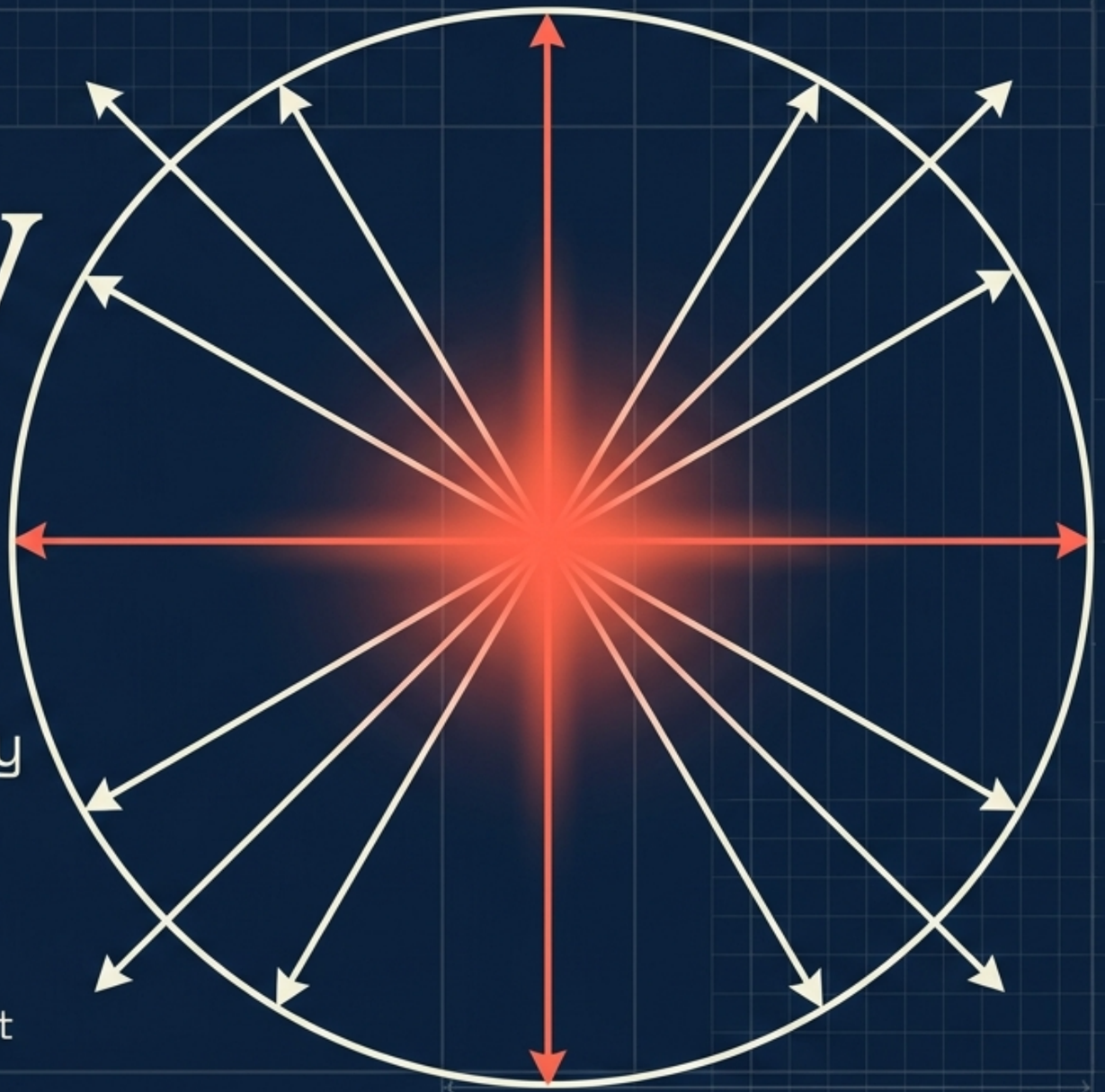
The Daily Miracle

An Architectural Blueprint for Reclaiming 24 Hours a Day



Based on the frameworks of Arnold Bennett

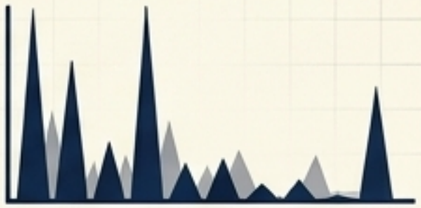
The Skeleton at the Feast of Enjoyment

We are haunted by a suppressed dissatisfaction. The years slip by, and we harbor a fixed idea that we ought to be doing something more than just loyally maintaining our families and jobs.

"He may desire to go to Mecca... but he will not be tormented in the same way as the man who, harried by the desire to reach Mecca, never leaves Brixton."

