

The Metascript Method

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Introduction to the Metascript Method

In this first section I'm going to introduce you to the concept of a Metascript journal, what it's for, and share some considerations on how to get set up.

Faulty Permission

The root of all your self-created problems come down to one simple reality:

You act poorly because you give yourself permission to act poorly

Read that sentence again and soak it in. This truth is your key to tremendous personal power and transformation.

Every time you relapse with your addiction, shirk your disciplines & responsibilities, or just generally act in a degenerate manner, it's because you gave yourself permission to do so.

Most guys resist this truth and the power it contains because it hurts their ego and makes them feel ashamed. They feel like there must be something outside of their control that's causing them to fail, not their own choice!

I get that. I know how hard many men out there are trying to change. They will even invest hundreds or (in the case of my personal coaching clients) thousands of dollars into achieving their personal transformation. The vast majority of these guys still experience instances of failure where they relapse into the very behaviors they've invested in overcoming.

So even if you're giving 100% effort - is a failure still the result of giving yourself permission to fail?

Yes. Most definitely.

And that's not a bad thing, that's a good thing. It means that the power is truly yours.

But here's another reality that makes this first one a bit more bearable:

We almost always give ourselves permission to act poorly UNCONSCIOUSLY while on "AUTOPILOT".

Either the decision flies completely beneath our radar and we don't even know that we've broke bad until we come to our senses later, OR we are unconsciously captured by some self-deceptive emotion that causes us to rationalize bad behaviors as good.

The core issue though is that we grant ourselves permission to behave poorly because we've lost connection to our "centered self".

Our "centered self" is the part of us connected to our highest values, clearest reasoning, and most authentic desires. Every time we behave contrary to this part of us, it's because our connection to this part was either weakened or altogether absent.

The goal then is to increase the strength and constancy of this connection. When you are plugged into your most centered self, then not only do you KNOW what's best, you'll be able to ACT on it.

Faulty Conditioning

The main issue that causes us to fall into uncentered states is that we suffer from faulty conditioning.

To use a computer analogy, it's like we've installed some faulty computer code. When that faulty code runs, we act in opposition to our most centered self.

The thing that causes these bad scripts to run is what is known as a "trigger" or a "cue". So for example: If a guy is trying to quit using pornography, a trigger might be a woman walking by with a low cut shirt.

When she walks by, it sets off the "porn addict script" in his psyche which activates the neural circuits in his brain associated with sensations of craving and rationalizations to watch porn.

If the guy 1) doesn't catch this switch occurring or 2) know how to rewrite the script, then chances are he'll just follow through with acting out and using porn.

Solution: The Metascript Method

That's where this guide comes into play. I want to teach you how to recondition your brain to stay connected to your centered self in the moments of critical decision making. This means better behaviors, better habits, better thinking and a better life.

The way we will be doing this is by applying a set of journaling techniques I've dubbed *The Metascript Method*. These techniques will allow you to "rewrite" the script that your brain plays out in the moments that matter.

I believe I'm in a unique position to write a guide like this because not only have I personally journaled for self-development purposes for 12+ years, read countless journals on forums I've been a part of (or run myself), but I've also been paid to monitor and provide feedback on the journals of dozens of paying coaching clients.

When it comes to journaling, I know what works and what doesn't. And to put it bluntly, the way most people intuitively journal just *doesn't work* (if they can even get themselves to do it at all).

However, when used properly, journaling can be THE ULTIMATE WEAPON for your personal transformation. There is nothing so convenient and powerful as a properly used journal for developing yourself.

Don't think of the Metascript Method as a set of writing exercise. Think of it as a ritual that creates a direct line to your highest and most powerful self.

Getting Set Up

Thinking isn't enough

The first thing to understand about reprogramming your conditioning is that just trying to make things happen "in your head" isn't enough.

There are two main reasons for this: limited brain power and the "cheapness" of thought.

Limited Brainpower

Our working mental capacity is pretty limited. If you start juggling more than a couple variables in your head at once, your brain short circuits and stops performing well.

Can you solve the math problem 945881 divided by 67 in your head? Unless you're some crazy math savant, probably not. There's too many pieces of information for your brain to keep track of.

In the same way, when you're dealing with more involved circumstances and emotions, it's simply unrealistic to expect yourself to be able to make good decisions in your head.

Thoughts are cheap

Thoughts are cheap. And thank God for that. If I had to take every thought I've ever had seriously I'd be in some crazy trouble. Our brains seem to naturally be wired with an understanding that not everything they produce is going to be of top quality.

For example, how many weird, random, irrelevant, or even disturbing thoughts have flitted through your brain throughout your life? Probably too many to count.

Because of this, our brain takes our thoughts only semi-seriously.

Despite all of us intrinsically understanding this principle, how many of us then try to rely on our thoughts alone to create lasting behavior change?

The answer: Far too many.

There's a good chance you're leaning too much on "doing it in your head" if you're stuck "trying" but not getting results.

Extended Brain

We solve both the limited brain power and "cheapness of thought" in the same way: using a journal.

Remember that math problem I gave you above? While you probably couldn't do that in your head, you could probably do it on a piece of paper (assuming you remember how to do the long division process).

A journal acts similar to a piece of scratch paper for mathematics. It allows you to lay down your variables of thought, emotion and circumstance in an external & observable place which then frees your mind to focus on finding a solution rather than just trying to keep track of all the various details.

A journal also solves the "cheapness of thought" issue by turning your thinking into an activity that gives your brain much more to sink its teeth into. By forcing your thoughts into an articulated and recorded form, you are adding a tremendous amount of neural weight and clarity to those thoughts.

The act of journaling a thought first crystallizes the thought into some coherent form and then externalizes it, placing it outside of you into the material world - separating it from all the easily ignored thoughts left bouncing around in the ether of your mind.

Written or Spoken?

So now we understand the value of a journal, the next topic to clarify is where this journal should be kept.

For most of you, some form of written journal is going to be the most convenient, effective, and comfortable.

However, there are people who simply won't write in a journal. They just won't. I know this because these people often invest a ton of money into personal coaching but then

steadfastly refuse to write in their journals despite the number of times they say they are going to.

While initially this was quite frustrating for me, I've come to accept that some people don't want to write, *they want to talk*.

