



# The 5 Step Breakthrough Guide: Mindset + Stress + Nutrition + Sleep + Recovery

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**Summary**

# MINDSET MANAGEMENT

A mindset is a way of thinking. In a word, a mental inclination or disposition, or a frame of mind. Your mindset is your collection of thoughts and beliefs that shape your thought habits. And your thought habits affect how you think, what you feel and what you do.

Your mindset impacts how you make sense of the world and how you make sense of you. So your mindset is sort of a big deal! Whether you care to admit it or not, the way you think affects the way you act. The way you act affects nearly everything happening in your life. Would you say that's a fair assumption to make?

So if you're not currently surrounded by people who elevate your thoughts, challenge your thinking and push you to do more. People who back you and support you. How can you hope to perform at the highest level? I implore you to research any high achiever and I can guarantee you that they consciously associate with people on the same mission as them. It is as much about changing your mindset and your circle as it is taking direction from someone. One of the biggest barriers to overcome when trying to make positive life changes is a poor mindset.

How many times have you started something but failed to achieve that outcome because you didn't have a strong enough mindset? It is easy to be enthusiastic or have a strong mindset when things are going well, but holding steady and staying positive in times of competition, crisis and adversity is a trained mindset.



# DEVELOPING A BULLETPROOF MINDSET

## **Acknowledge your challenges.**

Acknowledgment is the first step to overcoming any challenge. To bounce back from the unexpected, we have to keep moving forward.

Remind yourself to: acknowledge, accept, adapt and act.

Take accountability when things go wrong and accept that there are potentially better ways to achieve your goals.

Remove ego and pride from the equation and ask for help when you need it.

Accept constructive criticism and brainstorm solutions.

Keep perspective when acknowledging your challenges and remind yourself: “This is tough, but not tougher than I am”.

## **Growth mindset vs. Fixed mindset.**

“In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them.

They also believe that talent alone creates success—without effort. They’re wrong.”

“In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment. Virtually all great people have had these qualities.”



# DEVELOPING A BULLETPROOF MINDSET

## Why Is A Growth Mindset Such A Big Deal?

Because it helps you unleash your full potential. And crucially, seek to improve by learning from whatever transpires.

Research links the growth mindset with many benefits, including:

- Greater comfort with taking personal risks and striving for more stretching goals.
- Higher motivation.
- Enhanced brain development across wider ranges of tasks.
- Lower stress, anxiety and depression.
- Better work relationships.
- Higher performance levels.

## The Impact Of Your Mindset

Your mindset plays a critical role in how you cope with life's challenges.

When a child has a growth mindset, they tend to have a hunger for learning and a desire to work hard and discover new things. This often translates into academic achievement.

As adults, these same people are more likely to persevere in the face of setbacks. Instead of throwing in the towel, adults with a growth mindset view it as an opportunity to learn and grow.

On the other hand, those with fixed mindsets are more likely to give up in the face of challenging circumstances.

While people with a fixed mindset might not agree, people are capable of changing their mindsets. Here's how.

Focus on the journey. An important factor when building a growth mindset is seeing the value in your journey. When you are fixated on the end result, you miss out on all the things you could be learning along the way.

Incorporate "yet." If you are struggling with a task, remind yourself that you just haven't mastered it "yet." Integrating this word into your vocabulary signals that despite any struggles, you can overcome anything.

Pay attention to your words and thoughts. Replace negative thoughts with more positive ones to build a growth mindset.

Take on challenges. Making mistakes is one of the best ways to learn. So, instead of shying away from challenges, embrace them.

# STRESS-PROOF YOUR LIFE

Stress is a common experience that can affect both our physical and mental well-being. It occurs when we encounter excessive pressure or demands in our daily lives, leading to a natural physical and mental reaction. Even if you don't realise it, stress may already be present in your life, arising from factors such as work, social interactions, family obligations, and more. If left unaddressed, chronic stress can have negative impacts on many aspects of our lives, including digestion, fertility, sleep, energy levels, mood, and even appetite. This, in turn, can result in overeating and weight gain.

