

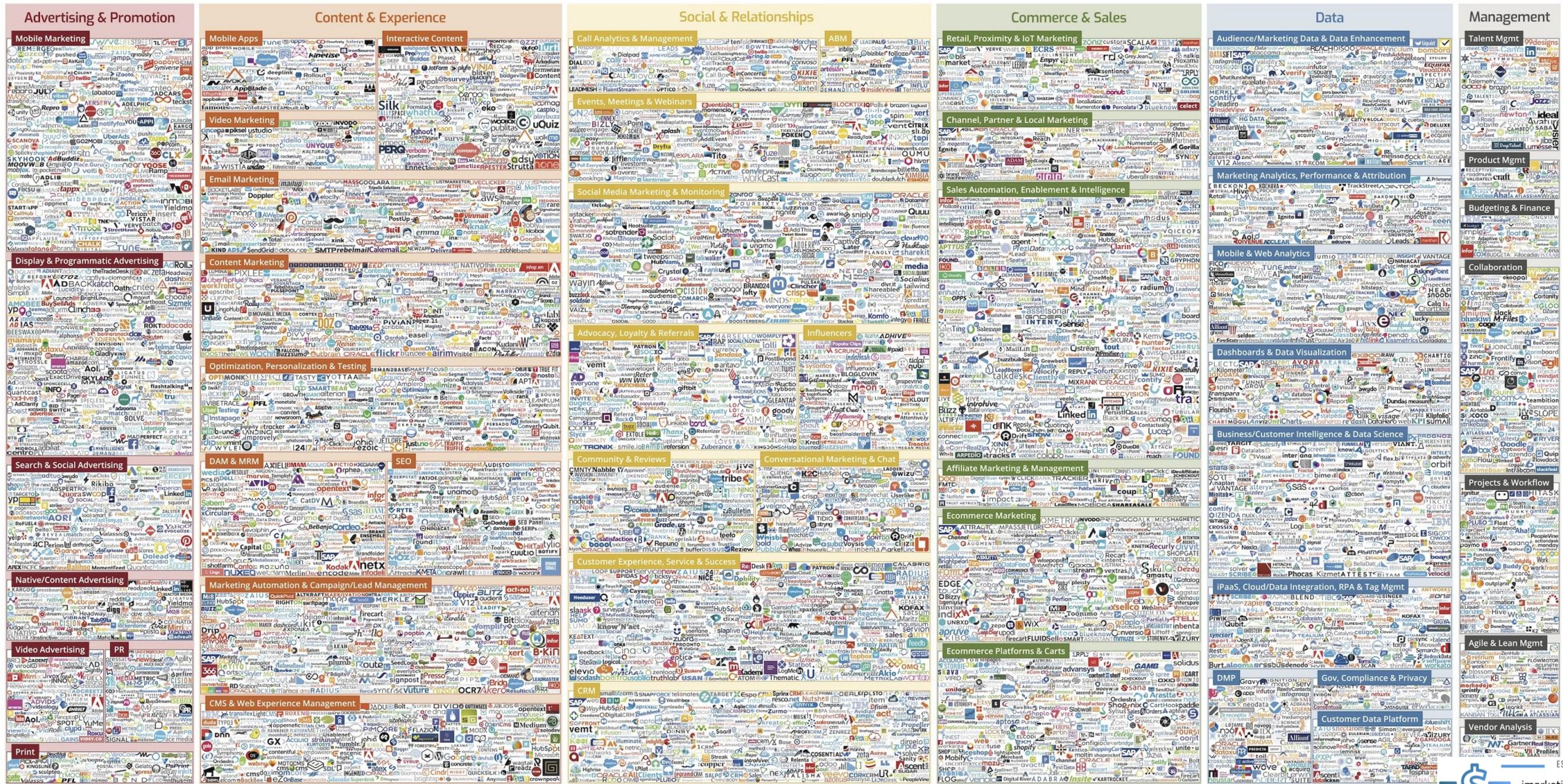
# Dopamine Detoxing, Battling Brain Melt and Defending Attention