If this is your situation, I believe you should use a voice recorder rather than a written journal. Forcing your thoughts into spoken word will still activate your brain significantly more than just whispering half formed notions inside your wrinkled thought machine.

If you are going to go the voice recorder route, you can enhance this process by trying to minimize dead space in your recording. Pause the recorder when you are thinking and then press record when you've got a statement ready. This forces a similar sort of condensed clarity that writing is excellent for.

The bottom line is that either written or spoken, you need something to physically DO when you are practicing the metascript method journaling techniques so that your brain is properly activated and engaged.

Setting Up Your Metascript Journal

If you are going the spoken route, then your options are limited. Get a stand alone voice recorder or use an app on your phone.

But when it comes to a written journal, the question is whether you should go with some electronic option or a simple analog notebook. There's pros and cons to each approach:

I've heard that studies have shown that physically writing out your journal entries activates your brain more and leads to greater beneficial effects for behavior change. I can see that being the case for sure.

I personally love my handwritten journals - I love that by writing things out by hand it creates one of a kind mental artifacts of intense personal value. My journals, filled with coffee rings, drawings, and in some cases tears, have become some of my most prized possessions.

The experience of hand writing is also very nice (especially if you invest in nice materials). I love the soothing and tactile process of putting my fountain pen on paper when so much of my time is spent sitting at the computer.

However, paper is slower and often messier than an electronic option. Additionally, it can be somewhat inconvenient to carry a journal with you all the time.

Electronic journals can be carried on your phone and synced to all your devices. This becomes very useful especially with a couple of the techniques I'll be showing you later on. It's easy to whip out your phone and record a quick entry without anyone batting an eyelash.

But perhaps the most powerful thing about an electronic journal is that you can keep one in a place where other people can see it. Depending upon what you're working on, there's likely an online community somewhere that you could post your journal entries and get incredibly valuable feedback.

For example, in my Vanguard community I have tons of guys keeping and sharing journals in our online forum around their process of quitting porn, engaging in dopamine detoxes and generally living on the front lines of life.

They put their struggles, their wins, and their failures on display (usually anonymously). This allows them to then harvest the valuable feedback and support of their peers.

So what should you do? Analog, private digital, or public digital?

Honestly, whichever you'll actually use.

It's also okay to use more than one journal. For example, I use my paper journal for my main metascripting work, but when I'm engaged in a specific challenge I'll sometimes make a public thread in my community about it for accountability. I'll also use my private electronic note system for conveniently capturing quick entries for specific kinds of challenges that require lots of self-check ins.

The reality though is that what you use is less important than actually using *something*. Don't worry about having things perfectly neat or optimizing for reviewing later. Reading through your journal entries is beneficial, but nowhere near as beneficial as actually creating those entries.

As long as you put the right things into your journals, you won't even need to go back and re-read them (even though you might benefit from doing that). Metascripting is a thinking tool for generating specific RESULTS, it's not about creating a life-log.

So take a moment to decide where you're going to write your metascript journal entries. Once you do that, you can move on and start learning what these entries are all about.

The Critical Moment Mindset

In this section I'm going to be covering some issues with the way people usually journal and then teaching you what "critical moments" are and why they are absolutely essential for creating personal change.

Top Journaling Mistakes

When people are left to their own devices in journaling they tend to record:

- Insights they've uncovered
- Things that have happened to them
- Feelings about those things
- Random life details

When people try to get a bit more intentional or maybe follow some popular techniques out there, they begin to record:

- Stream of consciousness longform writing
- Long emotional vents to "get it all out"
- Lists of different variables like pros & cons to help solve problems
- A pre-packaged set of affirmations
- Things they are grateful for

Now all of the stuff I've mentioned so far can be quite mentally and emotionally useful. I welcome and encourage you to do these things as much as you please.

However, none of these approaches will reliably drive lasting personal change.

Why?

Because they all almost unanimously ignore the MOST important thing that determines whether you actually end up modifying your behavior.

They all miss what I call "critical moment analysis."

Reconditioning the Critical Moment

The critical moment is that "fork in the road" moment where you decide whether you will turn left and follow your old conditioning, or turn right and take the new path you're trying to build.

The simple reality is that if you make good decisions in your critical moments, you change. If you don't, you stay stuck in the same old patterns.

So for example, if you're on a diet and you're cutting out sugar, the critical moment is the point where you decide whether you eat a donut or a chicken salad.

If you're quitting porn, the critical moment is when you decide whether you type the porn site's url into your browser or not.

If you are trying to become a more productive man, then the critical moment is when you decide to either get to work or watch one more YouTube video.

The things that happen before and after these critical moments matter (and we'll talk about them in a bit) but they don't matter nearly as much as these actual moments of decision.

The reason is because it is these decisions on which everything else hinges. Earlier I said:

"You act poorly because you give yourself permission to act poorly"

It's in the critical moment that this permission is granted or denied. If you can get a handle on how you show up in these moments, then you ultimately control the direction of your life.

There are two conditions to making sure that you consistently choose the right path:

1. You are conscious of when a critical moment is occurring & not just reacting unconsciously on autopilot
2. Your brain is operating on good thinking (rather than self-deceptive rationalizations) so you can make the right decision

The goal of our journaling then will be specifically about training your brain to be able meet the two conditions above. We want you conscious and we want you thinking in alignment with your highest values and intentions.

If you ONLY journaled about your critical moments toward these ends and ignored everything else, that would still likely be 10x more effective for behavior modification than all the other kinds of journaling I mentioned previously.

However, before we jump into the exact journaling exercises that will give us power over our critical moments there are a few things we need to define.

In particular, we need to figure out exactly which critical moments you are going to be focusing on controlling, and then we need to set up your "brain bridge" which will inform exactly what you end up writing to achieve that control.

Focusing Your Narrative

Without focus in this process, you will be lost. So let's take a moment here to talk about this critical concept.

Defining your Main Objective

In order for the Metascript Method to help you change your habits and lifestyle, you'll need to be focused about where exactly you want to create a shift.

The reason for this is simple: Since the Metascript Method revolves around working with your critical moments of decision, we need to know WHICH critical moments of decision to focus on.

Since every waking moment offers the opportunity to make a decision, unless we finely tune our filter it is too easy to see *every* moment as a critical moment. And if every moment is equally important, then every moment is also equally as *unimportant*.

