



**Transformative
Insights**

Firstbeat Wellness Programme

Webinar 5 – Balance

Agenda

- Check-in
- The Five Stress Essentials
- Stress versus Recovery
- Recovery capacity
- Break-out: Getting off to a good start
- Q&A



KEY REMINDERS

- About halfway through the programme
 - Continue with Firstbeat measurements
 - Early Nov = final repeat Firstbeat measurement
 - Take advantage of individual follow-up coaching session
-





RECOVER

Recovery is a fundamental part of a healthy stress response.

"Prioritise frequent, sufficient and good quality recovery"



REFRAME

It is how we perceive the stress that determines its effect on health.

"This is a helpful response, energising me so I can perform well"



REFOCUS

Anticipating or reliving an event has the same effect as the stress itself.

"Practice mindfulness to remain present to the current moment"



RELEASE

Managing stress is an oxymoron! Effort sustains the stress response.

*"Key is to **allow** space and give yourself **permission** to relax, sleep & recover"*



RELATE

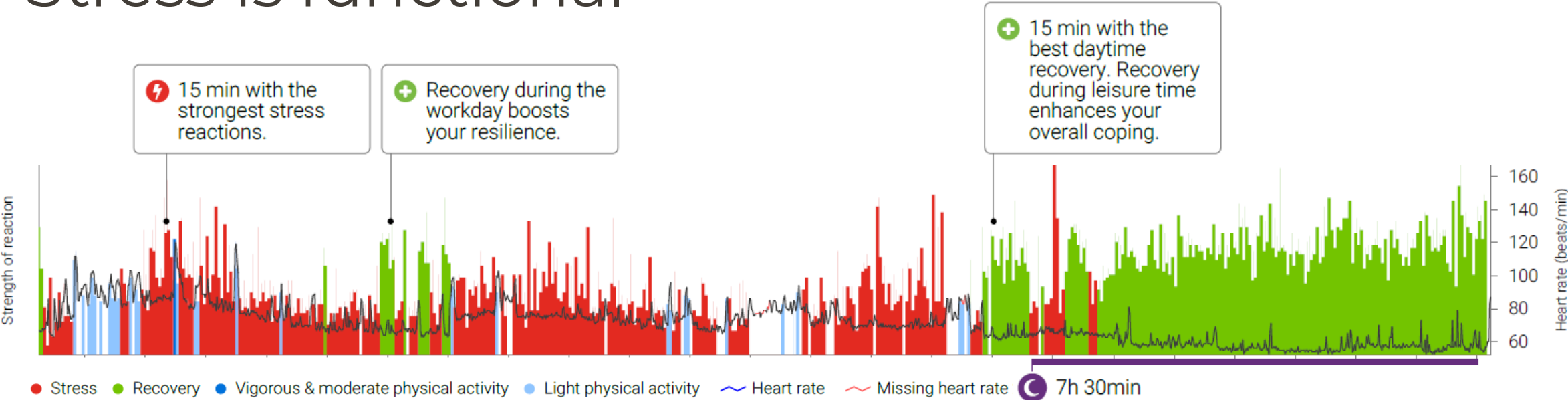
The stress response has an inbuilt protection mechanism.

"Connecting with and caring for others boosts our resilience"

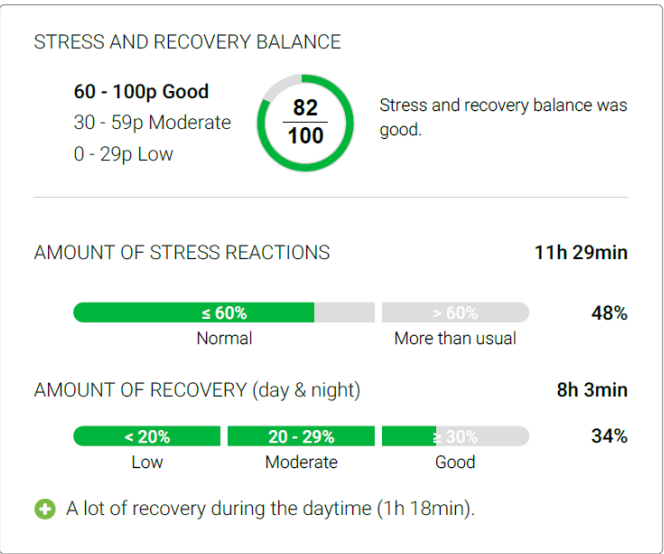
The five stress essentials

The traditional and popularised view is *"stress is bad for our health"*. This is simultaneously **correct** and **useful** as well as **incomplete** and **unhelpful**.