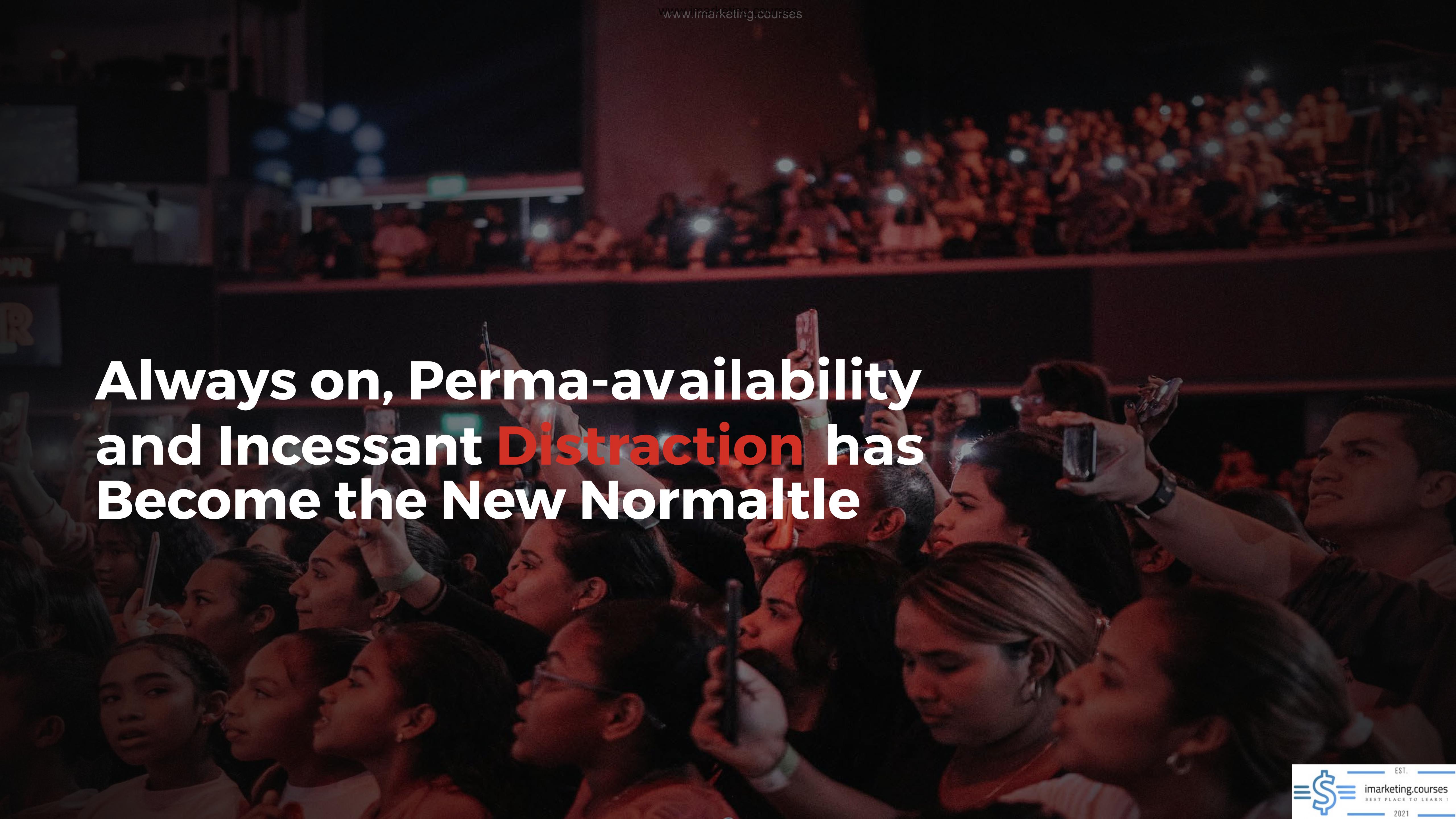
# Today's Gameplan

- 1 There's a Battle for Your Attention and You're Getting Slaughtered**
- 2 The Neurobiological Signature of Brain Melt**
- 3 Attention Deficit Trait—the Standard in 21st Century Workplace**
- 4 The Focus Advantage**

# The Attention Army Has a Hell of a Lot of Inventory

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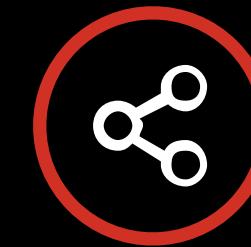


Always on, Perma-availability  
and Incessant **Distraction** has  
Become the New Normal

# The Distracted Mind: Ancient Brains In a High-tech World – Dr. Adam Gazzaley



Nomophobia - fear of being without a mobile phone. ~50% of young adults



Belief in multi-tasking ability is high. Actual performance is not. Ability to predict actual performance is varied but generally poor.



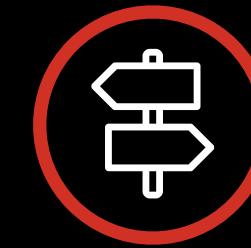
Phantom pocket vibration syndrom:  
~100% of young adults.



Strangers conversing report lower levels of a closeness, trust, empathy and understanding when there is a phone in indirect sight vs. a paper notebook

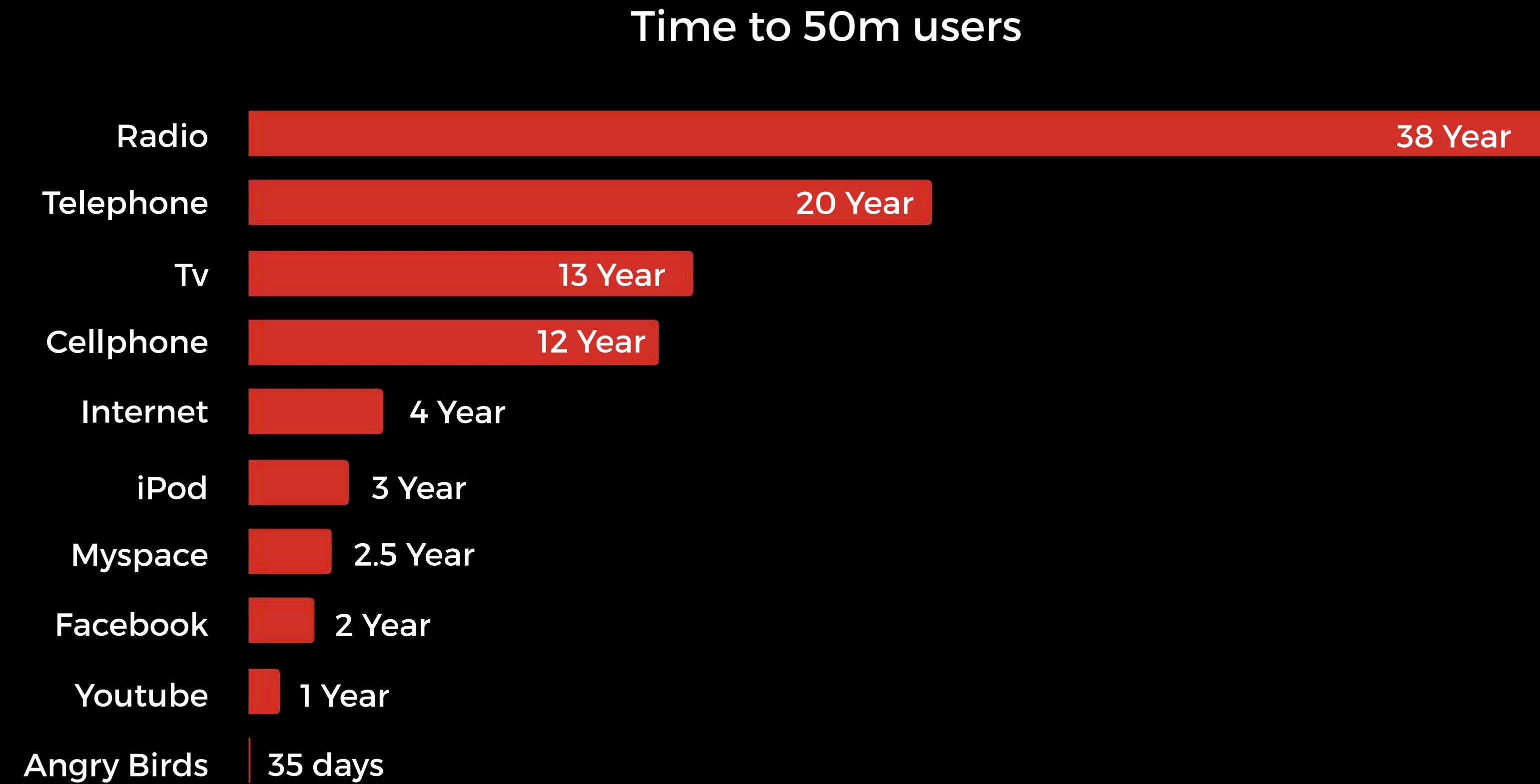


Average office: ~5m between interruptions and ~1m response times to messages.