To properly restrict your focus and maximize the leverage of your efforts we must define our MAIN OBJECTIVE. A couple points about main objectives:

- A main objective is a goal where you are looking to seriously modify your habits or conditioning in a positive way.
- A main objective is typically different than just a project or responsibility. A project or responsibility can only become a main objective if it requires you to step a fair bit outside your comfort zone or modify your current behavior patterns in a significant manner.

Examples of common main objectives:

- Lose X amount of weight by following a diet plan X
- Quit porn & masturbation by utilising the [Reforged Man program](#)
- Get side business making X amount of money per month by working X number of hours per week on it
- Write 1000 words on your book per day
- Find a girlfriend by approaching x number of women per week

IMPORTANT: If you have a main objective of *removing* something, then you must also make sure you define what you will be doing **INSTEAD** to fill that time and energy.

It's BEST when you have only one main objective. One MO means maximum focus and highest chance for change. When you have a particularly challenging MO, then you will want only one.

Two main objectives can work as long as you're truly dedicated and have the mental and emotional resources to devote to the process.

Three main objectives should almost never be pursued. The only exception would be when you have extreme external motivations pushing you to change (i.e. you **HAVE** to change or suffer dire immediate consequences). If you aren't 100% sure you are in the category then you probably aren't.

If you want to go higher than three then get outta here. You're falling victim to shortcut thinking and this is about real change.

[I talk more about main objectives, which ones I recommend, and how to structure them (usually in 90 day chunks) in my [Man of Action series](#). Also, you see me using the idea of quitting porn a lot - this is perhaps the most powerful thing to quit out of any of the common bad habits guys have. You can find out more about this [here](#).]

But for our purposes here, you just need to figure out what part of your conditioning you wish to transform.

When it comes to choosing your main objective, a good rule of thumb is that if the thought of your objective instills TWO of the three following feelings, then you're probably on the right track:

- Excitement about achieving something you truly care about
- Hopefulness for a reduction of some form of chronic pain or suffering
- Just a little bit of fear & worry over whether you can pull it off*

**The last one might seem a bit odd, but a little fear can keep you sharp and is a good sign that you're stepping out of your comfort zone into the growth zone. Just be smart about this - too much fear can be counter productive and simply signal that you aren't ready for this goal yet.*

As someone who took years to figure out how to just be patient and focus on only a few things at a time, I have a message to all of you out there who are resistant to this limited focus idea:

You can always do more if you have the energy and enthusiasm - the thing we are restricting here is the number of “hard-line goals” you have & are focusing on improving via the Metascript method.

So for example, let's say you *aren't* choosing a diet or exercised based main objective right now. Does that mean you can't work out and need to eat pizza and ice cream every meal?

No, of course not. If you're feeling like you're up to working out and making yourself a healthy meal, then go for it (in fact, you probably should do this). But if you're feeling overwhelmed & pushed to the limit by your current main objective then it's okay to drop or limit this discipline it as you develop strength in your main objective.

Basically, the idea is that you are free to engage in as many additional habits and pursue as many goals as you like, but you just don't tell yourself you HAVE to do them.

Sometimes you'll just need to save certain changes things for future phases. That's totally fine and normal.

I also highly discourage tracking a dozen different habits. This dilutes the power and meaning behind habit tracking.

Note, if you are following the Dopamine Detox methodology, then check out [this video](#) for some more guidance on selecting your main objective.

Habits are Connected

As you travel the path of pursuing self-mastery, you'll come to recognize that the majority of your behavior patterns are (often intimately) connected.

For example, if you are trying to write a thousand words a day on your new book you will quickly realize how much sleep you get determines how hard it is for you to hit that thousand word goal. When you are well rested, you write much better and more easily than when you're tired due to staying up too late.

As you focus on trying to get enough sleep, you'll find that your sleep is impacted by a number of things like whether you eat a bunch of junk food before bed, or if you stay up late bingeing some kind of electronic entertainment.

Whether you eat well or binge electronic entertainment might be tied to how well you managed your stress that day (with higher stress levels leading to more pleasure seeking escape).

Perhaps your stress levels depend heavily on how well you managed your relationship with your boss or your spouse or your kids that day. Or perhaps it depends on whether you did your meditation and got some exercise.

We could keep going but I think you get the picture. While the critical moment for your main objective might be that fork in the road where you decide to sit down and try to hit a thousand written words or not, there are numerous other decisions that can impact *how difficult this moment is*.

Because of that there are times when you may need to expand your objective and critical moment focus.

When to Expand Your Objective and Critical Focus

On one hand we cannot get too caught up in trying to get everything perfect. If you need to be perfect with all your relationships, your stress management habits, your eating, and your sleep in order to write a 1000 words a day (or whatever your main objective is)... then you'll probably never hit that goal.

Focusing on optimizing how you show up at your critical points helps keep you from falling into that trap of having to be perfect at everything.

However, we also cannot ignore that some things might be essential for your success.

So for example, let's say you are trying to quit videogames. The core critical moment would be when you decide to play videogames or do the other stuff you've identified as better alternatives.

Let's imagine your problem though is that almost every time you smoke pot you end up relapsing and playing videogames. Week after week, you do good with your goal of avoiding games, but every time you get high you end up playing them.

In this case you might need to cut out getting high and view this as an extension of your main objective. In this scenario, you'd expand your critical moment focus to also include the decision of whether to get high or not.

Or maybe you're trying to quit porn, but every time you use instagram you end up looking a pictures of butts and ultimately turning toward porn and relapsing. Every time you relapse, it's always preceded by instagram.

In this scenario you might need to cut out instagram for a period (or permanently) and see the decision to use the site or not as a critical moment for accomplishing your main objective.

How do you know if you need to expand the scope of your critical moments?
Experience.

Try and just focus on the baseline critical moment right before the good or bad decision at first and only expand as it proves to be necessary.

Constructing your Script & Metascript

Okay, now it's time to get into the part of the course that explains what the heck this whole "metascript" thing is about. Understanding this concept is critical for creating the most rapid and real progress possible.

Script vs Metascript

We'll start things off by defining the difference between your "script" and your "metascript" - let's use the writing of a screenplay as an analogy:

When an author writes a screenplay, they will have one document where they pen the actual draft that holds the dialogue and scenes, this is the *script*.

However, the writer almost always has a second document - one that often precedes the first. In this second document they have all their notes and ideas about the world the characters inhabit, what each character thinks, what their motivations are, and how those characters (and the world) will transform over the course of the story.