It's crucial to keep your stress levels under control so that you can perform at your best in your daily tasks, recover well from workouts, and manage your appetite. Chronic stress can significantly impair your body's ability to drop body fat, negatively affecting your overall health in the long run. When we experience stress, our adrenal gland releases cortisol, the main stress hormone, to supply energy from our liver, fat cells, or muscle to cope with the perceived threat. This is a healthy short-term response, as it triggers the fight or flight response, but prolonged exposure to stress can cause cortisol levels to remain elevated and compromise our immune system.

To manage stress effectively, it's essential to identify the sources of stress in your life and find ways to cope with them. You can try relaxation techniques such as meditation, yoga, or deep breathing, incorporate regular exercise into your routine, prioritise good sleep habits, and engage in enjoyable activities and hobbies. By practicing stress management techniques, you can feel more balanced, relaxed, and in control of your life. Keep in mind that stress management is not only vital for physical health but also for mental and emotional well-being.

# HOW STRESS EFFECTS THE BODY!



Mood swings, reduced cognitive function, increased anxiety, concentration issues.



Increased blood pressure, heart rate & risk of heart attack



Loss of libido, lower sperm production & increased period pain



Reduced immune & system health



Stomach cramps, reflux and nausea



Reduced bone density



Increased muscle and joint pain



Low energy and motivation





# DO YOU SUFFER FROM STRESS?

**Answer these questions below:**

- 1 Is your sleep frequently broken?
- 2 Do you find yourself dependant on caffeine?
- 3 Do you find no matter how much you eat that you never feel full?
- 4 Do you find yourself never recovering from training properly?
- 5 Do you work long hours and find it hard to switch off after work?
- 6 Do you constantly worry about money, relationships and family issues?
- 7 Do you find yourself constantly chasing your tail?

If you answered “yes” to 4 or more of the above questions then stress needs to be addressed. It's very important to be mindful of our stress in order for us to try to control it rather than let stress control us. This is very much easier said than done at times.



# HOW TO MANAGE STRESS

- 1 Sleep 6-8 hours a night.
- 2 Strength training 3-4 times a week increases muscle building and other anabolic hormones such as naturally occurring testosterone and growth hormone.
- 3 Eat balanced healthy meals every throughout the day. This will help prevent low blood sugar and minimise sugar cravings.
- 4 Remove processed food, plan your meals in advance favouring a high protein diet, healthy fats and vegetables.
- 5 Limit caffeine, alcohol and other stimulants.
- 6 Supplement with magnesium.
- 7 Get outdoors! By going for walks and being around nature more you will increase your vitamin d levels and lower your cortisol levels.
- 8 Perform more parasympathetic exercise such as yoga to help bring a state of calm in the body.
- 9 Meditate or use “grounding”. Deep breathing techniques and mindfulness has been shown to lower stress, anxiety and lower inflammation. Try using apps like Headspace.
- 10 Listen to music, podcast or audio books that help to bring a state of calm.

A bowl of food with various ingredients like greens, beans, and grains, next to a bottle of orange juice.

# NUTRITIONAL MANAGEMENT

The amount of energy humans expend is influenced by various factors such as body size, body composition, environment, and behaviour. Additionally, food intake and physical activity are crucial behavioural determinants of energy expenditure.

Total energy expenditure (TEE) refers to the total amount of energy (in calories or joules) that an individual expends over a given period of time. TEE is made up of three components:

**Basal metabolic rate (BMR)** - the energy used by the body to carry out basic functions such as breathing, circulation, and cell repair and maintenance.

**Thermic effect of food (TEF)** - the energy used by the body to digest, absorb, and process the nutrients in food.

**Physical activity energy expenditure (PAEE)** - the energy used by the body during physical activity, including exercise, work, and leisure activities.

A hugely underrated component of fat loss (and muscle gain surprisingly), is reaching a daily step goal. This is essentially tracking your levels of daily activity via a smart watch or phone, paying attention to the 'steps' metric.

I am a HUGE advocate of using steps to drive fat loss, and I think for a lot of people (myself included), it is the only "cardio protocol" that needs to be used.

Allowing more focus to be put on resistance training which is what ultimately is going to sculpt & develop your physique. To put the power of steps into context, by hitting 10,000 steps per day (which is realistic for most people), you are going to burn a further 400-500 calories per day, which can result in you losing 1lb of body weight each week from steps alone.

# ENERGY BALANCE

## 1. Energy Balance

Is the most fundamental aspect of nutrition and refers to the balance between the energy you consume through food and drinks and the energy you expend through physical activity and normal bodily functions.