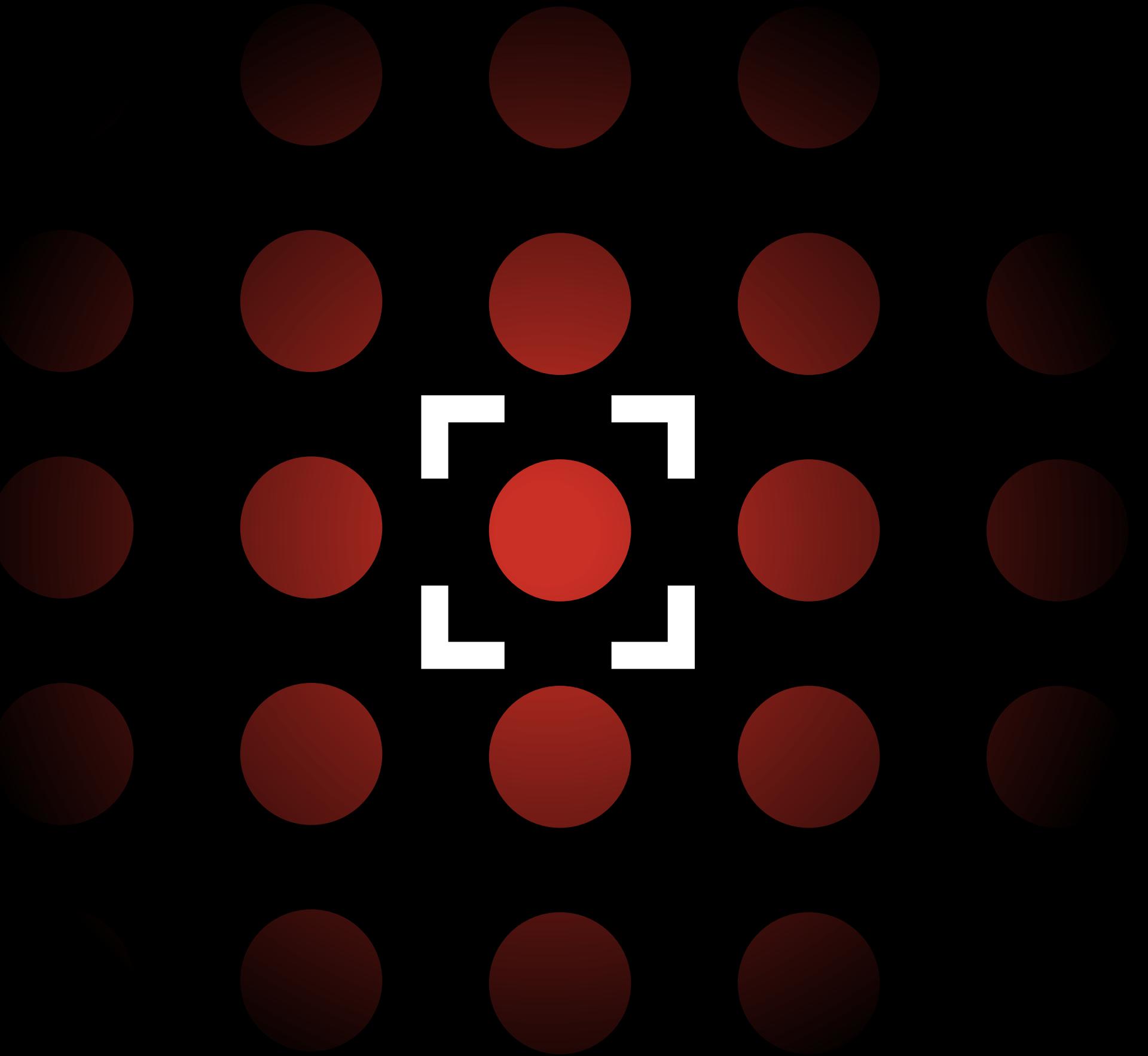
Correlational evidence for media use vs. sleep deprivation

# And It's Only Accelerating – The Uptake Speed of New Technology



# What Actually Is Attention?

“Attention is the behavioral and cognitive process of selectively concentrating on a discrete aspect of information while ignoring other perceivable information.”



# The Foglight and the Spotlight

“ Attention is the taking possession by the mind, ”  
in clear and vivid form, of one out of what seem  
several simultaneously possible objects or trains  
of thought. Focalization, concentration, of  
consciousness are of its essence.

— William James



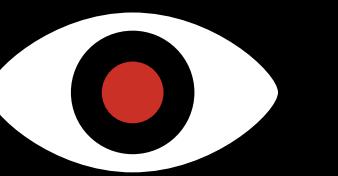
# Experience Determines Quality of Life, Attention Determines Experience

“ Attention is like energy in that without it no work can be done, and in doing work is dissipated. We create ourselves by how we use this energy. Memories, thoughts and feelings are all shaped by how we use it. And it is an energy under control, to do with as we please; hence attention is our most important tool in the task of improving the quality of experience.

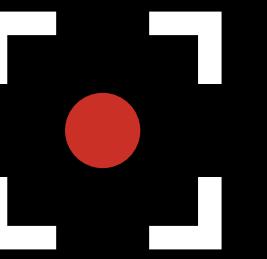
— Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi,  
*Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*