This second document is the "script for the script" or what I call the *metascript*.

Now let's bring this concept to our everyday lives:

The thoughts you have, the things you say to yourself or others, and the actions you take are representations of your script.

So let's say we've got a guy named Biff. Biff gets home from work and thinks "well today sucked, time to jerk off and play videogames!" that's Biff's mental script which will then lead him to act on those thoughts.

Biff's METAScript though is the underlying beliefs he holds about the world and himself that ultimately cause him to think and act that way.

So in this instance, Biff's metascript might contain beliefs like:

- "Porn and videogames are great uses of my time"
- "Porn and videogames are the greatest pleasure I have in my life"
- "It's not worth pursuing discipline or bigger goals, I can't do that and it would suck to try"
- "On the off chance I wanted to change, I can always do it later, no need to wear myself out right now"

Basically, Biff sees himself as a gamer and a wanker living in a world where gaming and wanking are not only okay and expected, they are perhaps even the ideal. It's from this perspective that all his thoughts in the moment are derived from.

Now that we know the difference between a script and a metascript, we can start putting this knowledge to use.

Congruence

The biggest thing that you need to understand here is that one of the core things your brain wants is CONGRUENCE. Mental congruence is when your script and metascript line up. The opposite of congruence is cognitive dissonance - where your script and metascript are at odds with one another.

So let's return to our buddy Biff. Let's say Biff is starting to recognize that excessive porn and videogames are really holding him back in life. This would signal a shift in his metascript.

Perhaps that first point of

- "Porn and videogames are great uses of my time"

Shifts to

- "Porn and videogames are holding me back"

Because of this change to his metascript, his script in the moment will have to change.

So instead of getting home after a long day at work and thinking:

"well today sucked, time to jerk off and play videogames!"

He'll think something like "Man, I REALLY want to watch porn and play videogames but I probably shouldn't porn since they are holding me back..."

Now at this point one of two things will happen.

Option 1:

He represses the new part of his metascript that believes these activities are bad. This causes him to just fall back into the same old pattern of escapism. However, he'll probably feel shitty about it later because he's becoming aware of how it's hurting him.

Option 2:

He flexes his willpower and prevents himself from watching porn and playing videogames even though he really wants to.

Now this second option might work once, or even a few times. But chances are he's going to end right back up at option one.

Why?

Because his metascript hasn't changed enough.

We listed MULTIPLE beliefs and viewpoints that supported his porn and videogame usage. If only ONE of them changes, then that's just a recipe for *conflict* - NOT *resolution*. Ultimately your actions will fall in line with where the bulk of your metascript points you.

Unlocking a New Version of Yourself

What I'm driving at here is if you want to create lasting change, not only must you change your internal script in during critical moments, but you must ALSO substantially change the metascript of your beliefs.

Basically, you can't sustainably act in new ways while holding on to the same old way of looking at things.

With this knowledge we can see the different levels from which people approach change and how effective they are:

Level 1: Effectiveness = Low

Intention: Changed
Script: Unchanged
Metascript: Unchanged

On this level someone simply tries to do something new - i.e. they set an intention to change some habit or behavior. If this is all they do, their success is likely going to be low or nonexistent if the change is of any significant size.

Level 2 (OPTION 1): Effectiveness = Temporary at best

Intention: Changed
Script: Changed
Metascript: Unchanged

In this scenario, a person not only sets an intention to change, they also try to change their thinking in the moment by focusing on the benefits of the new behavior or drawbacks of the old behavior. The problem is that their metascript of beliefs, interpretations of their emotions, and ideas about themselves stays the same.

This might lead to some success due to thinking good thoughts at the right times in some critical moments, but you can pretty much guarantee that they will end up back in the exact same old patterns eventually.

Level 2 (OPTION 2): Effectiveness = Temporary at best

Intention: Changed
Script: Unchanged
Metascript: Changed

In this variation, someone focuses on shifting their high level beliefs, but their thinking in the moment is still following the same old script. This person might have some limited successes while their new mindset is fresh in their mind, but as long as they still think the wrong things in critical moments, they will ultimately end up taking the wrong actions.

Level 3: Effectiveness = High

Intention: Changed
Script: Changed
Metascript: Changed

Here's the recipe for REAL change. Not only do you change how you think in the moment, you change your entire belief system. When you line all this up and act from this place, eventually your system gets rewired.

What starts out as an effortful discipline eventually ends up effortless and automatic. If you've ever successfully adopted a healthy habit that stuck, this is what happened on some level.

It is only when intention, script, and metascript all change that you can truly transform. This level of change unlocks the ability to become *a an entirely different version of yourself*.

Brain Bridging

So how do you create this high level of change? The best place to start is with a technique I call "brain bridging".

The way it works is super simple, but the effects are absolutely profound. The technique utilizes the three pillars of LOVE, HATE, and INDIFFERENCE.

All you do is start THINKING like someone who LOVES doing the thing that you are trying to do, HATES doing the thing that you are trying to quit, and is INDIFFERENT to the cost of making this transaction.

This might seem so obvious that you don't believe it could actually work. Surprise, it absolutely does!

Now to be clear, we aren't saying you have to FEEL like this person, you just need to start THINKING like this person. You need to get inside the head of that version of you (hence the name "brain bridging"). What you'll find is that as you practice these thoughts, eventually the actions and feelings will follow.

By hitting on the points of love, hate, and indifference, we will be mapping and shifting significant level of psychological metascript territory. These new perspectives then are then to be used in your journaling and the moment to moment self-talk you practice inside your head.

Building Your Bridge

Understanding and reconfiguring the mapping of your love/hate/indifference is the key to creating beneficial changes in your metascript.

Let's say that your main objective is to quit using marijuana. In order to build your brain bridge and transform your metascript, we need to start the bridge by identifying where you currently are. The way we do this is by identifying the metascript of the pot smoking part of you.

Note #1

We want to EXAGGERATE what this part thinks. You may hold more nuanced or even contradictory points of view to this part of you that you are trying to change - but the point is to identify the internal caricature of the part that's hooked on getting high.

Note #2

People like to sanctimoniously claim they don't hate ANYTHING because hate is BAD. Whatever, insert the word "dislike" where I say "hate" if it makes you more comfortable.