To maintain a healthy weight, it is essential to maintain a balance between the energy you consume and the energy you burn.

## 2. Nutrient Timing

Is the next important aspect of nutrition. This refers to when you consume certain nutrients, such as carbohydrates, relative to your workouts or other physical activities. Proper nutrient timing can enhance exercise performance, promote muscle recovery, and support overall health and well-being.

## 3. Macronutrients

Include carbohydrates, proteins, and fats, are the next important aspect of nutrition. These nutrients are essential for providing the body with energy and supporting various bodily functions. It is essential to consume macronutrients in the right proportions, as each has a specific function in the body.

## 4. Micronutrients

Vitamins and minerals, are essential for supporting various bodily functions and overall health. Consuming a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins can help ensure adequate intake of essential micronutrients.

## 5. Supplements

While supplements can be beneficial in certain circumstances, they should not be relied on as a substitute for a balanced diet.

CARBS	CARBS + PROTEIN	PROTEIN	FAT + PROTEIN	FATS
POTATOES RICE PASTA NOODLES OATS BREAD FLOUR VEGETABLES FRUIT	QUINOA BEANS PEAS LENTILS LOW FAT YOGURT SKIMMED MILK TOFU	CHICKEN BREAST TURKEY BREAST WHITE FISH SEAFOOD EXTRA LEAN BEEF VENISON EGG WHITES PROTEIN POWDER	WHOLE EGGS LAMB SALMON BEEF SAUSAGES BACON CHEESE CREAM WHOLE MILK	COCONUT OIL OLIVE OIL BUTTER NUTS OLIVES

## HIGH CALORIE HIGHLY PALATABLE FOODS:

### CARBS AND FATS COMBINED

ICE CREAM  
WHOLE MILK COFFEES  
CREAM SAUCE  
CHOCOLATE BARS

PIZZA  
FRIES  
CRISPS  
PASTA WITH CHEESE  
DIPS AND SAUCES

CAKES  
PASTRIES  
COOKIES  
WAFFLES  
PANCAKES  
DESSERTS

A close-up, dark-toned photograph of a person's profile as they drink from a white water bottle. The person's hand is visible holding the bottle. The background is dark, and the lighting highlights the contours of the face and the bottle. A yellow rectangular graphic element is in the top right corner.

# IMPORTANCE OF HYDRATION

Staying hydrated is an essential aspect of maintaining good health and well-being as it plays a role in several key bodily functions.

**Physical Performance:** Dehydration can lead to fatigue and decreased physical performance, particularly those engaging in intense physical activity.

**Cognitive Function:** Staying hydrated is important for maintaining mental clarity, focus and concentration. Even mild dehydration as little as 2% fluid loss can affect memory, mood, concentration and reaction time.

**Body Temperature Regulation:** Staying hydrated helps regulate body temperature, especially during exercise and hot weather.

**Digestion and Kidney Function:** Adequate hydration helps the digestive system run smoothly and flush out waste and toxins from the body.

**Decreased Joint Pain:** Did you know the cartilage in our joints contains approximately 80% water? Staying hydrated helps your joints stay well-lubricated, which helps reduce friction by creating more of a “cushion”, less friction means smoother-moving joints and fewer aches and pains.

Dehydration is when your body doesn't have as much water as it needs. It occurs when you use or lose more fluid than you take in, and your body doesn't have enough water and other fluids to carry out its normal functions. If you don't replace lost fluids, you will get dehydrated. The best way to beat dehydration is to drink before you get thirsty. If you're thirsty, you're already mildly dehydrated.

The effects of alcohol on your progress go beyond just calories, as it can hinder your results in other ways as well. While it's not necessary to completely avoid alcohol, it's crucial to consider its impact on various factors such as mood, anxiety levels, training performance, and recovery.

Alcohol is a depressant and excessive consumption can negatively affect your mental well-being. It can also cause dehydration and fatigue, which can impair your training performance and recovery even on rest days. Additionally, overconsumption of alcohol can lead to poor food choices, lack of physical activity, and reduced sleep quality and quantity, all of which can directly impact your progress.

# LET'S TALK ABOUT SLEEP

When it comes to working out, you know that what you do in the gym is important. But what you do outside the gym — what you eat, what you drink, and especially how you sleep, is just as crucial.