**Focus Is Prolonged Attention  
and Flow Is the State That  
Occurs with Prolonged Focus**



**Attention**



**Focus**



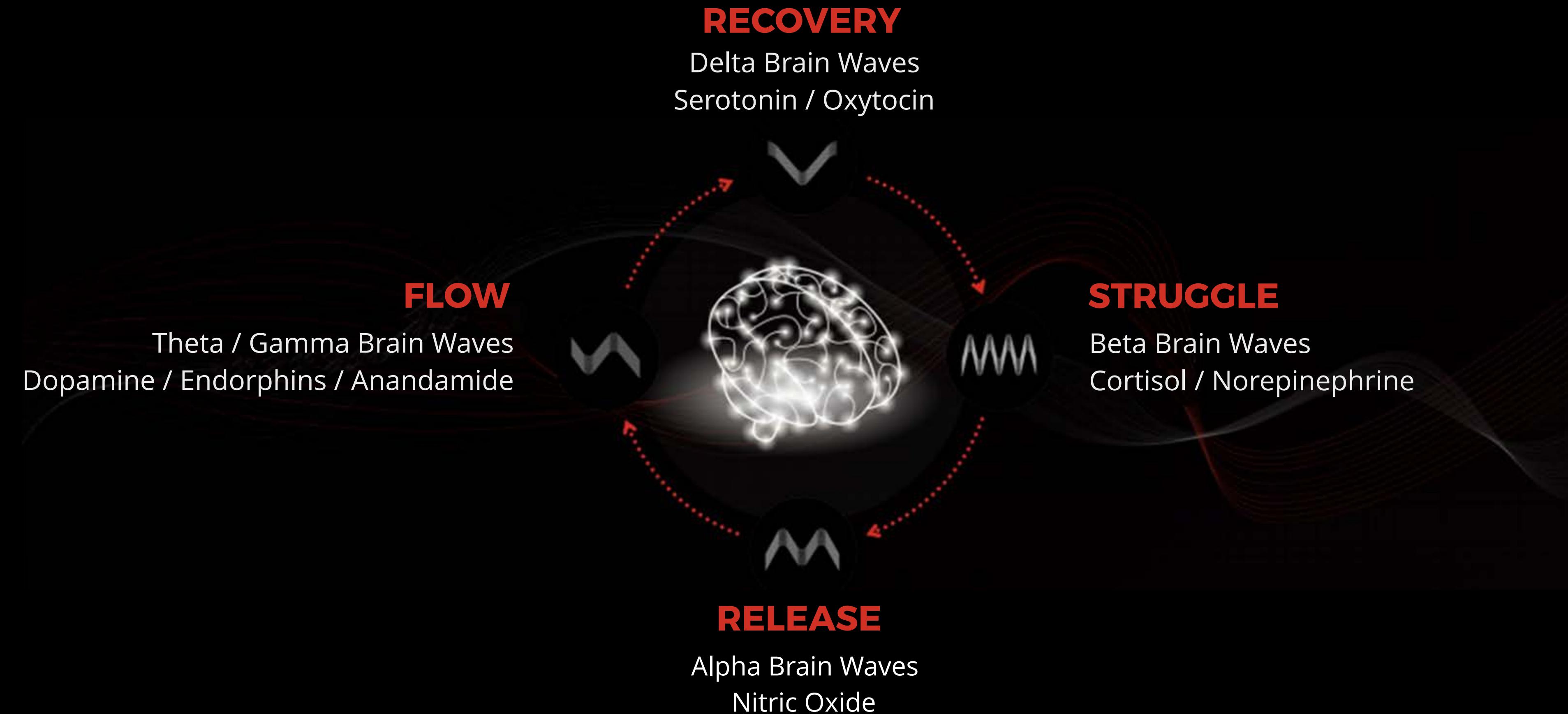
**Flow**



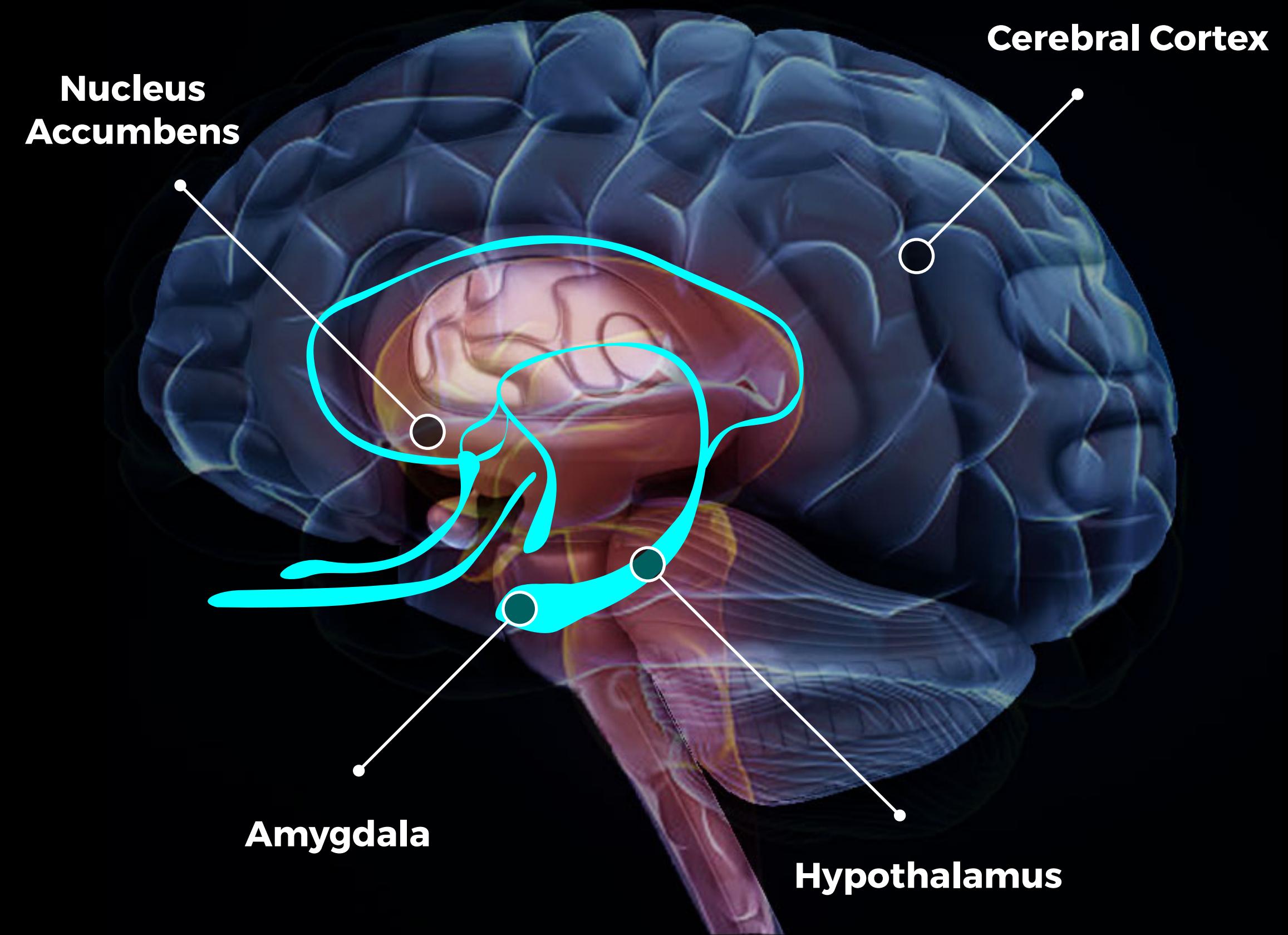
## **Distraction Is the Enemy of Attention, Focus and Flow**

- Attention is the behavioral and cognitive process of selectively concentrating on a discrete aspect of information while ignoring other perceivable information.
- Distraction occurs when we shift our attention to other information we're perceiving, that we do not want to be paying attention to.