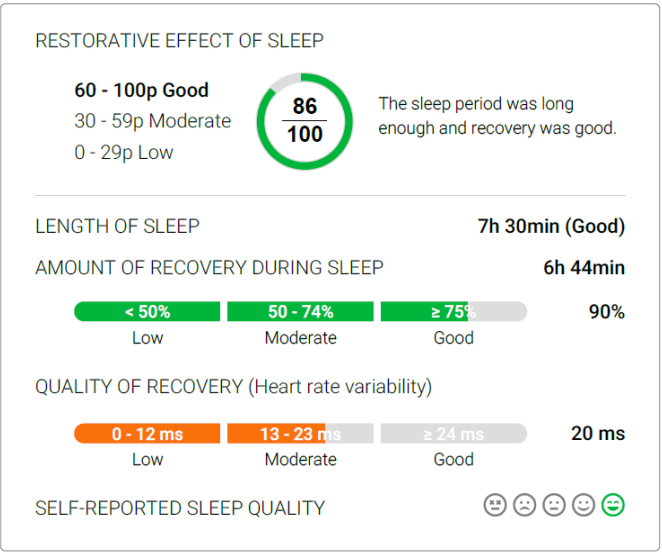
Stress is functional



⚡ + STRESS AND RECOVERY

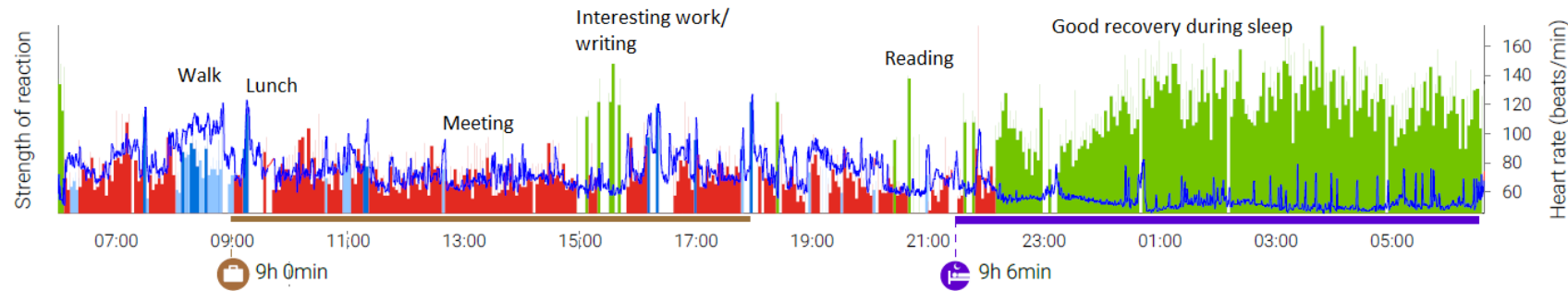


🌙 SLEEP

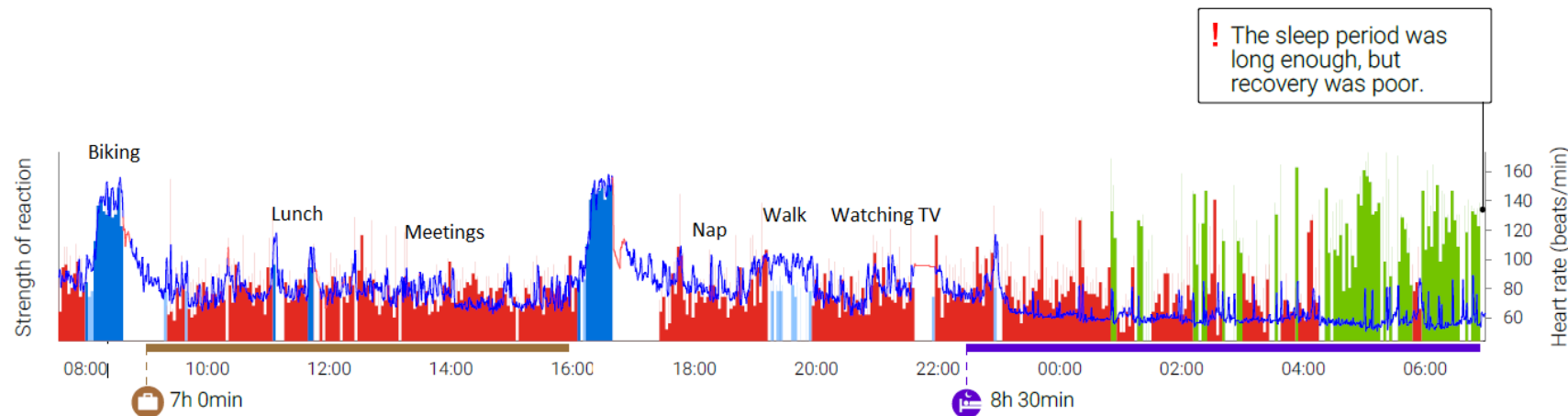


POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE STRESS?