Okay let's get to it:

Love

The part of me hooked on getting high loves pot because:

- It makes everything better!
- Food, music, nature, sex, and even working out is better when high
- It takes away my stress and anxiety
- It's "all natural" and better for me than being hooked on alcohol, harder drugs, or prescription antidepressants
- I enjoy the pot culture of chill times and good vibes
- It opens up my mind and allows me to be more creative and look at the world in a different way
- How it can be used as a tool to do stuff as well as a reward FOR doing stuff

Hate

The part of me hooked on getting high hates:

- Doing things sober that would be so much more pleasurable if done high
- Sitting with the feeling of being sober while craving to get high
- Bad weed
- No weed
- People who think pot should be illegal

Indifference

The part of me hooked on getting high is indifferent to: *(It can be helpful to note the rationalizations for the indifference)*

- The financial cost of weed - "It's worth the price!"
- The lack of mental clarity - "I think even BETTER when high!"
- The time spent absorbed and entranced with small things - "The secret to life is learning how to enjoy the little things!"
- The way it makes me overeat - "I don't need to eat when high, I can always change that"
- Lack of satisfactory life progress - "Plenty of super successful people love marijuana, clearly I don't need to give this up to reach my goals"

So after you go through this exercise with the part of you that's hooked on the old pattern you're trying to change, we need to build the other side of the brain bridge. This is where the magic happens.

Basically, you want to go through the same exercise but from the perspective of someone who loves living in the new way you want to operate and hates the old pattern you're trying to drop.

Love

The new part of me loves being sober because:

- The mental clarity lets me make much better decisions
- I can be massively more productive working on bigger and more meaningful goals
- I actually address my issues rather than just numbing them
- I feel much healthier and make healthier choices

Hate

The new part of me hates smoking pot because:

- I hate being dependent on some drug to feel okay
- It just makes unimpressive thoughts seem profound when they actually aren't
- I resent the notion that I cannot savor and truly enjoy life without chemical enhancement
- It wastes so much damn money when I've got debt I'm trying to pay off

Indifferent

The new part of me is indifferent to:

- Marijuana itself - "It's irrelevant to my goals and happiness"
- Losing the sensory enhancement - "Life is best enjoyed with a present and clear mind"
- Facing the cravings to smoke/vape - "It's just an itch that will pass, if I don't scratch it then it will eventually go away completely (which is way better than constantly having to scratch it)"
- When my friends get high around me - "They are welcome to do what they want, I'm not missing anything important by not partaking"

Now this is obviously just an example to illustrate how one might do this exercise. Perhaps you never smoked pot and never want to. Perhaps you are a moderate user who has no interest in quitting. Perhaps you DO want to quit weed but your rationale is completely different on both sides of the bridge.

This is all fine. The point of all this is to just give you an example of what this exercise could look like. You just need to understand the mindset you are coming from and create a mindset that TRULY LOVES the mode of operation you're aiming for.

The main thing here is that you take the time to clarify this brain bridge for any main objective you decide to undertake!

Take a few moments and write things out for both sides of the brain bridge for your main objective just like how I've done here.

So to recap, any time you are trying to make a change, you need to

1. Understand what the old metascript you want to shed looks like
2. Get inside the head of the person who not only succeeds in your main objective, but LOVES living that way

I'm stressing the "loves it" part because if you are constructing a metascript of someone who merely "tolerates" or has to grit their teeth to do the new behavior, then that's the kind of experience you will be engineering (and we don't want that).

Even if you think it's unrealistic for you to ever love certain aspects of your main objective, it's still worth working from this mental space because it will help you get things as good as they possibly can be.

As you keep returning and developing this new way of thinking, not only will your actions begin to follow, so too will your emotions. If you keep at it consistently, you will actually end up completely rewriting your emotional conditioning.

Taking the time to update and revisit this exercise can be extremely useful as your thinking and self-awareness evolves.

The Metascript Tenses & Techniques

Okay so now it's time to finally start getting into how you actually create your metascripting journal entries.

We can create a journal entry to address a critical moment at three different times:

1. Retroactively (after the moment has already passed)
2. Preemptively (before the moment comes)
3. Responsively (as the moment is happening)

A journal entry done at each of these points has a different goal:

1. Retroactive: Reinforce successes, learn from failures, and improve conditioning for similar future events
2. Preemptive: Prime your consciousness with the appropriate instructions and details that will give you the best chances of making a good choice when the time comes
3. Responsive: Separate your more accurate and valuable thinking from less helpful or outright damaging thinking so you can make a good decision

In order to meet these goals, each kind of entry will utilize a slightly different technique. But in general the goal for each of these techniques is to help you cross the brain bridge and act from the new metascript rather than the old one at critical moments.

The advantage to having three different tenses of journal entry makes it so that no matter where you are in relation to your critical moments, you can use the metascript method to help enhance your ability to show up as the person you want to be!

Retroactive Metascripting

If I could only teach people one technique for developing self-mastery, it would be this retroactive journal entry.

It might take a while, but by using ONLY this technique someone could transform from an undisciplined, immoral, degenerate into someone who consistently lives as their ideal self.

The reason it works is simple - you identify where you went wrong, how you gave yourself permission to act poorly, and then "rewrite" that mental script for future events. You can think of it as a standardized practice for "failing forward".

As long as you constantly course correct, you'll inevitably zig-zag your way to success.

As you practice this method in a structured and focused manner, you will stop thinking and acting like the old you, and instead begin showing up as the man that you truly want to be.

The Retroactive Entry

As we've mentioned, the retroactive journal entry works on critical points that have already passed. In particular, you'll be wanting to use this entry type when you've FAILED to honor your main objective

So for example, if your main objective was to quit videogames and then ended up playing videogames, you'd do a retroactive journal entry. In this entry you "go back in time" and program your brain to make a better decision for the next time you are confronted with a similar fork in the road.

The barebones technique is as follows:

1. Identify the instant where the critical moment occurred
2. Identify the lie, self-deception, or rationalization you used to consciously or unconsciously give yourself permission to fail your main objective
3. Record how you would have looked at the situation if you were operating from the love/hate/indifference of your new metascript.

Example 1

Main objective = Stay porn free

Critical Moment:

I was relaxing at night surfing the internet (reddit). I was just about to get off and go to bed and I came across a triggering image. Instead of just going to bed I ended up clicking on the image and then many more, leading to a relapse to porn.