# Distraction Means We Constantly Break the Flow Cycle



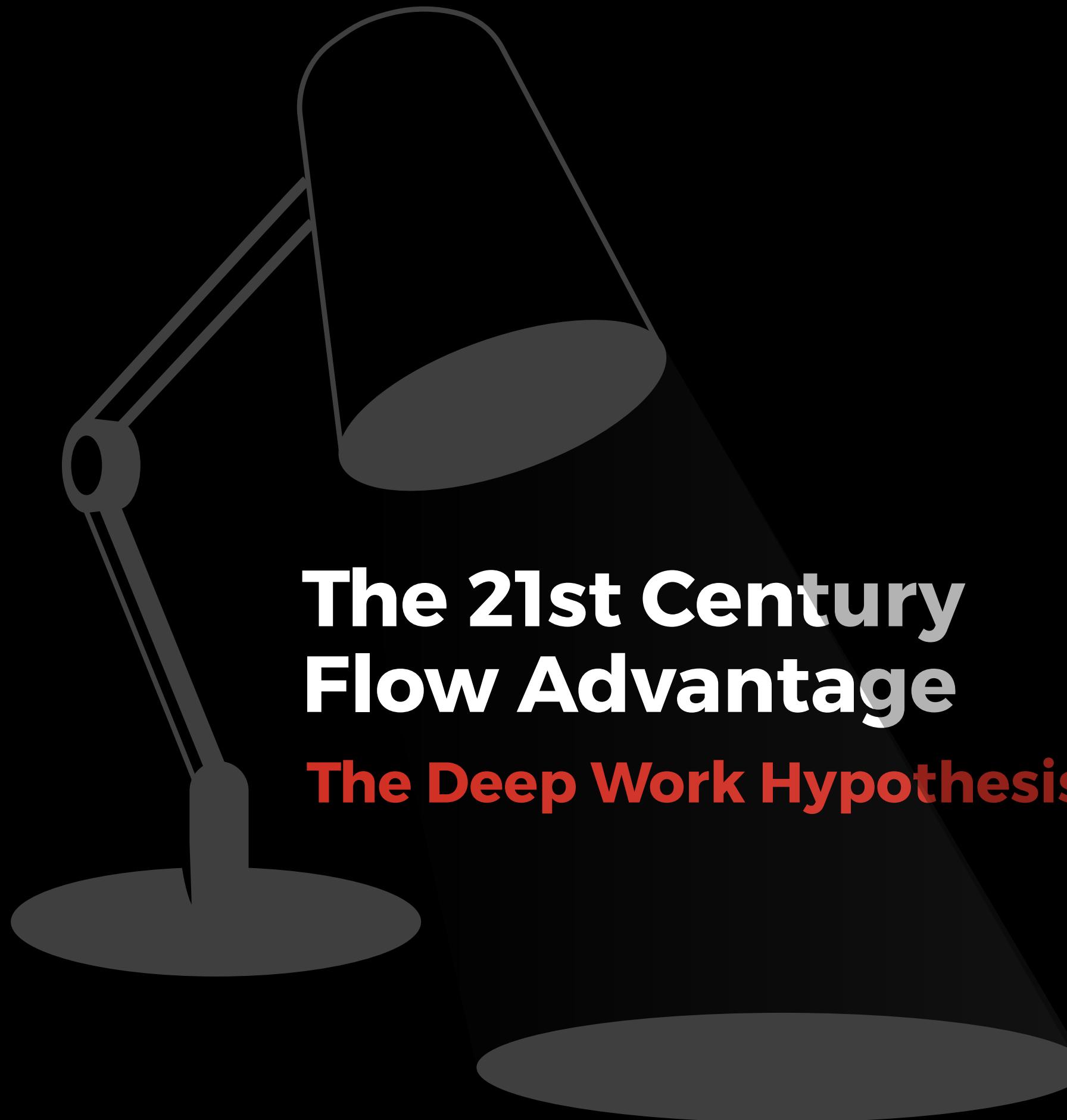
# The Impact on Our Brains and the Pleasure Principle



# The 21st Century Flow Advantage

**The Deep Work Hypothesis:**

**“** The ability to perform deep work is becoming increasingly rare at exactly the same time it is becoming increasingly valuable in our economy. As a consequence, the few who cultivate this skill, and then make it the core of their working life, will thrive.



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# The Uptick to All of This – a Massive Competitive Advantage

## ADT

- Never-ending struggle phase
- Incessant distraction
- Attention as a pleasure tool
- Dopamine addicted
- Immediate gratification



## Long Deep Flow States

- Long flow phase
- Protected attention
- Attention as precious asset
- Flow optimized
- Delayed satisfaction



# A Competitive Advantage That's Enormous and Simple to Capitalize upon

$$5 \text{ Hours Flow Daily} \times 5 \text{ Days Per Week} \times \text{Accuracy of Flow} = \text{Annihilating Competition}$$

The equation illustrates the formula for achieving a competitive advantage. It consists of three factors multiplied together: 5 hours of flow daily, 5 days per week, and accuracy of flow. The result is labeled as "Annihilating Competition", represented by a red stick figure standing triumphantly next to a bar chart.