Positive stress is functional and beneficial. It activates the body and improves efficiency, and generally does not inhibit day-time recovery or disturb recovery during sleep. We feel challenged in a positive way, it motivates us to meet the challenge and we are self-assured and feel capable. **“I have what it takes!”**

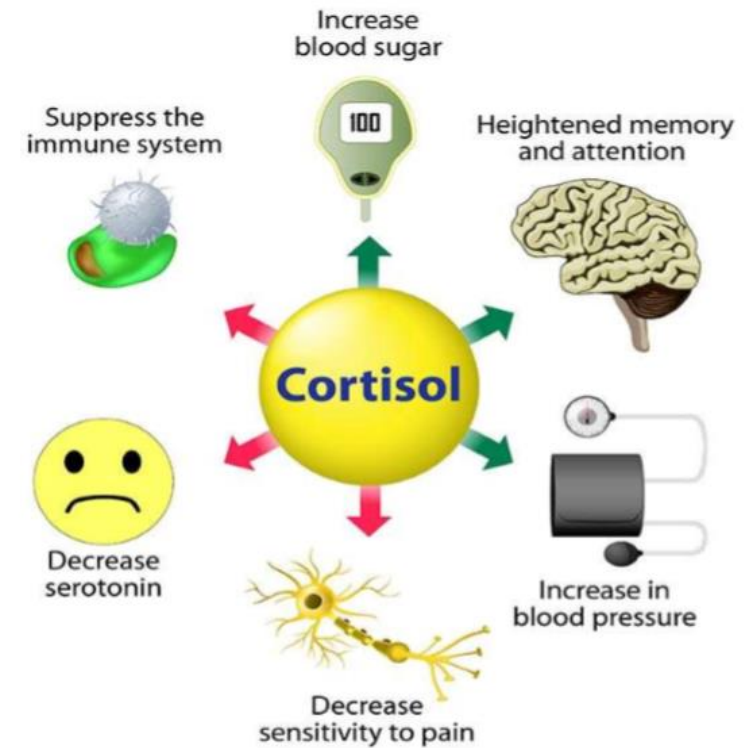
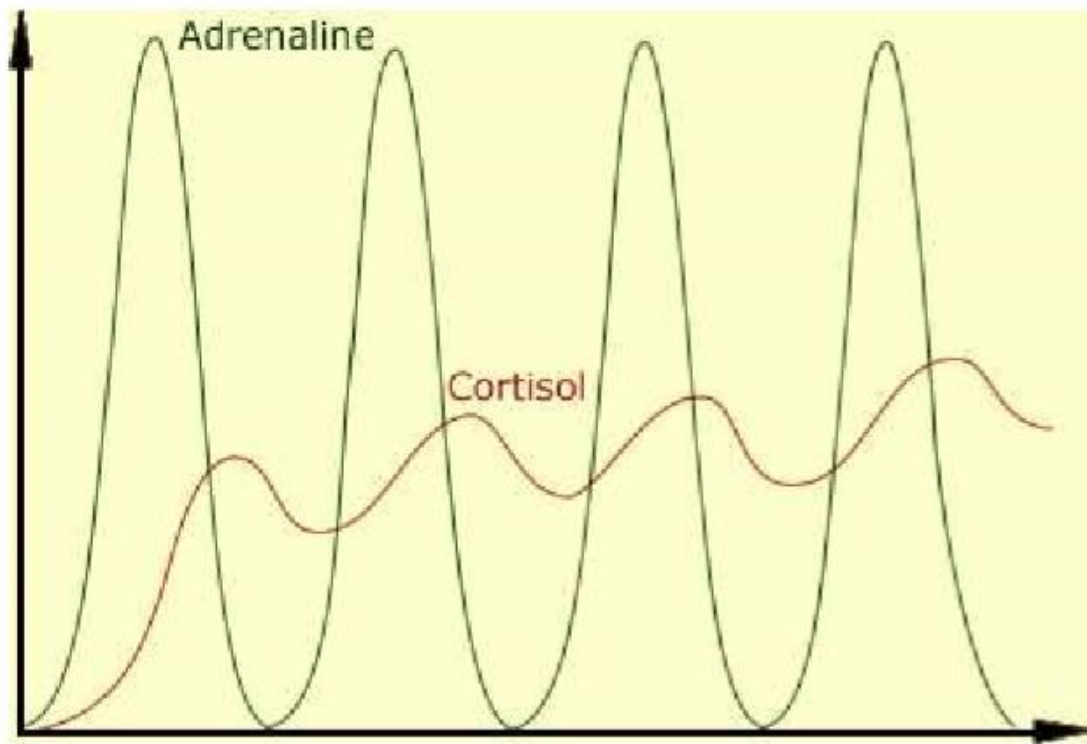