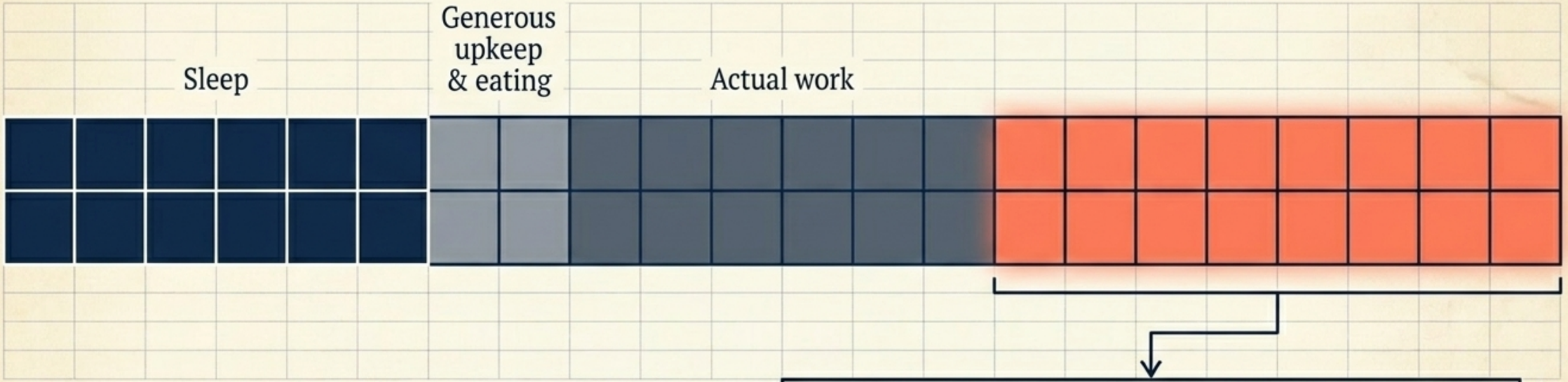


The Ultimate Currency Matrix

	Wealth (Money)	**The Daily Miracle** (Time)
Distribution	 Money is hoarded; genius gets no extra hours.	 Time is a perfect democracy.
Security	 Money can be stolen.	 Time is literally unstealable.
Future-proofing	 You can borrow against money.	 Time cannot be wasted in advance. Tomorrow is kept unspoilt.

“You have, and you have always had, all the time there is.”

The Audit of the Missing 8 Hours



"Defy yourself to account for these 8 hours. The supply of time, though gloriously regular, is cruelly restricted. We do not 'muddle through' a budget of money, but we muddle our time."