# Annihilating Distraction Is Key to Paying Attention

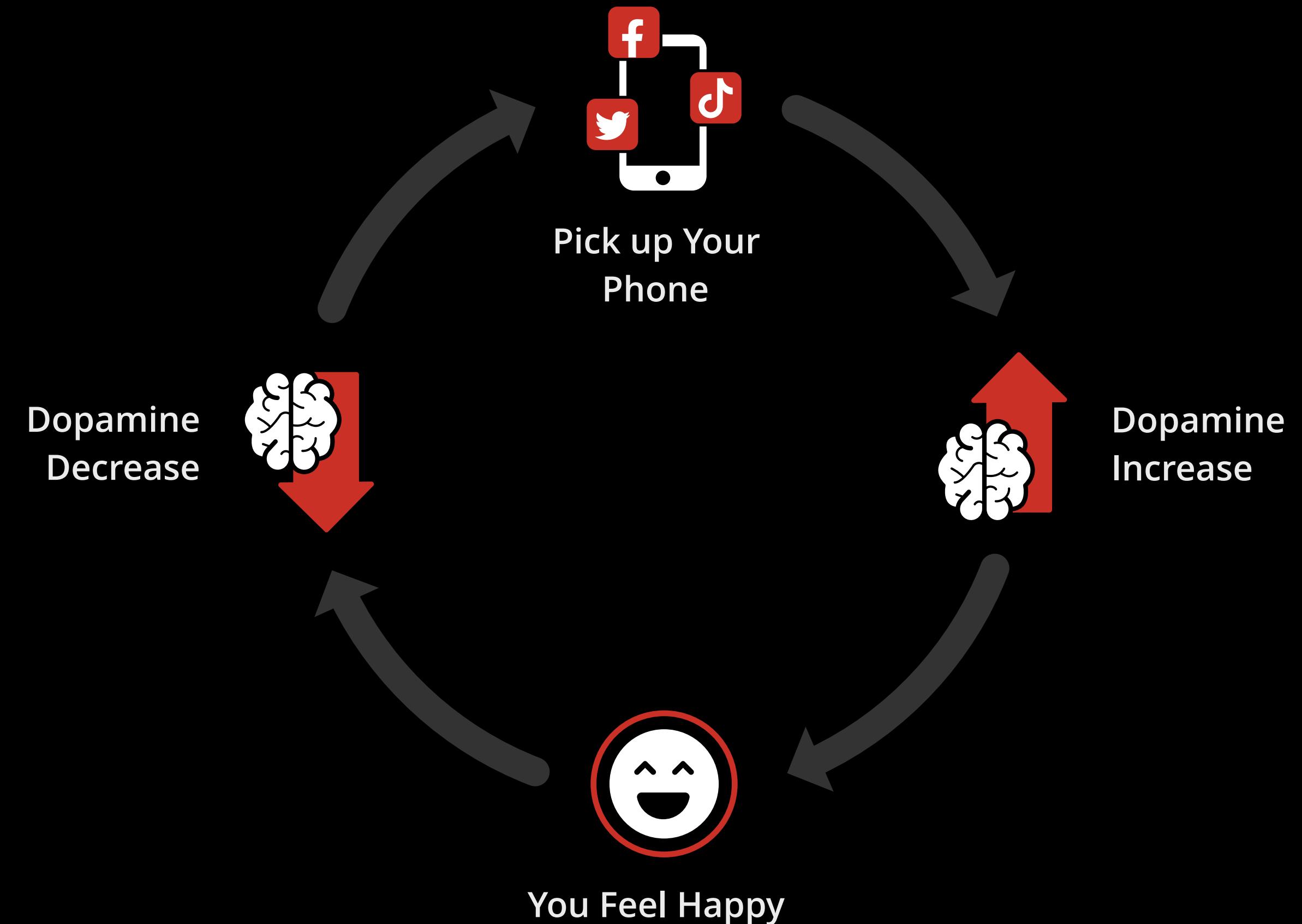
Before we try to proactively hack flow, we want to clean out all distraction.

The Two Forms of Distraction:  
**Self-imposed Distraction  
and Externally Imposed  
(Interruptions)**

- 1 Eliminate All Self-  
Imposed Distraction**
- 2 Barricade Our Attention by  
Eliminating All Disruption**