Self-deception/Lie/Rationalization:

"It's okay to just peek at that image really quickly, you'll just look for a second and then you can go to bed."

How I want to think next time:

I love getting my sleep and being energized. I love living porn free. I hate it when I let some stupid set of pixelated boobs cause me to break from my goals and values. Who cares if there's hot girls on the internet I'm not looking at, they irrelevant to my real life and distract me from real goals which will bring me actual fulfillment and open the door to true sexual connection.

As you can see the retroactive technique is pretty simple. You just identify the circumstances of the critical moment, list the faulty thought process, and identify the thoughts you wish you had fed yourself.

To keep things shorter, I usually abbreviate these headings with

CM: = Critical Moment X: = Self-deception/Lie/Rationalization \$: = How I want to think next time

Example 2

Main objective = Spend time each evening working on side business

CM: I just finished my morning routine and it was time to get to work on the side business, but instead I just ended up distracting myself with youtube videos instead of making progress.

X: "It's okay to skip your work, you've been fairly productive this week and you had a bad sleep last night. You owe it to yourself to take the day off and have some fun"

\$: "I love making progress on my goals. Here's my chance to take my productivity even further this week. I know that discomfort I feel right now will disappear almost instantly if I just relax and get started. I'll even end up enjoying it and ultimately feel much better later!"

—

Notice that the bad thought always follows the pattern of "It's okay to abandon your main objective because..."

Even if you didn't explicitly think these thoughts it's useful to frame them in this way because in effect this is what's happening.

Example 3

Main objective = stick to diet

XU: "It's okay to eat a whole bag of potato chips instead of chicken and veggies because it tastes better! Who cares about your health goals!"

\$: "I love eating in a way that makes me feel more energized and look better. I hate feeling and looking crappy because of bad food choices. I don't care if my healthier food

isn't as instantly pleasurable as junk food - I know once I break my addiction to the crap my tastebuds will adjust and healthy food will taste better and better.”

—

In this one the CM is too obvious to bother recording (you sat down to eat). The "XU" denotes that the poor choice happened unconsciously and automatically.

In this case, you just fill in the "It's okay to break the main objective because..." best you can. Usually it's something kind of inane like above, but sometimes it's a bit more complex. Write down whatever you can.

Also, you can see that in your response it can be useful to follow the formula of

"I love... I hate... I don't care..." filled in from your new metascript.

You don't always need to do this, but it hits on the love/hate/indifference of the metascript you are looking to adopt.

Progress

Don't worry if the new way of thinking feels foreign and you don't actually emotionally agree with it right away - practice this anyway.

Any new way of looking at the world, interpreting your emotions, managing your priorities is bound to be uncomfortable at first. But this is why we start this transformation on the mental level.

Is it really so bad to let yourself imagine what it would be like to actually BE that person who loves living in the way you actually admire?

As you continue to practice this technique, you'll find that your automatic response at critical points begins to change.

At first, where you would have just continued on mindlessly down a path of self-sabotage, you'll now start to become conscious and resistant to just continuing on with the poor action.

Where before you would lie and rationalize with poor thinking, you'll find that empowered thoughts aligned with your better judgment float automatically to the

surface. Eventually, you'll get to the point where this new kind of thinking actually becomes your new automatic reaction.

Shame and Failing Forward

One of the main reasons guys fail to utilize this technique after some botched critical point is due to toxic shame.

Toxic shame follows the formula of:

"I did bad, therefore I *AM* bad"

The single greatest reason for self-sabotage is because people don't feel like they are good enough. If you're bad/not good enough, then that means you aren't worth the effort or worthy of the reward of your own self-sacrifice.

Basically, if you're not good enough, then you're not worth the price of truly loving and caring for yourself.

Guys who suffer from toxic shame will feel too much pain and resentment for themselves to actually look at their mistakes in a productive manner. If this is you, then chances are you will continually avoid doing retroactive entries (and subsequently rob yourself of tremendous growth opportunities).

The way you break out of this toxic shame then is to learn how to embrace CENTERED shame. Centered shame is the perspective of:

"I'm intrinsically, unconditionally good, however, I acted in a way that was out of alignment with that goodness."

If you try to bend your finger in the opposite way your joints go, then you'll experience pain. In other words, if you behave in opposition to the nature of your finger, you'll feel pain. This is good because this incentivises you to operate in *cooperation* with the nature of your joints.

In the same way, if you see yourself as having a nature of GOODNESS, then when you behave poorly you are acting in *opposition* of that good nature and therefore will experience pain.

This perspective allows you to fully face your shortcomings from a place of self-love rather than self-rejection. You're not bad, you just did something against your best interest and it's only appropriate for you to correct that situation.

(Note: This is a pretty basic examination of this topic, for a much more detailed look in the context of masculine sexuality you can check out [this](#) video or do a deep dive in my [Reforged Man](#) course.)

Power of Emotion

You might be wondering - if we can change our mindset so much, *why we aren't trying to get rid of shame altogether?*

The removal of shame is actually a popular notion in our culture today. People think the issue isn't "bad behavior" it's that we feel shame about our behavior in the first place (this is especially popular in areas of sexual activity).

I do not support this mentality for quite a number of reasons, but if I were to leave morality and philosophy out of it, the most practical reason is that **shame is simply too useful to dispense with.**

The reality is that if we want to trigger neural rewiring & learning, emotion is one of the most powerful ingredients to accomplishing this.

I'm sure that if you think of the most impactful lessons you've internalized, they all had significant emotions tied to them.

When you allow yourself to feel productive shame and then combine it with positive & self-reflective action like we are doing here, it creates an extremely powerful recipe for mental rewiring.

Basically, I'm letting you know that it's okay to feel frustrated with yourself. *The best mental state for retroactive work is one where you combine some frustration/shame of your poor action with self-love, care, and compassion.*

So as long as you aren't beating yourself up in a way that leaves you feeling unworthy of your own care and effort, then it's alright to be a bit mad at yourself. All high performers care, and perhaps they are high performers *because* they care. Learn to care properly and you'll learn to perform properly.

Preemptive Metascripting

Preemptive metascripting is used to "pre-program" your mind to show up well in upcoming critical moments.