In fact, you must sleep in order for exercise to actually work. Sleep gives your body time to recover, conserve energy, and repair and build up the muscles worked during exercise.

When we get enough good quality sleep, the body produces growth hormone. Improving quality of sleep is a big part of the process of achieving your fitness goals, alongside good recovery, as well as optimising your health.

Only one night of poor sleep can provoke negative changes in appetite regulation and food intake. Restricting sleep to 5 hours or less for just one week has been shown in many studies to decrease carbohydrate tolerance and insulin resistance. So bad sleep packs a double whammy: it makes you crave the carb rich foods while impairing your body's ability to tolerate them.

Sleep quantity and quality is also closely related to the activity of the immune system. Lack of sleep means a decreased ability to naturally fight off infection. This explains why you're more likely to get a cold or feel run down after not sleeping well for a few nights.



# HEALTHY CIRCADIAN RHYTHM

Your circadian rhythm helps control your daily schedule for sleep and wakefulness. This rhythm is tied to your 24-hour body clock, and most living things have one. The circadian rhythm is influenced by outside things like light and dark, as well as other factors. Your brain receives signals based on your environment and activates certain hormones, alters your body temperature, and regulates your metabolism to keep you alert or send you to sleep.

Some may experience disruptions to their circadian rhythm because of external factors or sleep disorders. Maintaining healthy habits can help you respond better to this natural rhythm of your body. Hormones like melatonin and cortisol may increase or decrease as part of your circadian rhythm.

## **Maintain a consistent sleep schedule**

Focus on maintaining 6-8+hrs of quality undisturbed sleep every night, getting into the habit of setting an earlier bedtime routine and being religious with adhering to this set structure.

Many assume having a set bedtime will keep their circadian rhythm on track. This isn't the case — it's also important to wake up at the same time every day. A consistent sleep-wake routine will train your master clock to help you avoid waking up throughout the night. Resist the urge to catch up on sleep after a restless night. It's common to want to take a long nap or sleep in on the weekends, but this can make your circadian rhythm worse.

Melatonin usually begins triggering the body to rest around 9 p.m. and starts slowing down (which cues the body to wake up) around 7:30 a.m.

# SLEEP HYGIENE

## **Get outside in the morning**

Exposure to light in the morning triggers your brain to produce less melatonin. The first thing you should do after your alarm sounds is open the blinds. If you have time, get outside and go for a walk or sip your coffee on the porch. Exposure to sunlight will help reset your internal clock for the day.

## **Skip the afternoon nap**

Staying active throughout the day can help balance your circadian rhythm by using up your energy stores before prime sleeping hours. "If you are having trouble sleeping, taking a nap can decrease your ability to fall asleep at night. The longer you are awake, the more your body will want to sleep toward the end of the day.

Whenever you start feeling a dip in your energy, get up and move around. Give your body some movement and support your circadian rhythm by moving every 30 - 60 minutes.

## **Blue Light**

Blue light has a huge impact on your circadian rhythm, tricking your brain into thinking it is still daytime and releasing higher amounts of stress hormones. This in turn reduces hormones like melatonin, which help you relax and get deep sleep. Electronic devices like smartphones and computers emit large amounts and are worst in this regard.

To ensure better sleep quality and facilitate falling asleep, it is advisable to avoid using electronic devices such as TVs, phones, or laptops at least an hour before bedtime. Exposure to the blue light emitted from these devices can disrupt your sleep pattern and make it harder to doze off. Instead, try to wind down without electronic distractions and settle your mind before attempting to sleep by switching off your phone and avoiding TV.



# CAFFEINE & FOOD



Caffeine has a numerous benefits a single dose of espresso can enhance focus, energy and even boost your sports performance hence why it is often consumed pre-workout or added into pre-workout drinks.

However, when consumed late in the day, coffee stimulates your nervous system and may stop your body from naturally relaxing at night. It has been proven that consuming caffeine up to six hours before bed significantly worsened sleep quality.

Caffeine can stay elevated in your blood for 6–8 hours. Therefore, drinking large amounts of coffee after 2–3 p.m. is not recommended — especially if you are sensitive to caffeine or have trouble sleeping.