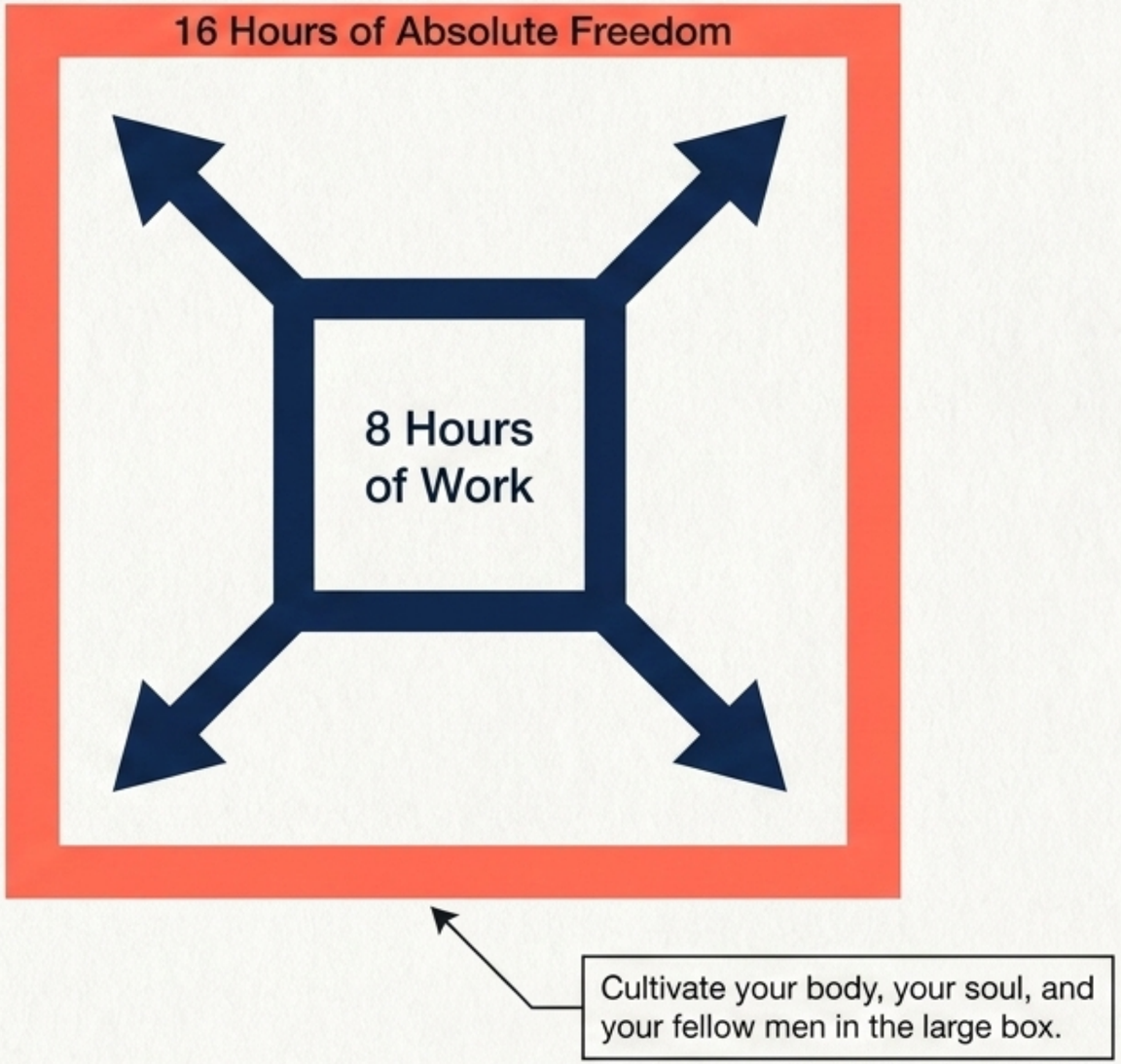
Two Architectures of Time

	The "Margin" Mindset	The "Inner Day" Mindset
Core Focus	The 8 work hours are "the day." Everything else is a prologue or epilogue.	The 16 non-working hours are a fully-funded, independent day.
The Commute	Viewed as lost time; a state of mental coma.	Viewed as the prime mind-training ground.
Evening State	Feigned exhaustion; frittering away hours until bed.	Active cultivation of vitality and continuous mental activity.

Making two-thirds of existence subservient to one-third kills your interest in the 16 hours you actually own.

The Day Within a Day

You must arrange a day within a day. From 6 PM to 10 AM, you are not a wage-earner. You have no monetary cares. You are as good as a person with a private income.



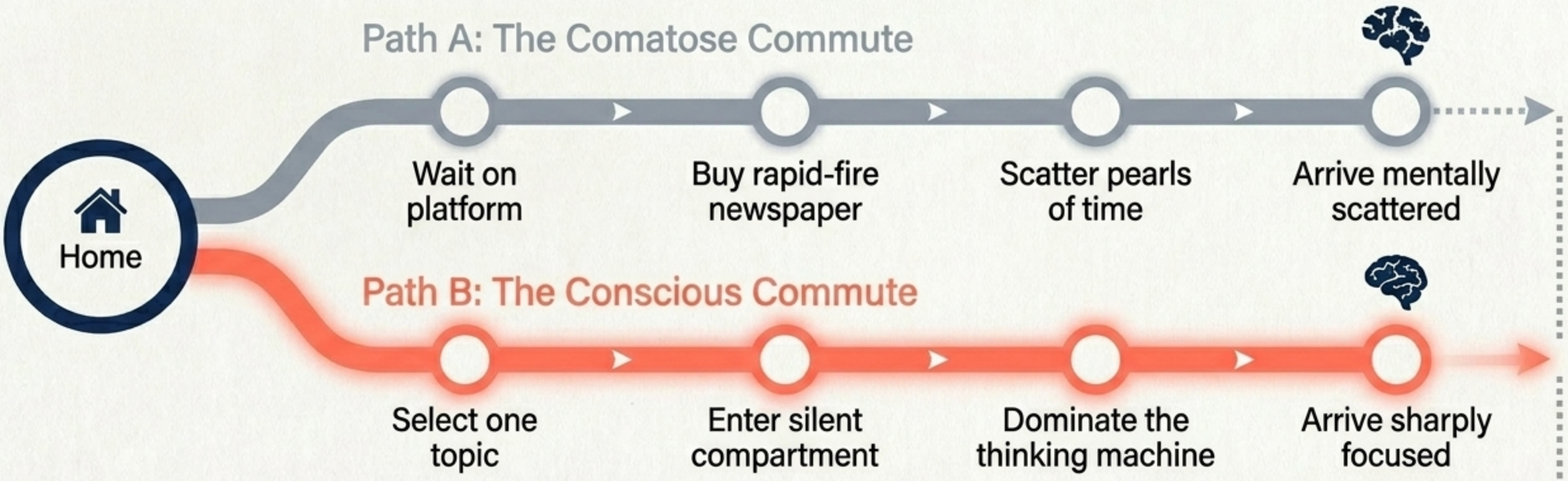
The Exhaustion Illusion



The tired feeling hangs heavy over the suburbs, but it is an illusion. Mental faculties are capable of continuous hard activity; they do not tire like an arm or a leg. All they want is change—not rest.

