

THE DOPAMENU: A NEURO-CHEMICAL MENU

CONCEPT: When you are low on dopamine (the "Depression/Boredom" crash), your brain forgets what brings you joy. It enters "doom scrolling" mode because that is cheap, low-quality dopamine.

OBJECTIVE: To create a physical menu of high-quality stimulation options that you can order from without thinking.

INSTRUCTIONS: Print this out or write it on a whiteboard. When you feel the "Crash" coming, look at the menu. **Do not think. Just order.**

THE MENU TEMPLATE

APPETIZERS (Quick Hits | 5-10 Minutes)

Low effort. Immediate sensory shift. Use these to break "Paralysis."

- [] **The Sonic Shot:** Listen to *one* song from the "Breach" playlist (High Voltage) at max volume.
- [] **The Cold Shock:** Splash freezing water on your face (resets the vagus nerve).
- [] **The Stim:** 2 minutes of intense pacing, hand flapping, or spinning (regulate the body).
- [] **The Sour Reboot:** Eat a lemon slice or a Warhead candy (intense sensory input forces presence).
- [] **The Micro-Clean:** Throw away 3 pieces of trash from your immediate vicinity.

MAIN COURSES (Deep Engagement | 1+ Hours)

High effort. Flow state induction. Use these when you have a block of time but feel "bored."

- [] **The Hunt:** Deep-dive research into a new obsession (The "5 Projects").
- [] **The Build:** Lego, coding, or physical crafting (Hand-Eye coordination).

- [] **The Sweat:** Heavy lifting or high-intensity cardio (The only way to naturally manufacture dopamine).
- [] **The Trance:** Put on the "15-Song Loop" and work on the Passion Project (not the obligation).
- [] **The Game:** Video games that require high skill/focus (not idle clickers).

SIDES (Comfort & Regulation | Low Energy)

Soothing. Safety. Use these when you are over-stimulated or burning out.

- [] **The Cocoon:** Weighted blanket + Noise Canceling Headphones + Darkness.
- [] **The Loop:** Watching the same comfort show/movie you have seen 100 times.
- [] **The Ritual:** Making coffee or tea with extreme precision and slowness.
- [] **The Shower:** Hot water sitting down in the dark (Sensory deprivation).
- [] **The Download:** Journaling or "Oracle Scripting" to get the noise out of your head.

DESSERTS (The Occasional Treat)

High reward. Use sparingly or it loses potency.

- [] Buying a specific tool/item for a new hobby.
- [] A "Rot Day" (Planned day of doing absolutely nothing with zero guilt).
- [] Ordering specific texture-safe comfort food.

RULES OF THE KITCHEN (How to use this)

1. **NO SUBSTITUTIONS:** If you choose an Appetizer, do it. Do not debate the menu. The debate uses energy you don't have.
2. **PREP WORK:** You cannot order the "Lego Build" if the Legos are in the attic. The "Mains" must be accessible within 30 seconds.
3. **DIET RESTRICTIONS (The "Do Not Eat" List):**
 - *Social Media Scrolling (The Junk Food):* It feels like dopamine, but it is actually draining your battery.
 - *Guilt Spiraling:* Rumination is not a hobby.

VISUALIZATION

Imagine your brain is a restaurant.

- **The "Depression"** is just the kitchen running out of ingredients.
- **The Dopamenu** is the supplier truck arriving with fresh supplies.

Next Step:

Now that you have the Strategy (The Logic), the Tools (The Scorecard/Playlist), and the Fuel (The Dopamenu), would you like to synthesize this entire conversation into a "One-Page Executive Summary" (The Master Plan) that you can pin to your wall as the final artifact of this research session?