Negative stress is not functional and affects our health & performance. It keeps the body constantly activated (wired), blocks day-time recovery and disturbs recovery during sleep. We feel threatened, tense, overwhelmed, uncertain, anxious and out of control or under pressure. **“I don’t have what it takes.”**

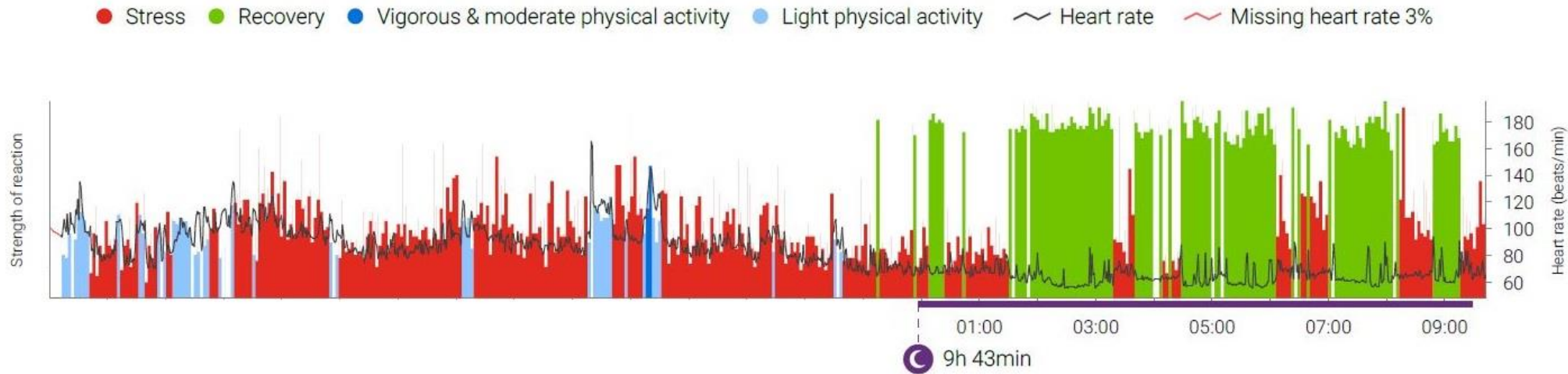


Chronic elevation of stress hormones

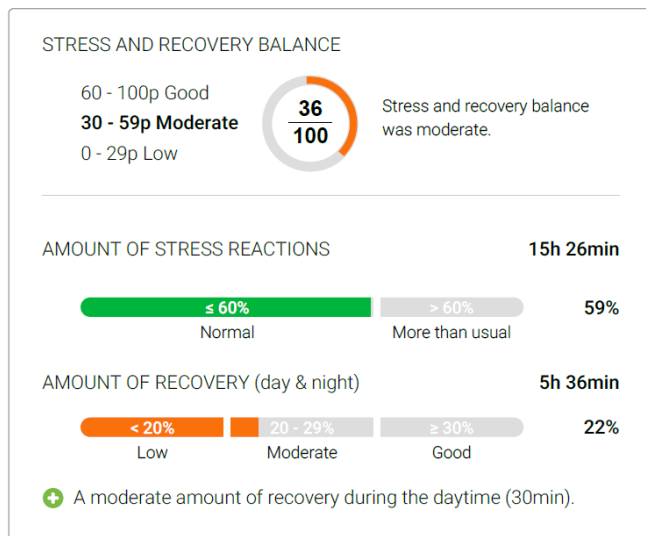
If there is lack of recovery after a stress activation, cortisol will not get the time to decrease and is sustained at chronically higher levels



What is often the actual key pain point?