Proof Point: Think of the energy you suddenly conjure when slaving over an amateur opera or rushing to the theater.

Reclaiming the Morning Transit



"You are not the Shah of time. No newspaper reading in trains."

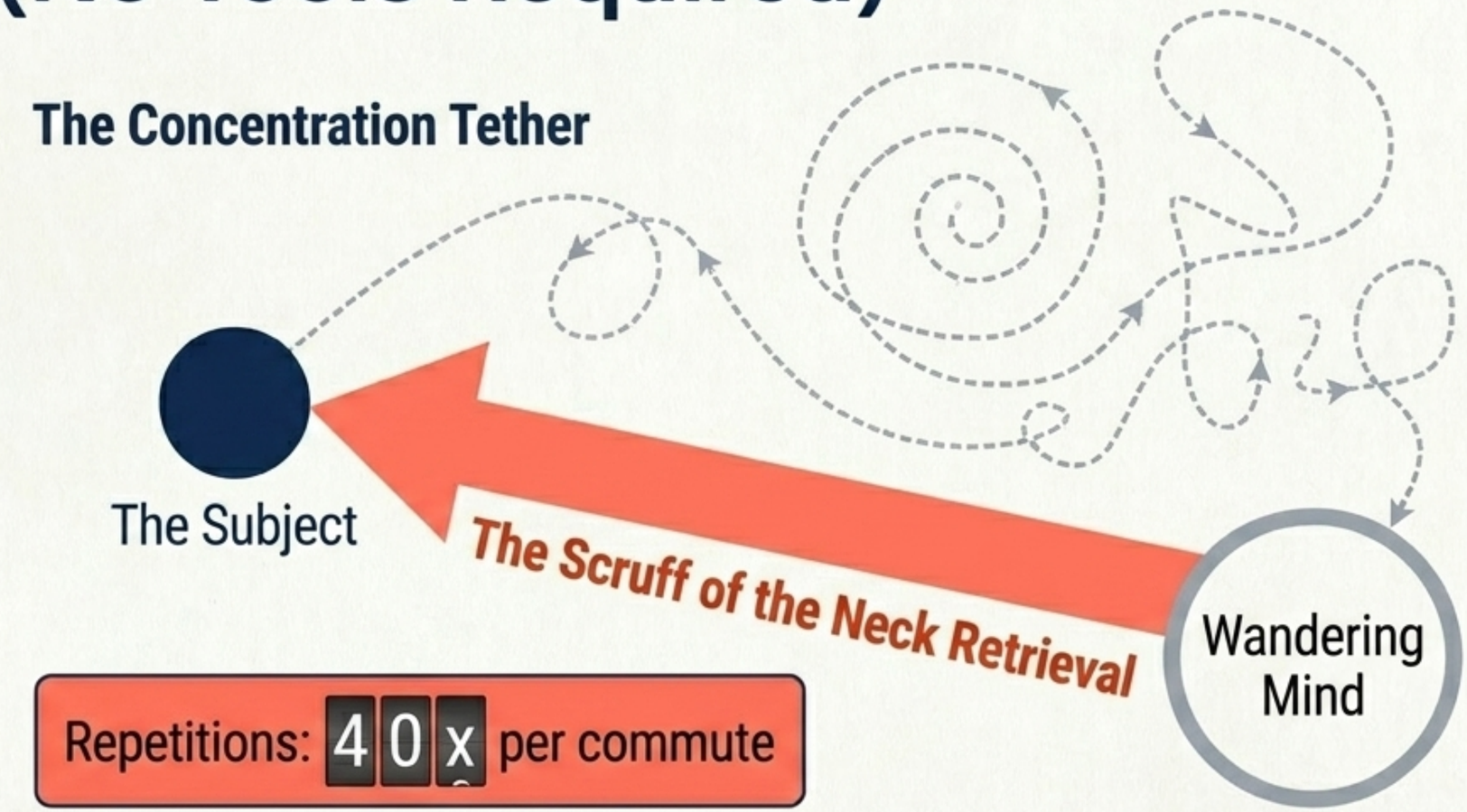
Railway companies unblushingly rob you of time.
Reading rapid-fire newspapers scatters priceless pearls of time.

The commute is a gym for your attention.

Mind Control (No Tools Required)

You will not go ten yards before your mind skips away to lark around the corner.
Bring it back by the scruff of the neck.

It is the mere disciplining of the thinking machine that counts.



"Nothing whatever happens to us outside our own brain; the supreme importance of controlling it is patent."

The Evening Commute & The Reflective Mood

The Event



Instinct



Getting cross at the waiter; losing dignity.