If you do crave a cup of coffee in the late afternoon or evening, stick with decaffeinated coffee.

Avoid heavy meals and caffeine later in the day. What you eat can impact how you sleep.

Food and alcohol cause heartburn, and caffeine and nicotine are stimulants that can trigger your brain to keep your body active.

Doing so means your liver won't be working as hard throughout the night. When your master clock triggers the release of melatonin, it also sends signals to the liver, telling it to stop creating enzymes to turn calories into energy and instead begin storing energy.

The more food you put in your body before bed, the harder your liver works, and more food is stored than burned.





# RECOVER LIKE A PRO

How much your body changes and performance in the gym improves depends on how well and how quickly you can recover. The faster you recover, the sooner you can begin again with the next training session.

A fully recovered body is far more resilient. Plus, you don't tend to get injured as easily.

In fact, it's during the time after your workout that the body improves its performance.

The idea of "Train hard, recover hard" has been around for a long time, but the concept of recovery has changed over the years. In the past, it was believed that taking a day or two off after a strenuous workout was the best way to recover. However, nowadays sitting idle for 24-48 hours is not considered ideal.

## There are two types of recovery:

### Passive Recovery

We rely solely on the body's own powers of recovery and hope that it can compensate for the training load as well as it can and restore its physical capabilities as quickly as possible.

### Active Recovery

We can also positively influence the process. Active support means using a variety of measures to stimulate the body during the rest phase.

#### The Effect:

Your body requires far less time to recover. Allowing you to get back to training faster or increase the intensity of your workout, which leads to enhanced results in a shorter period of time.

# LESS IS MORE!

One of the biggest misconceptions to training and getting results is that doing more will elicit a faster response.

This couldn't be further from the truth. Less is more!!

If you want to stay injury free and have longevity within your training creating a stimulus with the least amount of volume will be the best approach.

## **The main issues caused by overtraining include:**

- Acute inflammation of connective tissues leading to things like tendonitis.
- Overwhelming central nervous system fatigue.
- Suppression of anabolic hormones under certain, circumstances where calories are restricted.
- Reduced recovery time for micro tears in muscle fibres.
- Mental fatigue or brain fog and reduced focus.

Your body needs time to recovery in order to progress. Training should always be about quality opposed to quantity!

You only get stronger, fitter, faster and leaner by recovering from the demands of a workout. Lack of optimal nutrition and sleep make it almost impossible to recover from too many bouts of hard training. The focus should be training smart, not training hard!

## **Don't Skip Rest Days.**

There are times when you just need to rest. Getting good quality sleep and nutrition will help to speed up the muscle repair process and leave you feeling refreshed the next day.

Look at the most taxing sessions across a week and strategically placing a rest day where its most needed.

A balanced combination of rest and recovery along with a structured macronutrient meal plan should be a fundamental part of any training plan. You can still do light exercise on rest days while your muscles need time to recover after an intense workout, you can still do light exercise on recovery days, such as walking, swimming, or yoga.



# SUMMARY

## Mindset + Stress + Nutrition + Sleep + Recovery

In this guide, we've explored the crucial elements of managing stress and improving overall well-being through a holistic approach.

I've highlighted the impact of stress on the body and mind, and provided practical tips for managing stress through mindfulness and positive thinking.

We've also highlighted the impact of stress on the body and mind, the importance of nutrition, sleep, and recovery, with insights and actionable steps for incorporating healthy habits into daily life.

By adopting a holistic approach that considers the effects on both the body and mind, this guide offers a comprehensive framework for achieving improved well-being.

By implementing my tips you can cultivate a healthier mindset, nourish your body with balanced nutrition, help prioritise restful sleep and recovery.

In essence, this guide serves as a valuable resource for anyone seeking to improve their well-being through practical guidance and support for a healthier and happier life.

### **Here are my top tips for promoting a healthy 24-hour schedule:**

- Try to adhere to a routine each day
- Spend time outdoors when it's light outside to boost your wakefulness
- Get enough daily exercise — twenty or more minutes of aerobic exercise is generally recommended
- Sleep in an environment that promotes rest with proper lighting, a comfortable temperature, and a supportive mattress
- Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine in the evenings
- Power down your screens well before bedtime and try engaging in something such as reading a book or meditating
- Do not nap late in the afternoon or evening.



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