⚡ + STRESS AND RECOVERY



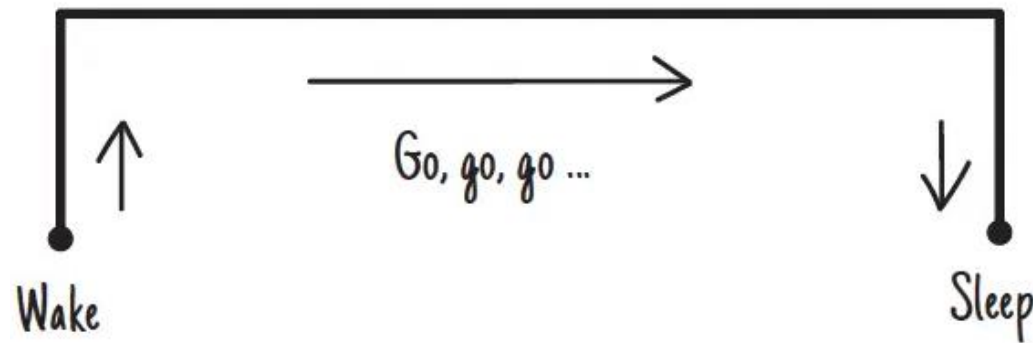
More often than not, the issue is a *lack of recovery* rather than a high stress load.



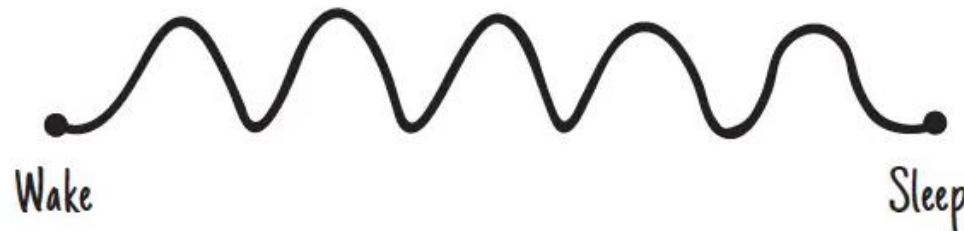
Chronic high stress load > erodes our capacity for recovery