Reason

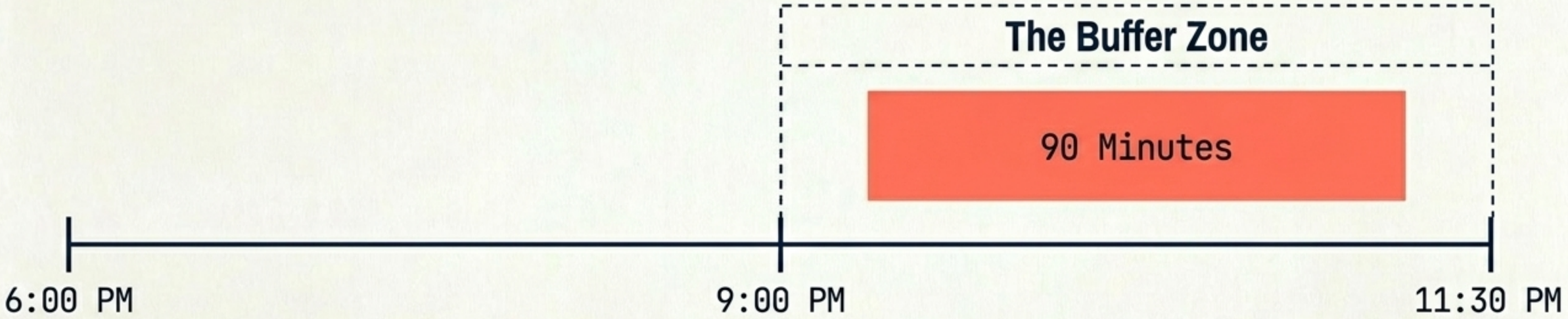


Calmness; realizing the waiter didn't cook the steak.

Use the solitude of the evening journey to study yourself. Unhappiness springs from the gap between your principles and your conduct. We are more instinctive than reasonable. Daily reflection forces reason to step into the cabinet-room of the mind.

The 90-Minute Sanctuary

Three evenings a week, dedicate 90 minutes to continuous cultivation. Allow a 2.5-hour window (9:00 to 11:30) to account for human nature and accidents.



Rule: These minutes are sacred. Treat them like a dramatic rehearsal. You must learn to say: “Sorry, I can’t play tennis, I have to work.” Tennis is urgent; the immortal soul is more so.

Cultivating the Mind Requires Friction

In the cultivation of the mind, the feeling of difficulty—of a task one part of you is anxious to shirk—is precisely the point.



A good novel rushes you forward like a skiff down a stream; it demands no strain.

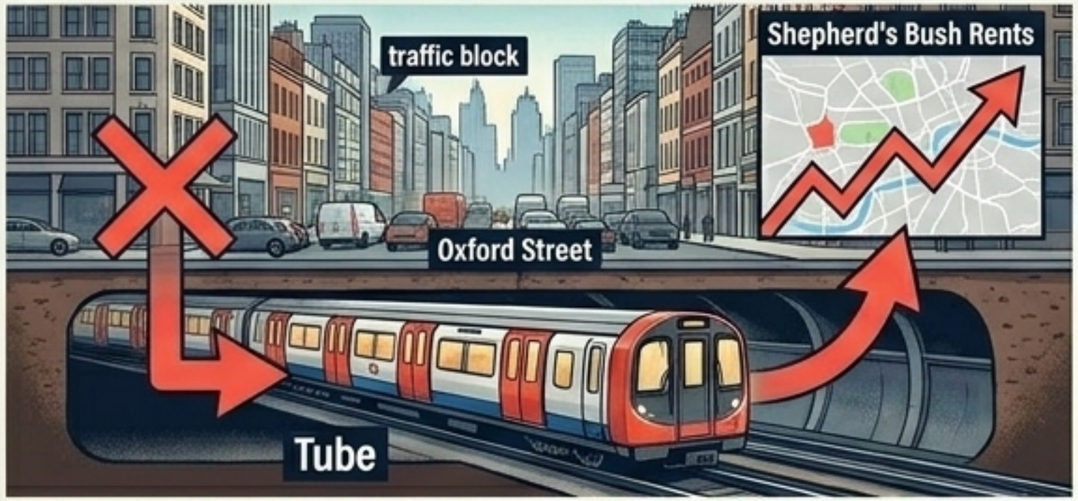
Spy out the instruments; know the gulf between a French horn and an English horn.

Highest mental exertion. The feeling of difficulty is the objective.

The Aesthetics of Cause and Effect

Nothing is humdrum. The whole complex movement of the universe is a matter of putting two and two together.

PROFILE: The Estate Agent's Clerk



A traffic block in Oxford Street leads to the Tube, which causes a spike in rents in Shepherd's Bush. This is the tremendous, changeful picturesqueness of life.

PROFILE: The Bank Clerk



Read Walter Bagehot's 'Lombard Street' to transform daily banking from a penance into an enthralling study of human nature.

