

✓ Week 01 - Build the Menu

✓ Week 02 - Read Your Hunger

Week 03 - Sequence the Meal

Week 04 - Become the Chef

SERIES 02 · DOPAMINE MENU ARCHITECT

WEEK 03

SEQUENCE THE MEAL

Or: The order you eat things matters almost as much as what you eat.



WEEK 01 - BUILD THE MENU

You have a personal menu. Appetizers, Entrées, Sides - with items you chose. That menu is the foundation of everything this week.



WEEK 02 - READ YOUR HUNGER

You learned to identify the flavor of under-stimulation before ordering - restless, foggy, or crowded. Your log now has four pieces of data per

entry. Those patterns are about to pay off.

You know what's on the menu. You know how to read your hunger. Now comes the part that turns a collection of useful items into a genuine regulation system: **intentional sequencing.**

A great meal isn't just good ingredients — it's ingredients in the right order. Dessert before dinner isn't a treat, it's a blood sugar spike followed by a crash. Your nervous system works the same way. **This week you stop ordering à la carte and start building complete meals — sequences designed for how your brain actually recovers from under-stimulation.**

THE SEQUENCING PRINCIPLE

Appetizers first — always. Movement is the universal primer. It shifts neurochemistry, clears physical tension, and prepares the brain to receive the next course. Even when you're foggy and the last thing you want is to move — a five-minute gentle Appetizer before an Entrée will make the Entrée work twice as well.

Sides are bridges and bookends — not meals. Use them to transition between Appetizer and Entrée when you need

time to land, or after an Entrée when your brain deserves a lighter finish. A Side alone is satisfying. A Side in sequence is strategic.

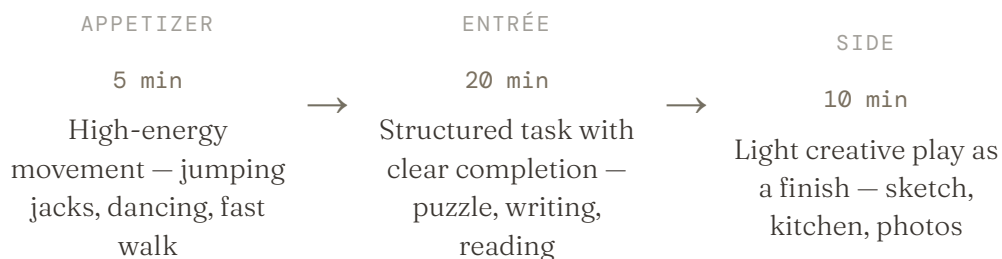
SEQUENCE

THREE PROVEN SEQUENCES – ONE FOR EACH FLAVOR



RESTLESS BOREDOM

The Discharge Sequence



The body burns off physical energy first, then the mind can settle into deep work. The Side at the end is a reward, not an escape.



FOGGY FLATNESS

The Warm-Up Sequence



Fog needs a slower ramp. The Side here is a bridge – it warms the creative brain before asking it to do real work. Skip straight to the Entrée and you'll stall.



ANXIOUS OVERCROWDING

The Quieting Sequence

APPETIZER

5 min

Slow, deliberate movement – stretch, yoga poses, breathing walk



SIDE

10 min

Absorbing, low-decision Side – sketching, instrument play, photography



SIDE

10 min

A second Side if needed – or rest without guilt if the system has quieted

When overcrowded, the brain doesn't need more input – it needs the existing noise turned down. Two Sides and a slow Appetizer is a complete, valid meal for this flavor.

YOUR STEPS THIS WEEK

1

THE READ

Notice the flavor. You've been practicing this for a week.

Pause. Ask the question. Restless, foggy, or crowded? You know how to do this now – it's no longer a new skill, it's an existing one. *Trust the read. A rough answer is enough.*

👉 Feet flat. One breath. Name the flavor out loud.

🕒 10 seconds

2

THE PLAN

Choose your sequence before you start

the first course.

Restless? You're running the Discharge Sequence. Foggy? The Warm-Up. Crowded? The Quieting. Say the full sequence out loud: "*Appetizer, then Entrée, then Side.*" This is not a suggestion you might follow. **This is the meal you ordered. See it through.** The ADHD brain has a strong pull toward abandoning mid-sequence — naming it in advance reduces that pull.

👉 Say the three courses in order. Then start the first one.

 20 seconds

3

THE TRANSITION

Between courses: take thirty seconds, don't pick up your phone.

The gap between courses is where the sequence breaks down. The Appetizer ends, you reach for the phone "just for a second," and twenty minutes later you're in a doomscroll. **The thirty-second transition is protected time.** Stand up. Drink water. Look out a window. Then start the next course.

👉 Phone stays down. Both hands free. Water if it's nearby. Breathe once. Then move.

 30 seconds

4

THE UPGRADED LOG

Log the full sequence this week — not

just the individual item.

Your log entry now captures the whole meal: flavor, sequence name, how each course felt (1–5), and one word for how you feel at the end of the sequence. *That final word is new.* It answers the question your brain actually cares about: did the whole meal work, or just one course?

🍷 Notes app. Flavor · sequence · three ratings · one final word. Two minutes, done.

🕒 2 minutes

5

THE PERMISSION

If a sequence isn't working mid-way — you can adapt. Once.

You started the Discharge Sequence and realized halfway through the Entrée that you're actually foggy, not restless. You're allowed to pivot — switch to the Warm-Up Sequence from where you are. **One adaptation per session.** This is not permission to abandon sequences at the first sign of discomfort. It's permission to read your body accurately when the first read was genuinely wrong.

🍷 Name the new sequence out loud. Complete it from the nearest course. Log the pivot.

🕒 as needed

Sequencing is the difference between eating randomly from the fridge and sitting down to an actual meal. Both involve food. Only one leaves you feeling genuinely fed. Your nervous system has been foraging for stimulation for years — random grabs, whatever was fastest, whatever was loudest. This week you sit down at the table. That's a meaningful shift.

— Brian Jaeger, MA, CRC, LMHC



This week's reflection (bring to session)

Which sequence did you run most — and did it match the flavor, or did you discover it was actually a different one mid-way? Also: what did the final word in your log say most often? That word is the headline of how this week went.



The week's target, simply stated

Use a named sequence every time you reach for the menu. Log the full meal. Protect the 30-second transitions. One adaptation allowed per session.

This week you eat meals, not snacks.

Brian Jaeger, MA, CRC, LMHC · brianjaeger.com

Private client resource – please do not share