How We've Been Told We're Supposed to Work



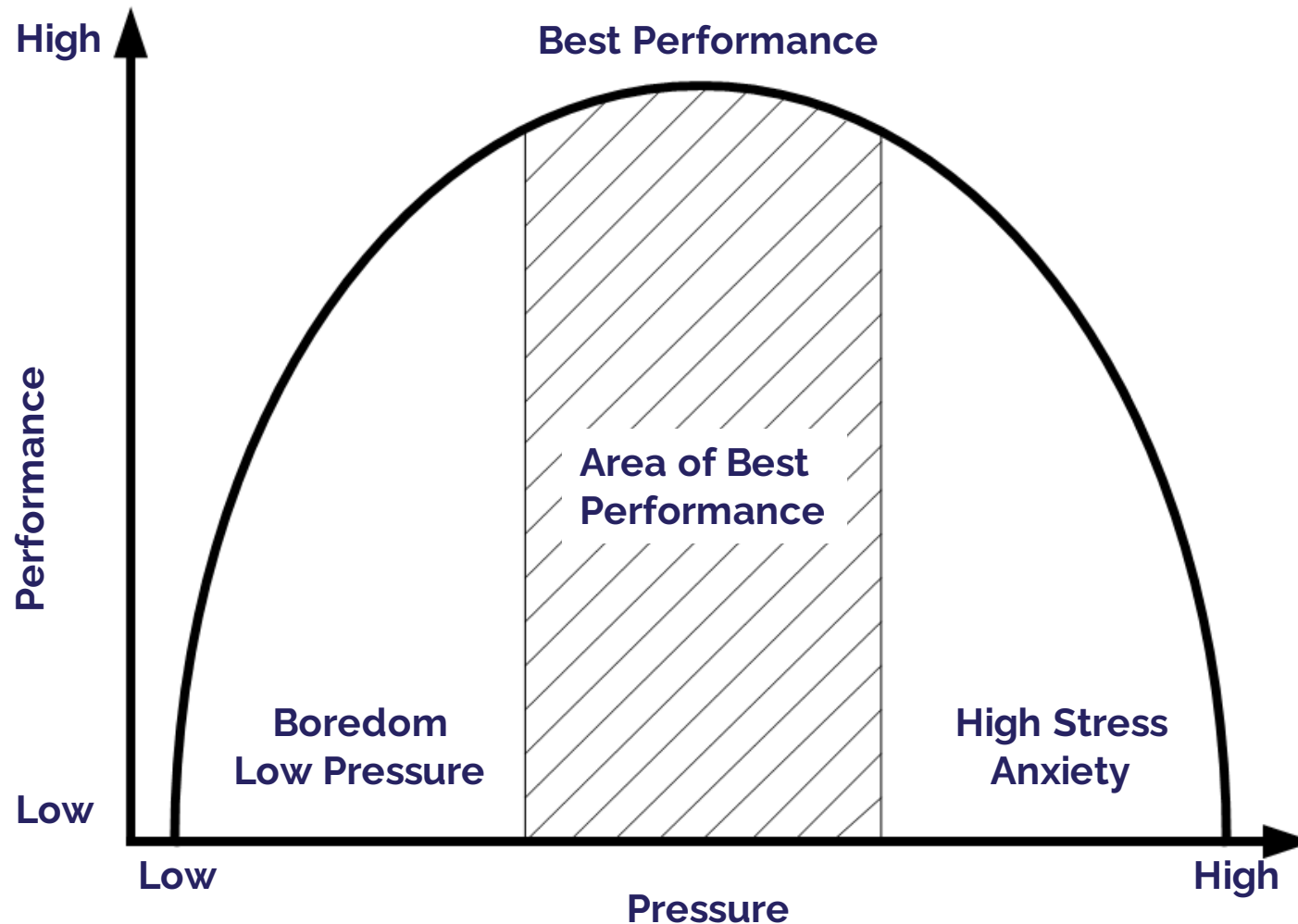
How We Actually Work



Our modern way of living is out of synch with our human design parameters!



Stress and the inverted U model



Strong and in particular *sustained or chronic stress impairs performance*



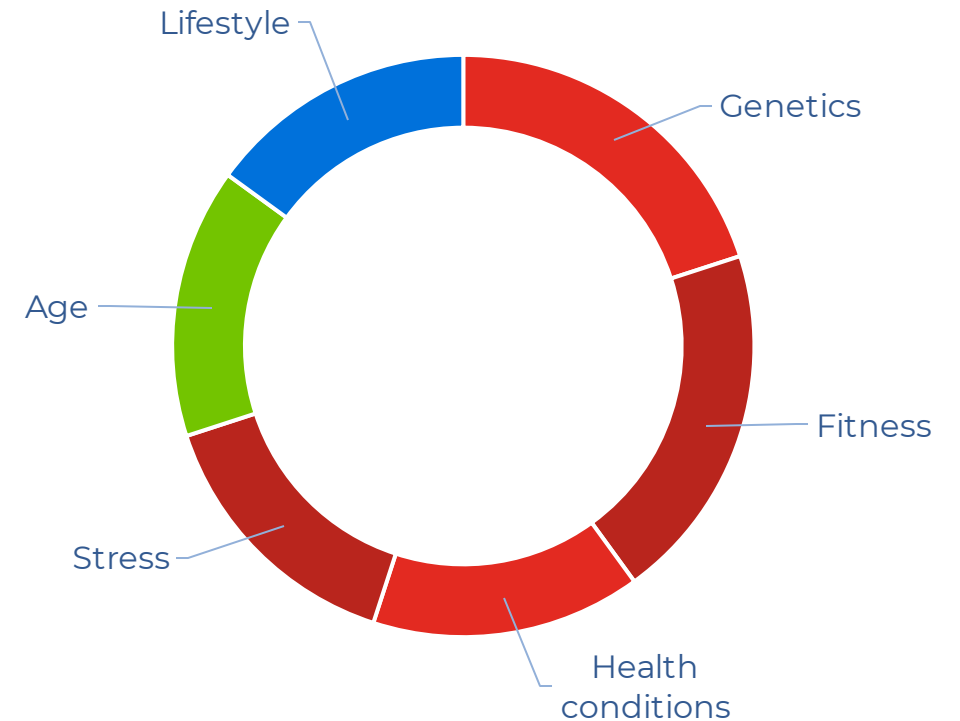
Having the capacity for good quality recovery



Heart rate variability (HRV) reflects the functioning, balance and resilience of all our regulatory processes. These processes keep us in tune and help us adjust to demands and changes.

They all operate at varying frequencies (e.g., circadian rhythm has a 24-hour cycle) and together they create a complex pattern of variability in our heart rate rhythm (controlled chaos).

