KESTON SCHOOL

BODY & ENERGY · FREE SAMPLE

Winter Energy Reset

Steady energy and routines through the dark, cold months

CHAPTER 1 + WORKBOOK SECTION

BEFORE YOU START

How to use this book

By the last page you will have a simple winter plan that gets daylight into your mornings, keeps you moving when it is cold, gives every week something to look forward to, and holds your routines steady from November to March, without pushing through on willpower.

1. Read one chapter at a time. Each one gives you a single idea and a single action.
2. Open the Winter Energy Reset Workbook and complete the matching section while the chapter is fresh.
3. Do the “Try this” action within seven days. Reading changes what you know; the action changes what you do.
4. Finish with the checklist in chapter 12 and come back to it whenever you slip.

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CHAPTER 1

The Long Dark Stretch

Recognize your own winter slump, see why pushing through until spring rarely works, and start a one-week energy log.

It is a Tuesday in late November. You leave for work in the dark and come home in the dark. Somewhere in between, the sun made a brief appearance while you were in a meeting room with the blinds half closed. At home you mean to cook something proper, call a friend back and maybe go for a walk. Instead you eat something quick on the couch, scroll for an hour you will not remember, and go to bed feeling oddly tired for someone who barely moved all day.

Nothing is wrong, exactly. You are just running on low. And you have a feeling it will stay that way until March.

The slow slide

The winter slump rarely arrives in one dramatic moment. It slides in. In October you still walk in the evenings, because it is light enough. In November the walks get shorter, then become weekend-only, then stop. The gym bag sits by the door for two weeks and then moves to the closet. Dinner with friends turns into "let's do it after the holidays." You start sleeping later on weekends and feeling foggier on Monday.

Each change is small and sensible on its own. Of course you skip the walk when it is dark, wet and cold. Of course you stay in when everyone else does too. But stacked together over four or five months, those small sensible changes add up to a season in which you feel slower, flatter and more closed in than you would like.

Many people describe the same pattern in almost the same words:

- **Heavy mornings.** The alarm feels earlier than it is, because it is still dark outside.
- **The afternoon fade.** Energy drops away by mid-afternoon and does not come back.
- **Couch evenings.** The evening shrinks to food, a screen and bed.
- **A smaller world.** Fewer plans, fewer people, fewer reasons to go out.
- **Habits on pause.** Exercise, cooking and hobbies quietly stop until spring.

If you recognized yourself in three or more of those, this book is for you.

Why pushing through does not work

The usual response to the winter slump is one of two strategies. The first is to push through: grit your teeth, keep the summer routine, and blame yourself when it does not hold. The second is to wait it out: accept that winter is a write-off, hibernate, and promise to restart in spring.

Both fail for the same reason. They treat winter as a temporary interruption to normal life, when in fact it is a third of the year with its own conditions.

Pushing through asks your willpower to beat the weather every single day. You might manage it for a week. But a routine that depends on fighting the dark and the cold each morning is a routine you are going to lose, and when you lose it, you also lose a bit of trust in yourself.

Waiting it out has a quieter cost. Four or five months is a long time to put your energy, your habits and your relationships on hold. And spring does not restart them for you. You come out of winter having to rebuild everything you dropped, often from a lower starting point.

> **Key idea:** Winter is not a break from your normal routine. It is a season that needs a routine of its own.

What this book will and will not do

This book is about everyday habits: getting more daylight into short days, moving when it is cold, keeping a steady daily rhythm, and giving each week something to look forward to. These are practical, ordinary changes that most people can make without special equipment or a big budget.

It is not medical advice, and it is not a treatment for any condition. Feeling a bit slower in winter is common. But if your mood stays low for weeks, if you lose interest in things you usually enjoy, if you are sleeping far more or far less than usual, or if you struggle to get through ordinary days, please talk to a doctor. Persistent low mood and tiredness can have many causes, and a professional is the right person to look into them. The habits in this book can sit alongside that help. They are not a replacement for it.

Try this: a one-week winter energy log

Before you change anything, find out what your winter actually looks like. For the next seven days, take two minutes each evening to note the following in your workbook:

1. **Daylight.** Did you go outside while it was light? Roughly for how long?
2. **Movement.** How much did you move beyond the bare minimum? A rough guess is fine.
3. **Rhythm.** What time did you get up and go to bed?
4. **Contact.** Did you spend real time with anyone, in person or on a call?
5. **Energy.** Rate your energy from 1 to 10 at three points: morning, mid-afternoon and evening.

Do not try to improve anything this week. Just observe. Most people find the log surprising. Some discover they have not been outside in daylight on a working day for weeks. Others notice that their energy rating is fine on days with one particular thing in them, such as a lunchtime walk or an evening with a friend, and flat on days without it.

Keep the log honest, even if a day looks bleak on paper. It is not a grade. It is a map, and you will use it to build your winter plan.

At the end of the week, circle the day with the highest energy and the day with the lowest, and write one sentence about what was different between them. That sentence is often the first clue to what your winter needs.

Next, we look at what winter actually does to an ordinary day, and why four small drains add up to such a large effect.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The winter slump is a pattern, not a personal failing.
- Willpower alone loses to months of short, cold days.
- A one-week log shows where your winter energy actually goes.

→ Workbook, section 1

01 The Long Dark Stretch

Log one ordinary winter week before you change anything.

FILL IN

My one-week winter energy log

Day	Daylight outside (min)	Movement	Up / bed	Contact	Energy AM / PM / eve

CHECKLIST

Winter signs I recognize in myself

- [ ] Heavy, dark mornings
- [ ] The afternoon fade
- [ ] Couch evenings
- [ ] A smaller world, fewer plans
- [ ] Habits on pause until spring

My highest-energy day vs. my lowest: what was different?

Has my mood felt low for weeks, or have I lost interest in most things? If yes, when will I talk to a doctor?

YOUR NEXT STEP

Want the whole book?

You just read chapter 1 of Winter Energy Reset and tried the first workbook section. The full e-book has 12 chapters, a complete workbook and a final checklist. Here is everything inside:

01 The Long Dark Stretch

02 What Winter Does to Your Day

03 Five Months on Low

04 Give Winter Its Own Plan

05 Chase the Daylight

06 Move Through the Cold

07 Plans to Look Forward To

08 Winter in Real Life

09 When Winter Wins a Week

10 Set Winter on Autopilot

11 Every Winter Gets Easier

12 Mistakes & Checklist

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