# **Three Pillars to Battling 21st Century Brain Melt and Harnessing the High Flow Advantage**

# Step 1 – Deploying Dopamine Detox



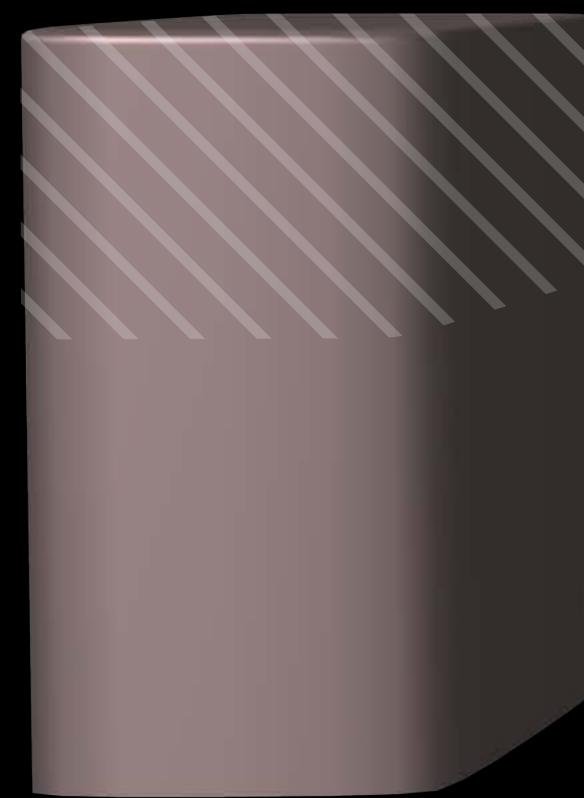
# Becoming Sensitive to Stimulation

## Desensitized to Dopamine

## Sensitive to Dopamine

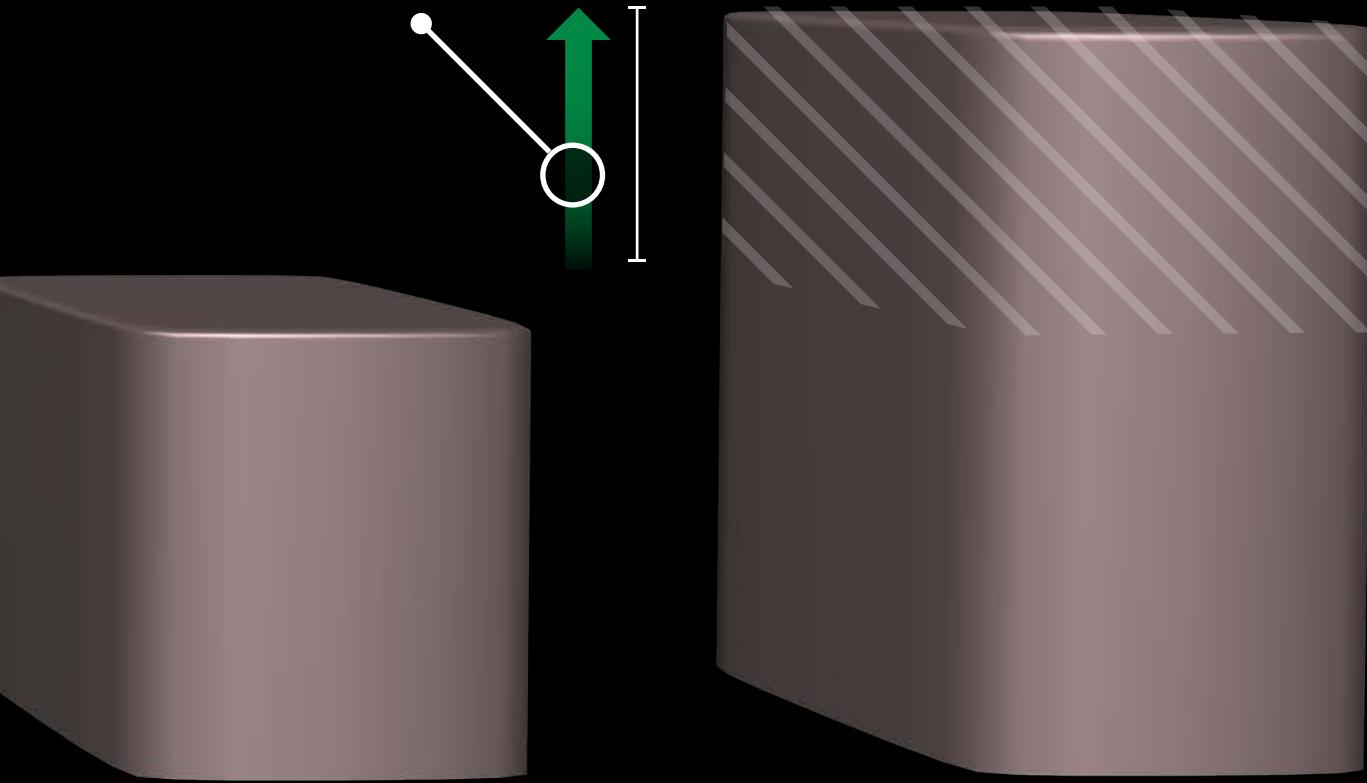
Decrease in stimulation, more susceptible to distraction

Increase in stimulation, less susceptible to distraction



High Stimulation Activity (Social Media)

Lower Stimulation Activity (Work, Reading)



Very Low Stimulation Activity (Meditating, Wall Staring, Walking)

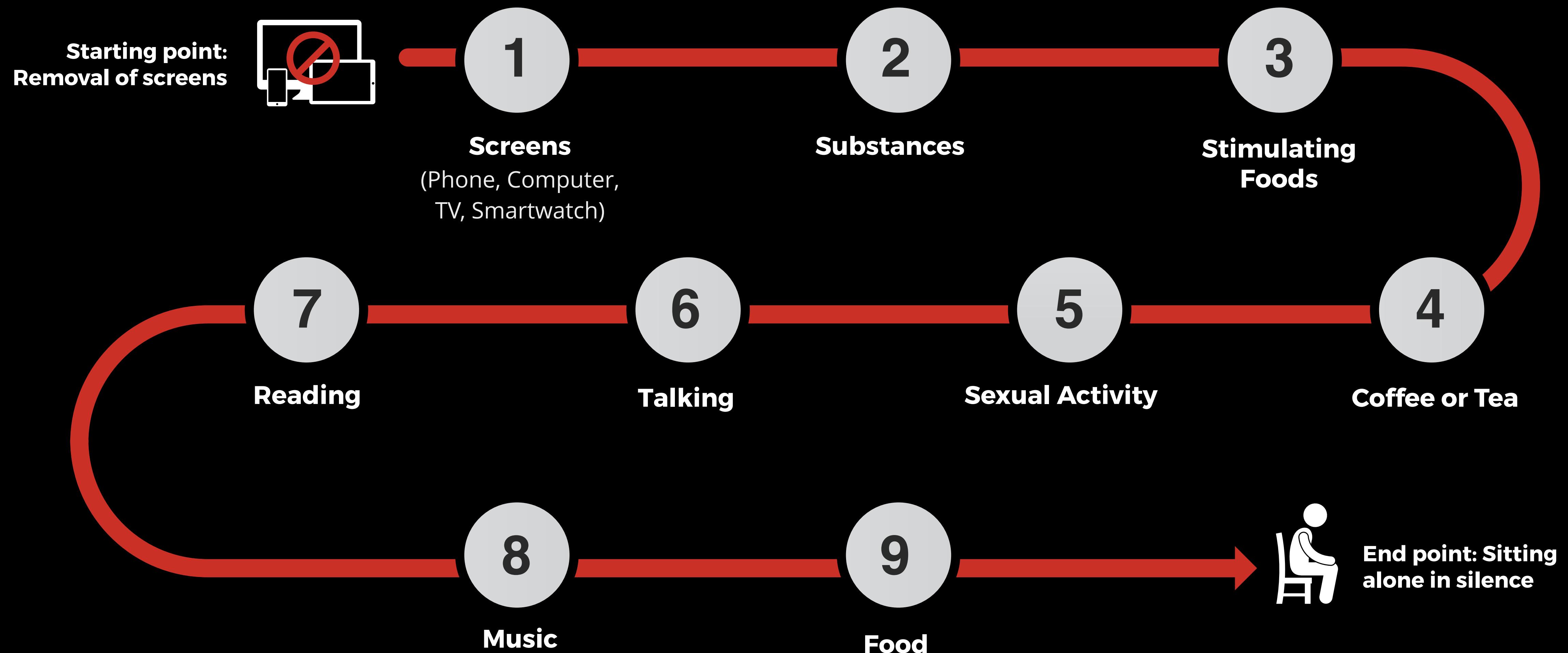
Lower Stimulation Important Activity (Work, Reading)