Factors that influence HRV
(70 to 80% directly under our control)



Tapping into that capacity

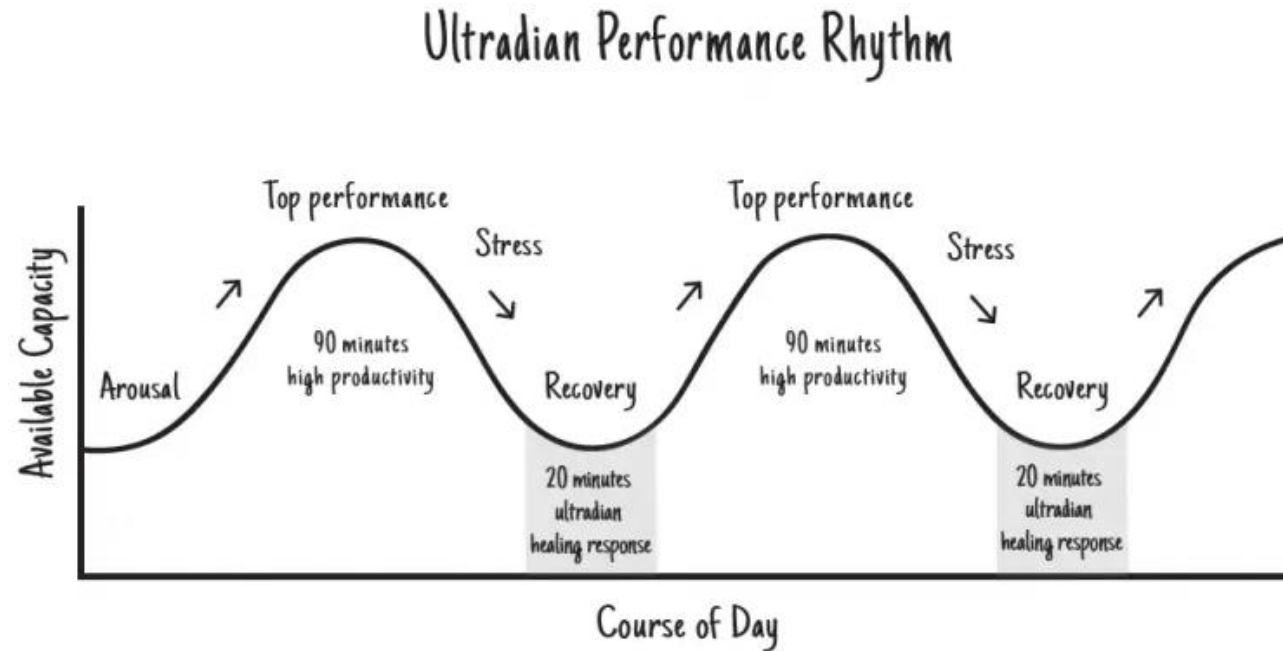


Illustration adapted from *The 20-Minute Break* by Ernest L. Rossi, PhD (Tarcher Putnam, 1991)

Micro-moments of recovery and resets throughout the (work) day

Sleep practices for optimal recovery during sleep

- 1 Get outside first thing in the morning** ★★★★★
Light is the timekeeper of your circadian rhythm. Morning sun light striking your eyes triggers the transition to a new cycle. Get at least 30 min outside, without sunglasses, by noon.
- 2 Power down in the evening** ★★★★★
Shutting off all electronics, ideally at sunset but at least two hours before sleep, avoids blue light from screens interrupting the production of melatonin.
- 3 Give yourself permission to sleep** ★★★★★
Let go of "there are not enough hours in the day" and embrace the science that shows good sleep enhances performance and productivity (in addition to your health & well-being).
- 4 Adopt a consistent schedule with "resets"** ★★★★★
Going to bed and waking up at the same time every day, including the weekend, helps to keep your natural circadian rhythm functioning optimally. Also "reset" often during the day.
- 5 Replenish the melatonin building blocks** ★★★★★
Few foods contain melatonin so focus on including its precursor tryptophan and the vitamins and minerals needed to produce it (Vitamin B6, magnesium, calcium and zinc) in your diet.
- 6 Eat between sunrise and sunset** ★★★★★
Avoid or minimise food, alcohol and other substances after sunset to allow your body to get ready for rest. A light snack before bed is fine - feeling hungry inhibits sleep.
- 7 Reduce the temperature** ★★★★★
Contrary to popular belief our body temperature needs to lower during the night. Avoid a hot bath / shower right before bed and keep the bedroom cool. Make sure your feet are warm.
- 8 Use the bedroom exclusively for sleep** ★★★★★
Avoid multi-purposing the bedroom and keep it clear from distractions. If you cannot sleep, get out of bed and hop back into bed only when sleepiness returns.
- 9 Be physically active & exercise regularly** ★★★★★
Exercise uses up energy and makes you feel more tired at night. It also reduces stress and anxiety which are common reasons for not falling asleep and sleeping restlessly. Make sure to do high intensity workouts earlier in the day so they don't disrupt your sleep.
- 10 Find your own wind-down routine** ★★★★★
Release stresses and emotions build up during the day with a wind-down routine to allow your parasympathetic nervous system to kick-in and downregulate your level of activation.
- 11 Put the clocks away** ★★★★★
Make sure (alarm) clocks are not visible. Watching the clock makes you worry and activates your mind, making sleep even more elusive.
- 12 Prevent revenge bedtime procrastination** ★★★★★
Allow some 'me time' in your day so that you don't put off going to bed. Build in some micro-steps like eating lunch away from your desk or doing one thing that makes you happy.

