

THE CORTISOL EDIT - FREE RESOURCE

The 5-Day Morning Reset

for exhausted women

This is not a morning routine overhaul. It is five small shifts — one per day — that work with your cortisol curve instead of against it. Print it. Check the boxes. Feel the difference.

DAY ONE

Delay Your Caffeine by 30 Minutes

- ☐ **Wait 30 minutes after waking** before your first coffee or stimulant
your cortisol peaks naturally in the first 30-45 min. Caffeine on top of that spike amplifies the crash that follows.
- ☐ **Drink 12 - 16oz of water first** - add a pinch of sea salt if you have it
dehydration is one of the most overlooked causes of morning fatigue and brain fog
- ☐ **Get 5 minutes of natural sunlight** - outside or near a window
Light exposure in the morning anchors your circadian rhythm and supports a healthy cortisol curve all day.

DAY TWO

Change How You Take Your Coffee

- ☐ **Have your coffee with or after food, not on an empty stomach** -
Caffeine on an empty stomach — when your cortisol is already peaking — amplifies the spike and the crash that follows.
- ☐ **Notice how you feel at 10AM and 2PM** - write one word in your phone notes
Most women notice the difference in energy stability within the first 2-3 days of switching
- ☐ **Do not add sugar or artificial creamer** to your morning coffee today
Blood sugar spikes first thing in the morning extend the energy crash into the afternoon

DAY THREE

Eat Something That Stabilizes You

- ☐ **Eat within 60 minutes of waking** - protein first, not carbs first
Protein in the morning anchors blood sugar and prevents the cortisol-spikes-and-crash cycle before noon
- ☐ **Aim for at least 20-25g of protein at breakfast**
Eggs, Greek yogurt, a protein shake, cottage cheese - whatever fits your life. Keep it simple.
- ☐ **Skip the pastry, granola bar, or sugary yogurt today**
High-carb, low-protein breakfast spike insulin and set up the 10AM energy drop most women blame on not sleeping enough.

DAY FOUR

Protect the First 20 Minutes

- ☐ **Do not check your phone for the first 20 minutes after waking**
Email and social media trigger a cortisol response before you have even had breakfast. You are starting your stress cycle before the day begins.
- ☐ **Do one slow, intentional thing instead** - make your coffee, stretch, sit quietly
This is not about productivity. It is about giving your nervous system a few minutes to regulate before the demands start.
- ☐ **Set a phone alarm labeled “cortisol window”** so tomorrow you remember
Protecting this window consistently is one of the highest-impact habits for women managing chronic stress.

DAY FIVE

Stack It and Make It Stick

- ☐ **Run through all four habits from Days 1-4 in sequence this morning**
Water - light - delayed caffeine - protein breakfast - phone-free window. That is your reset protocol.
- ☐ **Notice your energy at 2PM today without reaching for caffeine first**
After five days of supporting your cortisol curve, the 2pm wall should feel noticeably different - less like a cliff, more like a gentle dip.
- ☐ **Keep going for 30 days** - these nervous system habits compound over time
Five days builds awareness. Thirty days builds a new baseline. Be patient with yourself.

You are not exhausted because you are not trying hard enough. You are exhausted because you have been trying without the right support. This checklist is not about doing more — it is about doing less, better. Start with one day. That is enough.

Keep an eye on your inbox this week — I'll walk you through a little more of what actually helps, one small thing at a time.