

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

The High-Performer's Energy Diagnostic

5 signals. 25 checks. 5 minutes.

An honest read on what's draining you.



By The Still Architect

Health Disclaimer

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The High-Performer's Energy Diagnostic

You keep a lot of things running. Your body is one of them. It's been sending you signals you haven't been reading.

This is a diagnostic. It runs 25 checks on the part of you that's been keeping everything else running. It tells you which part is pulling the hardest on you, so you stop guessing.

How to use it

1. Read each statement carefully.
2. Check the box if it applies to you.
3. Be honest with yourself. There are no right or wrong answers.
4. Review your results at the end to pinpoint your energy drains.

Body Budget

Your body keeps a running account of energy spent and energy restored. Chronic demand without enough recovery runs the account into overdraft. Your body sends signals long before your mind notices them.

This week's checks

- I woke before my alarm with my thoughts already running (2 mornings or more)
- I woke between 2 am and 4 am and couldn't fall back asleep
- A weekend of rest no longer clears the tiredness by Monday
- Tight shoulders, short breath, or a racing heart arrived without an obvious trigger
- I felt wired and tired at the same time

Signal score: ___ / 5

Count how many boxes you ticked above. Record this number.

Sleep Quality

Time in bed is one thing. Time restored is another. Quality decides whether you wake with capacity. Your sense of "I'm fine" is the last metric to update.

This week's checks

- I slept 7 hours or more and still woke tired
- I needed caffeine to reach a functional baseline
- I can't remember the last morning I woke genuinely rested
- I had trouble falling asleep, or woke multiple times in the night
- Weekend sleep didn't make up what the weekdays cost

Signal score: ___ / 5

Tally the checked boxes.

Cortisol Timing

Your alertness and decision-making peak in the morning and drop through the afternoon. That's how your body works. The problem is a calendar that treats every hour as equal when your body doesn't.

This week's checks

- I made a call after 2 pm that my morning self would have rejected
- My meeting schedule put complex decisions in the afternoon
- I felt sharpest before 11 am and foggiest between 2 and 4 pm
- I pushed through the afternoon dip instead of working with it
- My most important decisions of the week happened outside my peak hours

Signal score: ___ / 5

Tally the checked boxes.

Decision Load

Complex decisions early in the day leave your brain triaging by evening. Your brain is shifting what it's willing to spend energy on. Your evening self defaults to easier choices because the harder ones have already been spent.

This week's checks

- I stood in front of the fridge or wardrobe unable to choose
- I ordered the same default meal because choosing felt like too much
- I skipped exercise or reading I wanted to do, for scrolling I didn't
- I snapped at someone at home in a way I wouldn't have at 10 am
- My evening self made a choice my morning self would reverse

Signal score: ___ / 5

Tally the checked boxes.

Attention Budget

Focus is a finite resource. The longer you push it, the steeper the cost. Recovery only happens through low-demand breaks. Scrolling isn't one.

This week's checks

- I reread the same paragraph 3 times without absorbing it
- I tab-thrashed, or got sudden hunger, in hour 3 of deep work
- My breaks were checking my phone, not stepping away from screens
- I couldn't hold a thought across interruptions the way I used to
- I ended the day mentally spent but unsure what I'd actually produced

Signal score: ___ / 5

Tally the checked boxes.

Your Energy Load

Add your 5 signal scores together. **Total: ___ / 25**

0 - 5

In balance this week. Whatever you're doing, keep doing it. Note which signals scored zero. Those are what's protecting you. Keep them.

13 - 18

Compound load. Two or more signals are in overdraft. You're running in deficit and adapting to it. That's the more dangerous state, because you stop noticing.

6 - 12

Mild load. One signal is running hotter than the rest. The others are still holding. That signal is where the next change goes - fixing the loudest one usually quiets the others.

19 - 25

Structural load. Your body has been sending signals for longer than you've been reading them. Multiple parts of you are running red at once.

What a High Signal Score Means

Find your highest-scoring signal. Here's what a 4 or 5 is telling you.

→ Body Budget

Your body is in chronic overdraft. Rest alone won't clear it. The debt built up over months, and a weekend of sleep works on a different timeline. The signals are readable once you stop explaining them away.

→ Sleep Quality

Time in bed has stopped tracking with time restored. Your tracker is misleading you. The gap between what it reports and how you feel is where the deficit hides.

→ Cortisol Timing

You're making your most important calls at the wrong hour of the day. The 9 am decision and the 2 pm execution came from two different operators, and the calendar doesn't know the difference.

→ Decision Load

Your environment is making you carry too much. The people who look disciplined at 8 pm made fewer decisions by noon. Their setup did the work, the willpower got the credit.

→ Attention Budget

You're spending focus faster than you're restoring it. Your breaks are more of the same effort, dressed up as rest. The tab-thrashing is the alert that lands before the feeling of tiredness does.

What This Tells You

The score is the easy part. It tells you which signals are loudest right now. It doesn't tell you why they got loud, or which single change would quiet them.

The signals are downstream of your environment. The calendar that asks for hard decisions at 3 pm. The phone that calls itself a break. The week of sleep that didn't restore anything. None of this gets fixed by trying harder. It gets fixed by changing what your day asks of you in the first place.

That's what **The Refactor** does. 7 modules. 26 prompts. Self-paced rebuild of your operating environment.

Start the rebuild →

About the Author

Dihan Pool writes about why willpower fails high-performing professionals, and what to build instead. After 20+ years in tech and management watching brilliant people burn out, he started The Still Architect to teach mid-career professionals how to replace willpower with environments where good outcomes are the path of least resistance.

Find Dihan on [LinkedIn](#) and [Substack](#).

Know someone running on fumes?

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