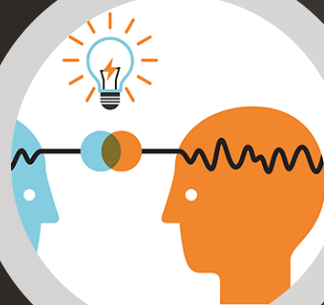
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**RESET,
REFOCUS,
RESTART.**



Down-the-wall Pose



Day-time recovery strategies
Finding your individual sweet spot is key

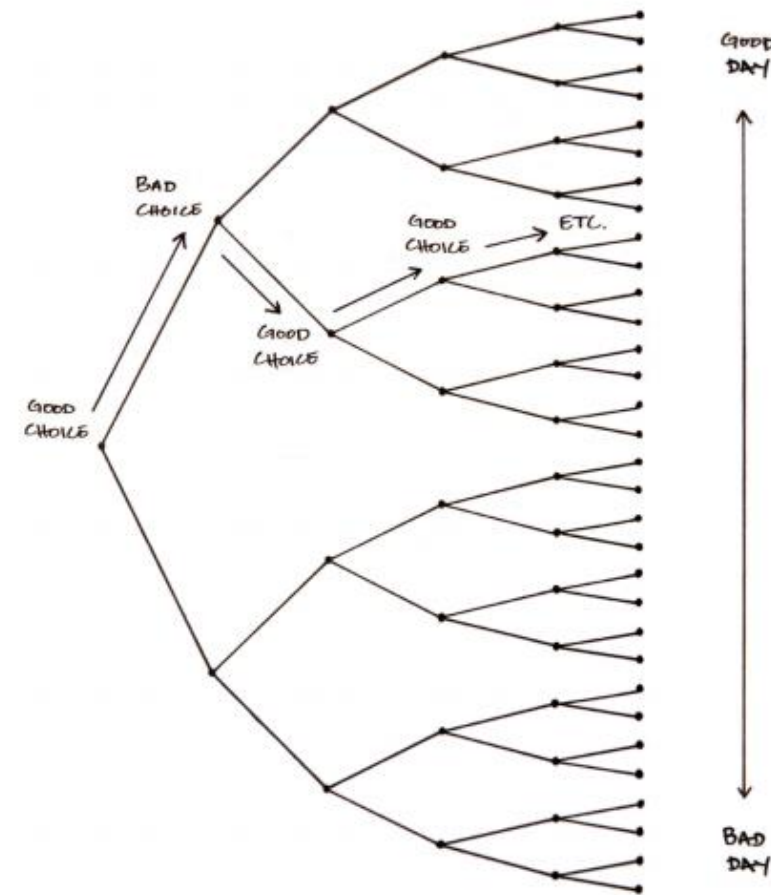


AVOID THE COMMON PITFALLS

"You do not rise to the level of your goals.
You fall to the level of your systems."

- James Clear

Pitfall 5: Letting the first habit of the day slide.



Solution: Success breeds success. Get the first new habit off the day off to a good start, which paves the way for the next choice to be a positive one as well.

Get off to a good start with micro- moments of recovery

In break-out triads, help each other to determine:

1. What does a good (enough) and sustainable recovery strategy look like for you?
2. Which 'first habit of the day' (if you were to always get it in) would increase your chances of sticking to the rest of your recovery strategy?
3. How will you hold yourself accountable to get that 'first habit of the day' in all the time?

Key takeaways

View stress in adaptive ways

(our relationship with stress is vital)

Adopt a good sleep practice

(sleep = best recovery opportunity)

Prioritise Ultradian Rhythm Breaks

(reset stress response throughout the day)

Connect & care

(buffer and protect through human connection)

Boost fitness level

(increases nervous system resilience)

Practice mindfulness

(develop capacity to be in the present moment)







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