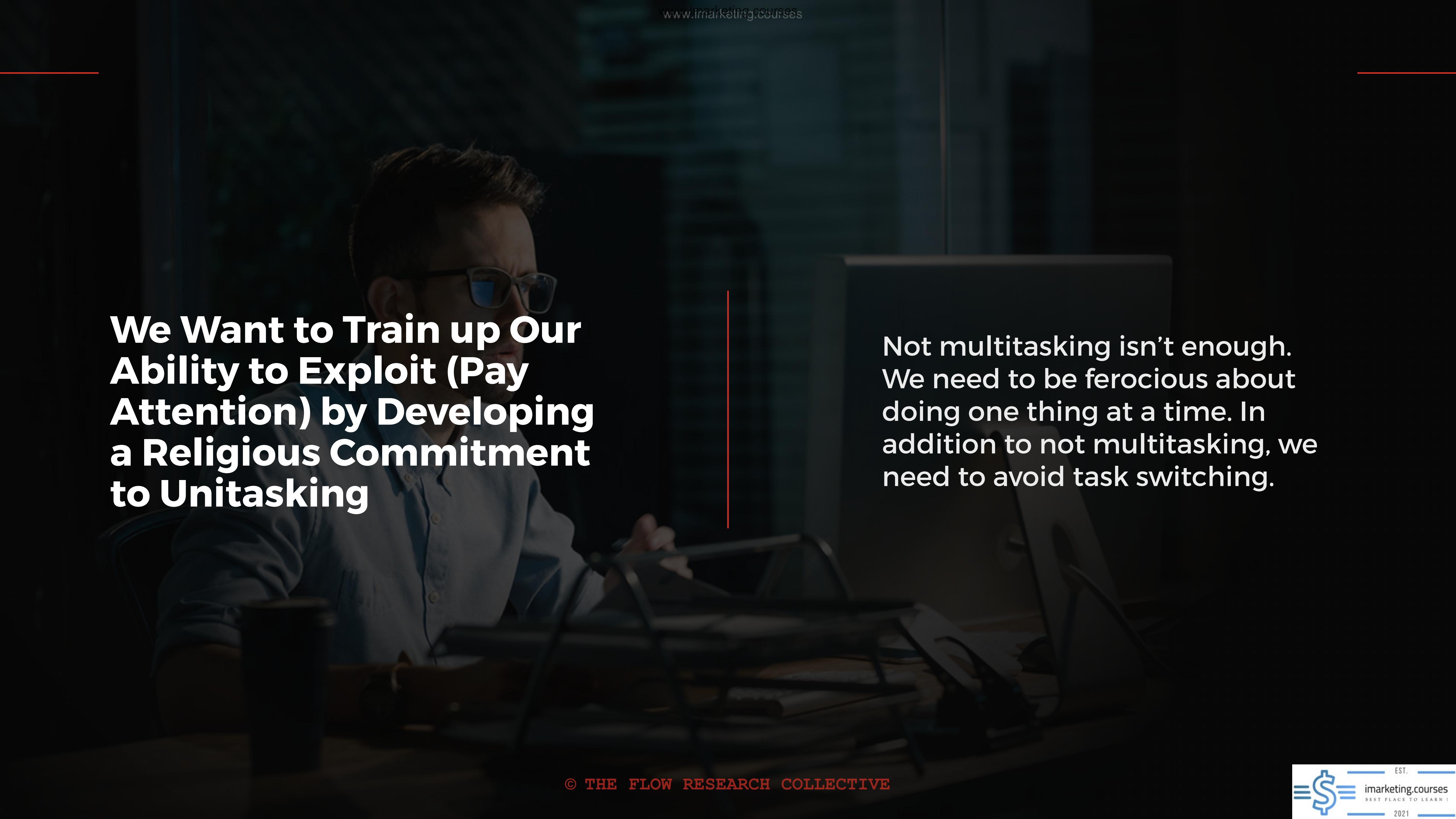
# Lower Your Baseline for Boredom by Stripping out Stimulation

**Maximize time spent without stimulation:**

- Arrive early for events and sit quietly
- Be with yourself while your dinner guest goes to the bathroom
- Wait in line without checking your phone
- Spend an evening sitting looking at a wall instead of watching TV
- Fast from eating, speaking, sexual activity
- Cut out unintentional information consumption: streaming, news, social media
- Spend time in sensory deprivation chambers

# The Fully Fledged Dopamine Fast





**We Want to Train up Our Ability to Exploit (Pay Attention) by Developing a Religious Commitment to Unitasking**

Not multitasking isn't enough. We need to be ferocious about doing one thing at a time. In addition to not multitasking, we need to avoid task switching.

# Make This a Habit – Always Focus on Unitasking...

- 1 When in the gym**  
Work out and work out only, phone on flight mode.
- 2 When speaking to someone**  
Speak to them only, phone off.
- 3 When working**  
Work only, eliminate all other distractions.
- 4 When eating**  
Just eat, don't try to squeeze-in extra work, too.
- 5 When getting ready to work**  
Just get ready, don't start responding to emails, too.

Step 3

# Developing Monk Like Impulse Control



1

# Focus on Keeping Cognitive Load Low at All Times



2

## Resist the Impulse Through Exaggeration



3

## Heighten Your Standards for Boredom by Reducing Stimulation

4

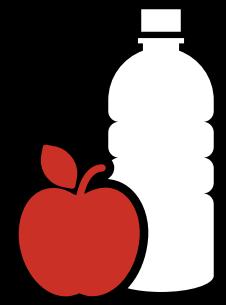
## Positive Psychology Basics All Help with Impulse Control



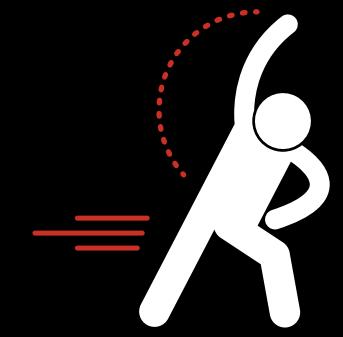
# 4 – Feed Your Impulse Control with the Positive Psychology Basics



**Sleep**



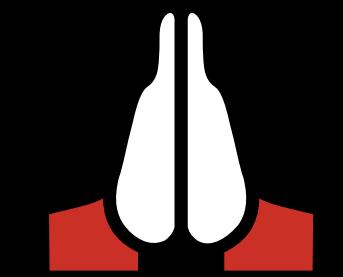
**Fuel**



**Exercise**



**Social Connection**



**Gratitude**



**Mindfulness**

5

Expose Yourself  
To Nature

# 6

## 10 Breaths to Arouse Your Metacognition

7

## **Write down the Objective of the Impulse**



# 8

## Grit Fueled Attention Span Stretching



# What We've Covered

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## Exercise:

# Distraction Management Audit



Download Workbook  
to Get Started

- 1 What are your five biggest sources of distraction in your life?
- 2 What steps could you take to eliminate/minimize them?
- 3 GO!

## Exercise: Interruption Log

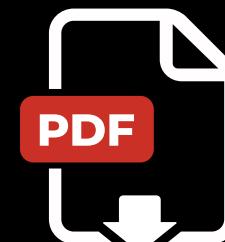
- 1 We've covered self-distraction—the bigger issue are interruptions. From today, start making a note every time you're interrupted. Note:
  - A) the source of the interruption (e.g., coworker, phone, outside noise) and the severity of the interruption
  - B) an estimate of how much it has damaged your attention.



Download Workbook  
to Get Started

Exercise:

# Schedule a Dopamine Fast



Download Workbook  
to Get Started

