it to stop. In. And out. In. And out. The body knows how to do this part. Your only job is to not interrupt it.

You have been resting for a while now. There is nothing left to do in this session except let the last minute or two be completely unproductive. No fixing. No planning. Just the surface under you, the breath moving, and a body that is finally off the clock.

In a moment, we will come back. Start by making your breath a little deeper. Wiggle your fingers and your toes. Let some small movement come back into your hands and feet. When you are ready, roll to one side and sit up slowly. Open your eyes last.

Notice how you feel before you reach for your phone. That quieter, heavier feeling is the point of the practice. You can get here in ten minutes, in the middle of the day, without sleeping and without caffeine. Use it on the afternoons that need it, always before three, and let your nights stay for sleeping. The session is over. Carry the slow breath with you.

TRACK IT

YOUR 14 NIGHTS

Two minutes in the morning, every morning. No tracker means no proof. Fill in the row before you pick up your phone.

NIGHT	BEDTIME	WAKE TIME	HOURS SLEPT	READINESS 1 TO 5	CAFFEINE CUTOFF KEPT?
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					

HOW TO READ IT

Look for the trend, not the single night. Hours creeping up and readiness drifting from 2s to 3s is the plan working. A bad night inside a good week is data, not failure. If a column is blank for three mornings in a row, the tracker is the first thing to fix, not the sleep.

THE WEEKLY CHECK

YOUR SLEEP SCORECARD

Fill one in at the end of each week. The tracker is the daily record. The scorecard is the verdict, and it is where the next week gets its one fix. Never pick more than one fix. The fix is one thing, on purpose.

WEEK 1 SCORECARD

MEASURE	YOUR NUMBER
Average hours slept	
Nights under your target	
Caffeine cutoff streak (longest run)	
Average readiness, 1 to 5	
Green / Yellow / Red mornings	
Fastest time to fall asleep this week	

One fix for next week: _____

WEEK 2 SCORECARD

MEASURE	YOUR NUMBER
Average hours slept	
Nights under your target	
Caffeine cutoff streak (longest run)	
Average readiness, 1 to 5	
Green / Yellow / Red mornings	
Fastest time to fall asleep this week	

One fix for next week: _____

HOW TO PICK THE FIX

Look at the column that is worst, not the column you feel worst about. Cutoff streak broken most nights? That is the fix. Readiness stuck at 2 and 3? The bedroom and the regularity anchors are the fix. One lever, one week, then score it again.

One fix per week. That is how this keeps working after the 14 days.

WHAT NOW

AFTER DAY 14

Keep the anchors and the wind down. They are not a 14 day thing anymore. They are just how you run your nights now. Keep the tracker going for two more weeks if the numbers help you stay honest.

When a bad stretch comes back, and it will, do not start over. Rerun block 2 for four nights: anchors plus the full wind down, lights out locked. You already know the system. That is the difference between a protocol and a tip.

If the red flags page rang a bell, or if sleep has been broken for months even though you ran the system, that is a doctor conversation, not a protocol failure. Bring the tracker. Bring the scorecard.

Want this built around your actual life?

This protocol is the starting point. My 1:1 coaching builds the whole system around your calendar: training, food structure, sleep, and the headspace to hold it together. In Boston and online.

Book a free 20-minute strategy call: **https://cal.com/coachmikeurso/strategy-call**

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