The Reading Ratio

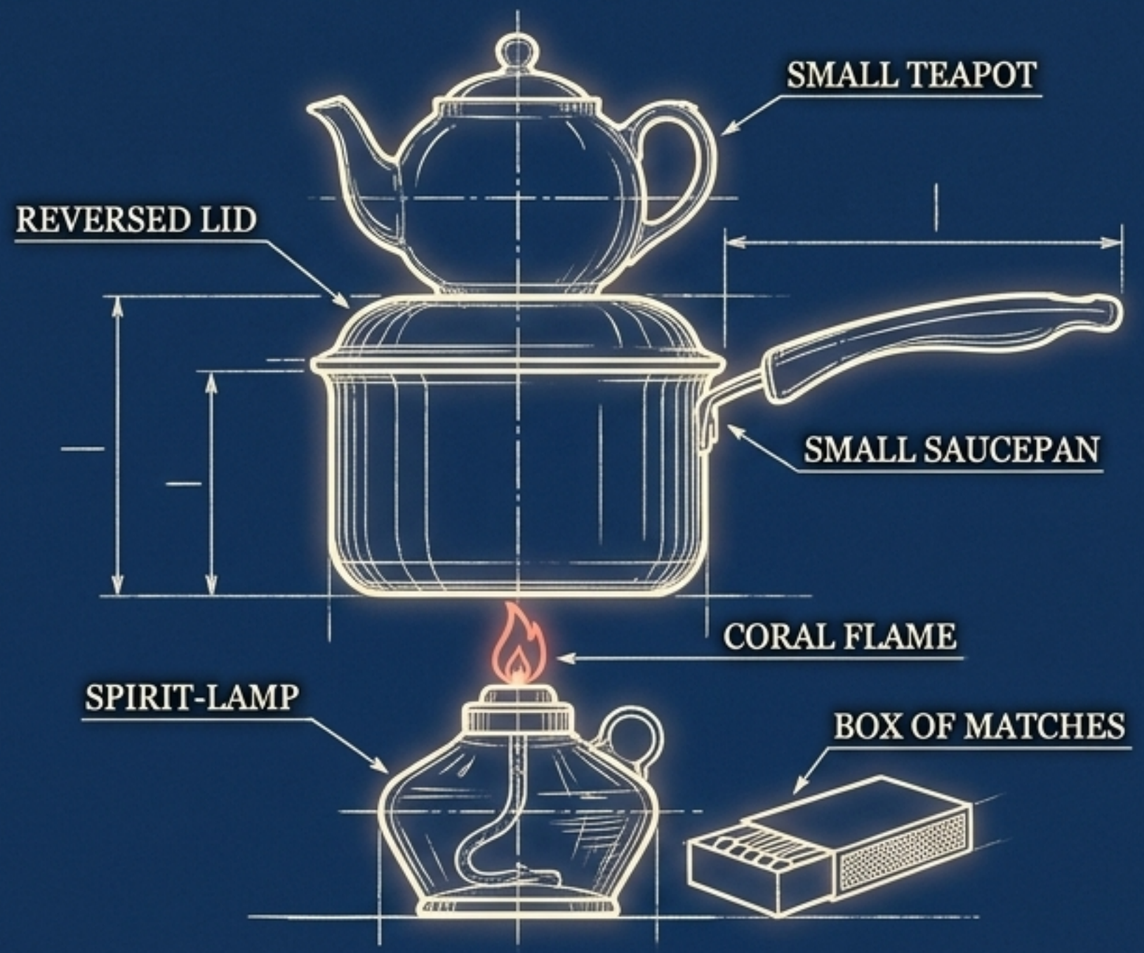


People take to reading as better men take to drink—flying through the shires of literature on a motor-car, their sole object being motion.

Unless you give at least half your 90 minutes to careful, fatiguing reflection upon what you are reading, your time is chiefly wasted.

The Spirit-Lamp Ruse (For the Genuinely Fatigued)