Preemptive metascripting is most useful when you see some kind of unhelpful trigger coming up in your near future OR when you see a period of low consciousness and poor decision making potentially heading your way.

In a preemptive entry, you simply tell yourself what you are going to think and do in that moment of trial. By taking the time to write this down, you'll be much more likely to think those thoughts and take those actions. If you combine this with some visualization of the moment, that makes this exercise even more powerful.

The trick to it though is that you can't just imagine a "perfect you" in these moments. You need to be writing to the part of you that's struggling, tempted, conflicted, and on the verge of making a bad decision.

So the message isn't for the super motivated and committed version of you - that guy doesn't really need your help. The entry is written to give the version of you who is stuck in old stories and behavior patterns a lifeline to break free and get on a good path.

How does the guy who is about to make a bad decision think? How does he feel?

If you cater your message to help THAT guy out, the higher the chance that this entry will create good behavior in the future.

Preemptive Technique

The preemptive technique is pretty simple - you just imagine the scenario, how you will feel, and then write out what you need to hear to stay true to your objective. You can think of it as tapping into your "internal leader".

There's a part of you that generally knows the "right way" to handle most situations that you come across. The problem is that we simply don't tap into this part nearly enough. The main purpose of the preemptive technique is to make that connection early and often.

While the preemptive technique is primarily used to deal with potential upcoming critical moments, you can also do it whenever you want for a boost in mental and emotional clarity.

For example, since I work for myself I don't have a boss or manager to help motivate or direct me. Because of this, it's easy to fall off track mentally or productively.

So in addition to preemptively journaling around critical points that have to do with my main objective, I'll just regularly connect with my inner leader for guidance and motivation. I do this multiple times a day and find it to be an indispensable technique.

Preemptive Example 1

Main Objective = Hardmode Porn Reboot (a period of complete sexual abstinence).

Pattern - you find yourself looking at sexual imagery and relapsing first thing in the morning before you get out of bed

Entry - (done night before)

Okay, you're going to wake up and feel tired and triggered. You'll want to reach for those sexy videos to relapse. You do this because it gives you a boost of energy and makes your morning grogginess go away.

However, that's not the kind of man you are going to choose to be. You're a man who starts his day strong and doesn't give into that kind of BS.

First, you are going to plug your phone in the outlet across the room so you can't just reach it from bed

When morning comes you are going to get going on your own power, excited about the day in front of you and chomping at the bit to get rolling on your goals.

Instead of porn first thing, you are going to take 5 deep breaths, pull your covers back, get up, take a piss, and hop in the shower. Then you are going to go make yourself a cup of coffee and write out your plan for the day.

::visualize yourself doing this::

—

Some of the hardest patterns to change are the ones that fire off in states of low consciousness and/or depleted willpower. So changing your behavior first thing in the morning, late at night, during times of intense distraction/stimulation etc. are all very challenging.

The best thing you can do is to pre-program your brain like we are doing in this example. When you first wake up, your mind is in a relatively low powered state, by writing out and visualizing how you want to behave differently ahead of time is one of the best things you can do outside of engineering your environment by putting your phone/alarm clock across the room, setting your clothes out etc.

Preemptive Example 2

Main Objective = Spend an hour studying for upcoming certification test.

Pattern - each time you sit down to study, you end up internet surfing and wasting time

Entry (done right before studying)

You are going to sit down and study and you are not going to do ANY internet surfing. The reason is because you care about this test and you want to study. In fact, you LOVE to study. The feeling of tackling challenging material and gradually mastering it fills you with satisfaction.

To help yourself focus you're going to use your pomodoro technique where you set a timer for 25 minutes of intense focus, and then allow yourself a five minute break to go to the bathroom or get a drink.

You're going to do 2 rounds of this. This is easy man. You'll probably end up wanting to throw a third pomodoro in there because of how much you'll be enjoying it. Get at it!

::visualize yourself doing this::

—

Note how we've been including a space to actually visualize ourselves playing out the instructions. Taking a minute or two after the entry to conjure up the image of you experiencing the conflict but then following your instructions is SUPER useful.

It's kind of like a fire drill - by rehearsing before hand it makes it easier to pull off during the real deal.

Preemptive Example 3

Main Objective: Approach 4 women and try to get their number while bar hopping with your friends

Pattern - Either straight up chickening out or stopping after you get one rejection

Entry: (done before going out)

Okay man, I know old you gets really nervous to approach women. But the new you decides to see that energy as EXCITEMENT not nervousness. The big change here is that the new you doesn't care whether you get the number or not.

You know that dating is just a numbers game. If a girl rejects you it's her loss, and it frees you up to just move on to the next one.

Have fun, be playful, and make a game out of it. You don't need their affirmation to be okay. You're okay because you're choosing to behave as the guy you want to be.

—

In this one I use a powerful trick of emotional redefinition. The old you feels a sensation and calls it "nervousness" - the new you feels the same sensation and calls it "excitement". The difference between the two is mindset which is then reinforced in the entry.

Understanding your Patterns

The preemptive technique really begins to shine as you develop awareness around your patterns of behavior.

So let's say that you regularly fail to stick to your main objective on Friday afternoons right when you get home from work. Taking a couple minutes before you leave work on Fridays to do a preemptive entry where you write out how you want to show up when you get home would be a very good idea.

However, sometimes your patterns don't follow a set schedule so much as they follow a certain kind of activity. Maybe you tend to abandon your main objective whenever a girl you ask out turns you down.

Before you approach a girl or ask her out, you could write a preemptive entry to help you solidify the mindset you want while talking to the girl AND how you want to respond and hold the situation if it doesn't go the way you want (similar to what we did in example 3).

And to be clear, we aren't planning for failure, we are aiming for the best possible outcomes - we often just need to have the worst case scenario response easily accessible to avoid any undesired emotional outbursts.

Responsive Metascripting

As you begin making preemptive and retroactive journal entries you'll likely start reaching points where you find yourself conscious in a critical moment but are filled with conflict over which way to go.

This is where responsive journal entries fit.

Responsive metascripting is used in a moment that you are struggling to help align your head, your heart, and your actions. In other words, you use responsive metascripting when you are IN the critical moment to resolve inner conflicts and choose the right path.

Sometimes these moments show up as the classic angel on one shoulder, devil on the other. The "devil" fills your mind with rationalizations fueled by selfish pleasure seeking. The "angel" feeds you thoughts based on your values, goals, and main objective.

