<u>REBOOT: MAXIMIZE YOUR DAY</u>

In prison, it is virtually impossible to get a good nights rest. There's the constant noise and light interrupting our efforts to slumber in peace leaving us feeling groggy and tired (not to mention moody) for the rest of the day. But, fear not, your faithful author has poured through the research in an effort to find a solution. See below for a simple plan to jumpstart and maximize your day. (As always, with the understanding that every prison is different, adjust as necessary.)

* Wake: Look out your window or turn on the lights. This signals your brain it is time to start the day.

* 1 minute energizing routine: 10 push-ups, 10 crunches, 10 mountain climbers, 10 squats, 10 deep breaths.

* Shower: Adjust the water temperature to the coolest you can handle without discomfort, hit the hot spots, and finish with a 1 minute cold rinse. (Warm-to-cold showers have been shown to reduce sickness by up to 54% and linked to more energy and thus higher quality of life.) Pat dry. Moisturize and apply sun block.

* Breakfast: 1/2 protein, 1/2 carbs and fat recipe has shown to improve mood. My breakfast is oatmeal, spoon of peanut butter, mixed with powdered milk.

* Music: Listen to some upbeat music. Music stimulates the brain's limbic pathways releasing the feel-good hormone, dopamine.

* Drink 1 cup of caffeinated coffee or tea -- easy on the sugar, real milk is best as mixer.

* Lunch: Try to get as much protein and fruits/vegetables off your tray - avoid empty carbs like white bread and sweets.

* Nap: 20-30 min. max.

* Energy boost meditation: Sit up straight in a chair, shoulders back; inhale deeply through the nose slowly for 4 seconds letting your stomach expand while rolling forward until your bent over your stomach resting on your thighs. (This automatically signals your body to drop your blood pressure.) Hold for 4 seconds. Finally, exhale hard while slowly rising over 8 seconds until you're back in the starting position. The oxygenated blood pumps through

your veins so both your body and brain get a boost of O2 and energy.

* Body-weight exercise: The late afternoon work-out will help you sleep later.
Try to work-out before dinner.

* Dinner: Should be your smallest, healthiest meal of the day -- more like
a big snack than a meal. No carbs or sweets. (An additional late-night snack
is okay as long as it's protein packed; think nuts, seeds, fish, et cetera.
Also, a warm beverage before bed can help you sleep;decaf tea or coffee without
sugar or a glass of milk is fine.)

* Turn off all screens at least one hour before bed.

* Plan your day for tomorrow. Journal. Give thanks for 5 things that happened
today.

* Read for at least 30 minutes before bed. It has shown to reduce stress
by up to 68%. No puzzles or crosswords right now, leave that for earlier
in the day when your mind is fresher and more agile.

* Sleep: Undress down to your boxers and socks (staying cool will help you
fall asleep faster, while keeping your feet warm will help keep you asleep
when your body temperature drops in the middle of the night), eye mask, ear
plugs (a fan on high can work as a make-shift white noise machine in a crunch).

Be patient, do your best, and in time you will see a measurable increase in
both your energy throughout the day and your sleep at night. Enjoy.

By Leo Cardez (pen name)

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