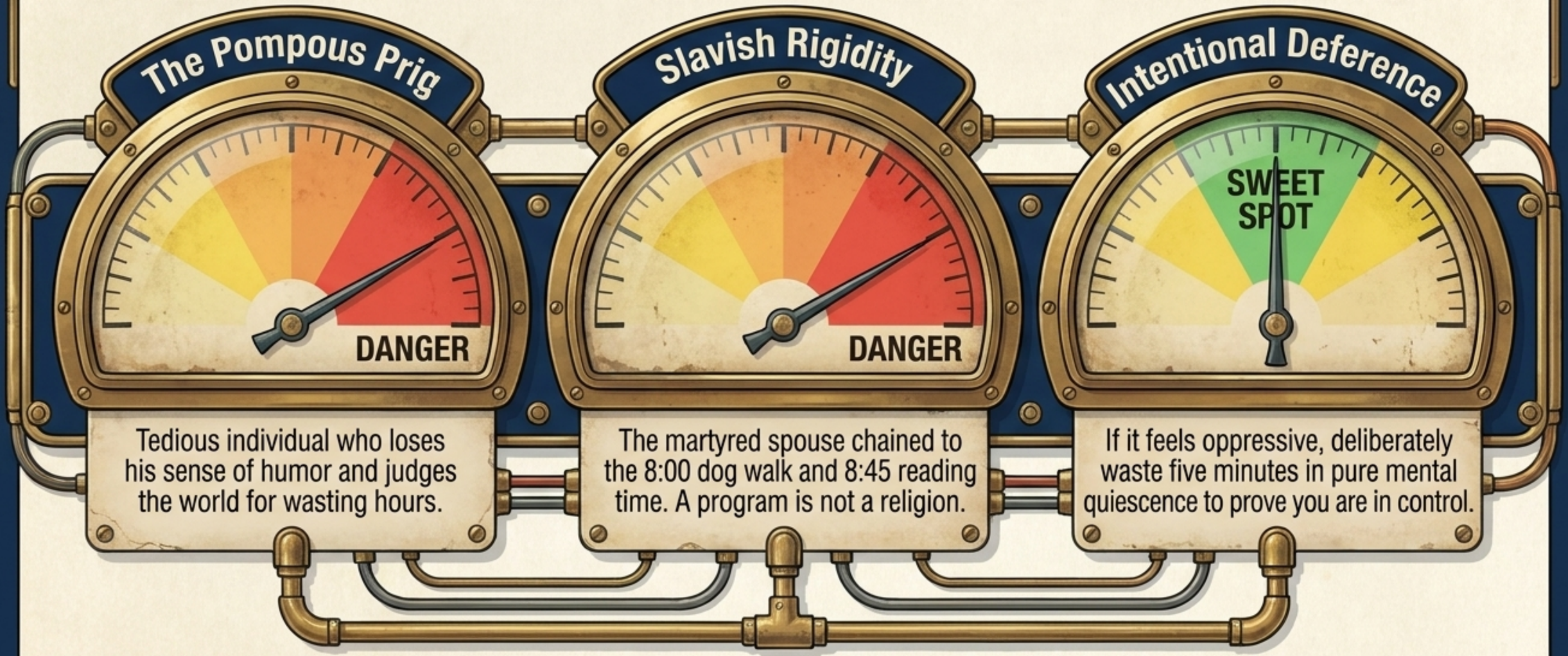
If your day's work truly monopolizes your powers, circumvent your ardour. Employ your engines before the official program begins.

