



# Mitigating the Dark Side of Flow

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1. How to Play with Fire
2. Flow Hacking Risks

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# Flow Is Dangerous — “As Children We’re Taught Not to Play with Fire, Not How to Play with Fire”



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# Flow Hacking Involves Tinkering with Primal Biology

“Flow feels like the meaning of life for good reason. The neurochemicals that underpin the state are among the most addictive drugs on earth. Equally powerful is the psychological draw.”

— The Rise of Superman



# Fully Alive and Deeply Committed Is a Risky Business That Costs Not Less Than Everything



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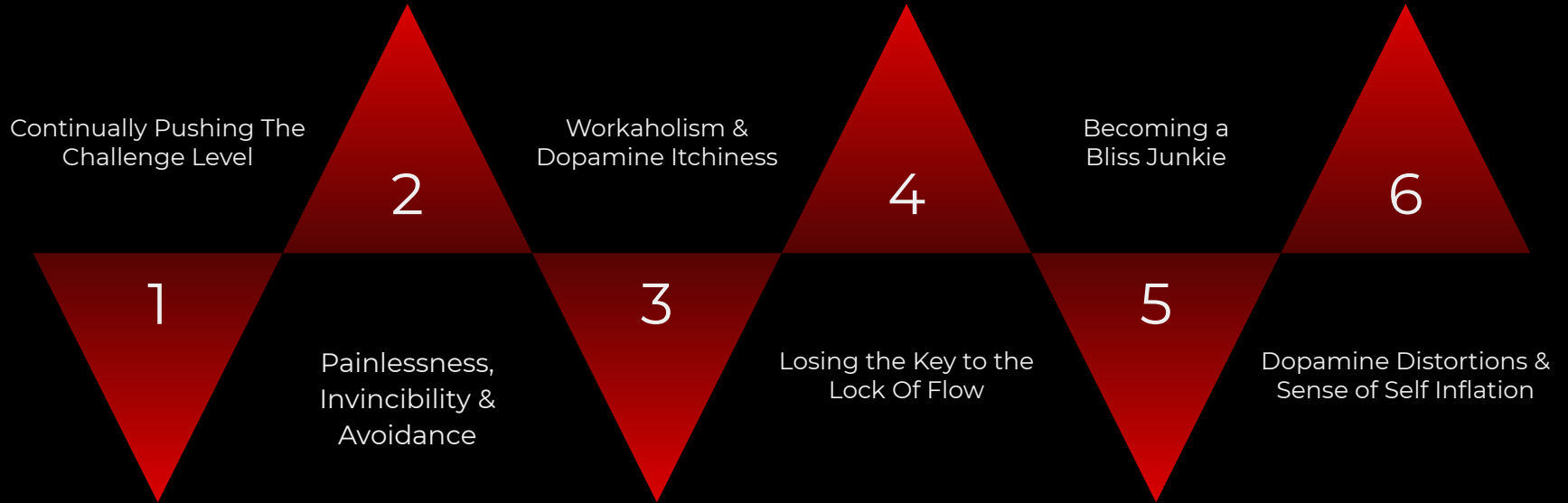
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# Flow Hacking Risks to Watch for



# Flow Hacking Risks to Watch for: Continually Pushing the Challenge Level

Sooner or later, if we stay on this path long enough, pushing past one's comfort zone is going to require exceeding traditional margins for safety.

**Solution** — When sober, derisk and objectively analyze the moves you're making, ensure that there is calculated rational thought at the foundation.

# Flow Hacking Risks to Watch for: Painlessness, Invincibility and Avoidance

Using flow to kill pain, getting a distorted sense of one's capability and avoiding uncomfortable feelings that need to be addressed.

**Solution** — Ensuring you confront uncomfortable emotions and don't mask them will flow.

"The degree to which you allow yourself to feel negative emotion is the degree to which you're capable of feeling positive emotion".

# Flow Hacking Risks to Watch for: Workaholism and Dopamine Itchiness

Discomfort when not working or engaged in flow that makes relationships and recovery challenging.

**Solution** — Acknowledging the “come-down” from work and sitting with the lack of stimulation.

# Flow Hacking Risks to Watch for: Losing the Key to the Lock of Flow

Being locked out of the state with no way back in.

**Solution** — Multiple access points to flow, all de risked and varying.



# Flow Hacking Risks to Watch for: Becoming a Bliss Junkie

Requiring flow to get good work done and relying on it for productivity.

**Solution** — Implementing everything else in this training and seeing flow as emergent property that sits on top.

# Flow Hacking Risks to Watch for: Dopamine Distortions and Sense of Self Inflation

Becoming sporadically “manic”, excessive excitement, distorted perception of one’s own worth, excessive sense of what you’re capable of.

**Solution** — Staying grounded through relationships, stoicism, perspective gaining and DISCIPLINE!

# Beware the Hypomaniac Edge

“Hypomania is the common thread that connects these world changers, a thread as invisible, as powerful, and stretching back as far in time as a strand of DNA. Ideas pour out of hypomanics, a mix of the ridiculous and the brilliant.”

— John D. Gartner, *The Hypomaniac Edge: The Link Between (A Little) Crazy and (A Lot of) Success in America*



1. Remove stimulants such as caffeine
2. Regulate your nervous system; exercise, journaling, sleep, nutrition, mindfulness
3. Anchor to routine
4. Have others “check you”
  - Seek a medical professional!



## Today's Exercise

What Is Your Highest Risk of the Dark Side of Flow?