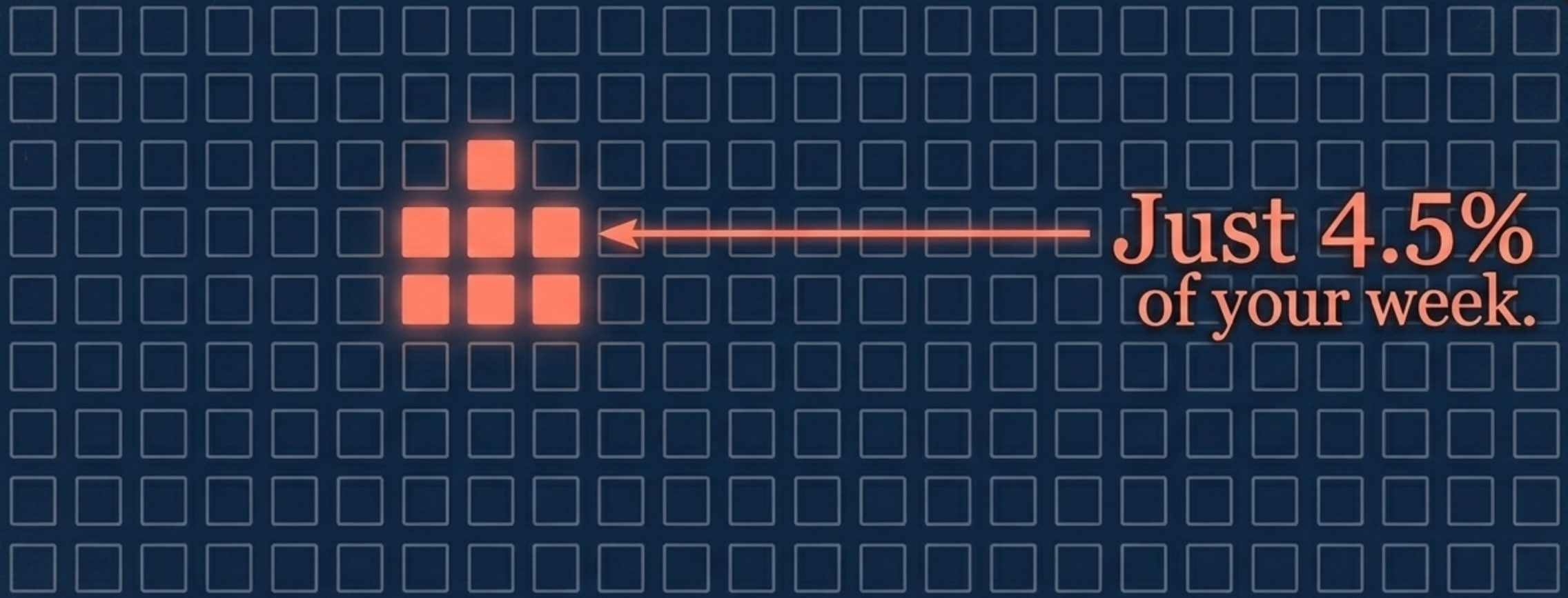


"Most people sleep themselves stupid. Rise an hour earlier."

The wise balancing of one's whole life may depend upon the feasibility of a cup of tea at an unusual hour. Instruct your fellow creatures the night before; strike a match, and begin.

Operational Dangers to Avoid

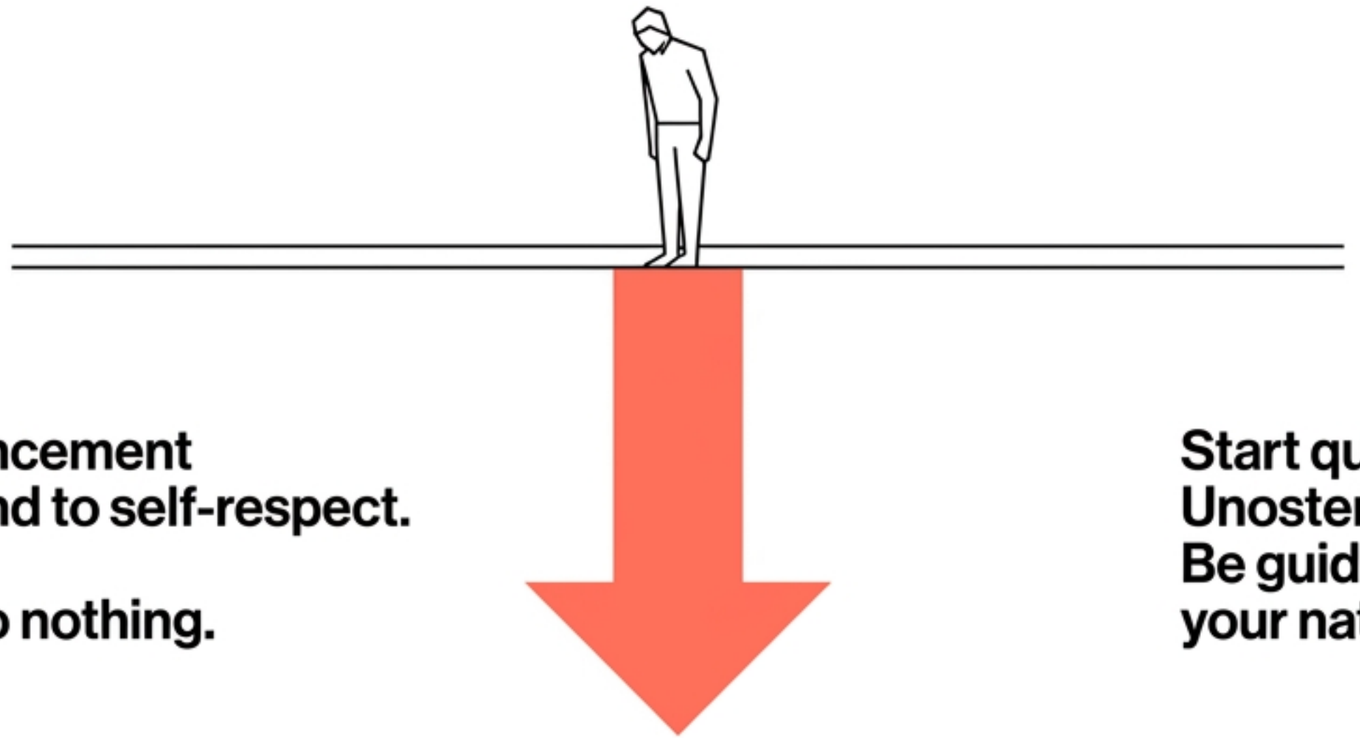




You do not need to overhaul your entire life. By capturing just 7.5 hours out of 168, you completely change the vitality and quality of the remaining 95.5%.

A trifling effort that yields the air of a miracle.

Petty Success over Glorious Failure



A failure at the commencement
deals a desperate wound to self-respect.

Glorious failure leads to nothing.

Start quietly.
Unostentatiously.
Be guided entirely by
your natural inclination.

There is no magic method of beginning. Just jump. Take hold of of your nerves, and jump.