However, these conflicted critical moments don't always have such a black and white feel to them. Sometimes it can feel like there are a dozen different voices in your head and heart, swirling around like a vortex.

Whether you're dealing with your shoulder angels or a confused mass of emotion, you can turn to your trusty journal, bang out a responsive metascript and get some relief.

The Responsive Entry

The basic formula to the responsive entry is to:

1. Give words to all the emotions however outlandish or "wrong" they are
2. Respond to them as a leader, friend, and lover of good action

The biggest benefit of this technique is that it releases you from control of unprocessed emotions.

An unprocessed emotion is an emotion that exists purely as a sensation. The reason unprocessed emotions are tricky (especially during critical moments) is because *you cannot argue with sensations*.

Have you ever shared some painful emotion you were feeling with someone and had them tell you that your feeling was *wrong*? How helpful was that? Probably only made things worse, right?

If you *feel* like you want to abandon your weight loss main objective and pound a whole box of oreos, you can't argue with the fact that IS TRULY how (at least a part of) you *feels*.

And the reality is that unless you know how to argue with your emotions, you'll either need to repress them (bad idea) or give into them (also often a bad idea).

We don't want to just give into our emotions because emotions often speak in half-truths, outright lies, or simply limited & unhelpful perspectives.

We also don't want to repress our emotions them because not only can we end up ignoring important information in our psyche, but more importantly repression just sets you up for an uncontrolled emotional outburst later (think of an overstuffed balloon popping).

The key then is to translate your emotions from pure sensations INTO WORDS. Once your emotions have been mapped to words, your rational mind can engage with them, challenge them, point out the flaws, merits, etc.

By getting the emotions out you can then respond to them from the other side of your metascript brain bridge.

3 Tips for Responsive Entries

When you are doing responsive journal entries there are a few things that you can do that will likely help:

- 1. Go ahead and let your emotional side exaggerate**

When you are venting, it's okay to let it all hang out - even if it's not fully accurate of how you feel. Even if you know you're being overdramatic, letting that part air it's feelings in an uncensored manner actually makes responding to that part and managing it easier.

2. Find the feeling "under the urge"

Usually you'll have an immediate craving, and then a negative feeling BENEATH that craving.

So for example, if you are trying to give up social media and are craving to scroll twitter, yes, there is the immediate desire to look at twitter which you need to record, but usually there's also something underneath that craving like boredom, stress, loneliness, insecurity etc.

You'll want to find that feeling and give it words as well, as this is often the actual driver for the craving in the first place.

3. Make sure you establish a new "next action" in your response.

You need to make sure to identify the immediate actions that you are going to take instead of the poor action. This is especially important if your main objective is to *quit* something. You cannot just tell yourself what you will NOT do, you need to also decide on what you WILL do.

So for example, if you tell yourself that you aren't going to just eat cheetos and watch netflix, but then you don't figure out what you are going to do instead, then you'll probably still end up eating cheetos and watching netflix regardless of the message you write yourself.

This tip is important for the other two entry types as well, but is of special importance here.

Responsive Example 1

Main Objective = Quit Porn

(Just got home from work and are triggered to watch porn)

Vent

Gah I just want to watch some freaking porn! It'd be so nice to fire up my favorite site, find some hot chick with a perfect body and just slip into the fantasy.

It would allow me to get some pleasure in an otherwise crappy day.

I'm also mad because I screwed up that project at work and my boss reamed me out in front of everyone. Now I'm going to have to figure out how to fix this while also keeping up with the other work I've got on my plate.

To top it off, that girl I met the other day and was texting never got back to me about meeting up for coffee. I was really thinking that we were hitting it off pretty well and now it seems like she's going to ghost me and I'm left striking out again with women.

Life is so stupid and hard and ;lkajsd;lkfa;lskn;nv

Response

First off, I can totally understand why you're struggling here. You've had a rough day and you want to escape.

However, you know that using porn will just set you backward and make things worse. You're the kind of guy who likes staying present in his life, takes the challenges as they come, and makes things better!

You can fix things at work - you know exactly where you went wrong with that project and how to fix it. You'll just have to prioritize your time and maybe speak to your boss about an extension on some of your other work if you fall behind. He might be annoyed but you know he'll come around.

Also, who cares about that girl. There are so many other girls out there and if she's not interested then we'll just have to find another one. We enjoy talking to girls and understand it's really just a numbers game until we click with someone.

Let's just make dinner, relax with some TV and go to bed. The craving will pass and I'll be happy tomorrow that I stayed clean.

—

Notice how we not only addressed the immediate feelings of wanting to watch porn but we also dug a little deeper here and found the emotion under the urge and then addressed each piece in the response.

The deeper you go, usually the better the results. However, it is important to know that sometimes you won't really find anything deeper than an immediate craving. That's okay - just address the craving and focus on your main objective if this is the case.

Responsive Example 2

Main Objective = quitting marijuana and sticking to primarily whole foods diet

(Thursday night after a week of dieting and wanting to revert to old behaviors)

Vent:

Oh my god I all I want to do right now is get super baked and demolish a whole double deluxe pizza. I'm so sick of being sober and I'm even more sick of this diet.

I'm never going to be able to stick this challenge out for 80 more days anyway. I might as well go out in a blaze of glory early rather than getting close and inevitably failing anyway.

Let's just rip bong, pound pizza, and pass out.

Response:

Bro, snap out of it.

First, you know you don't truly want to get high. You're sick of living in a haze and love the clarity that being sober has brought you. Right now you're just a little stressed and are looking for a quick feel good button.

If you just do your stretches and take a long hot shower you'll feel relaxed as hell and won't need to get high.

As for the pizza, forget about it. You don't need it or the cheese hangover it will give you. You've got your prepped meals already there for you in your fridge - just heat it up and eat it, you love eating healthy.

Plus, your scheduled "cheat day" is literally in two days. You can hold on until then and eat some more fun food. The difference will be that if you wait, you'll feel proud of yourself and on track with your plan.

And finally YOU ABSOLUTELY CAN do this. You've gone 10 days and are feeling better than you have in months. You just wrote yesterday how much you LOVE this new

lifestyle despite how tough it's been. You love being clear headed. You love being fit and healthy. Just stay the course and keep rocking!

—

Sometimes you just need a pep talk. Learn how to become your own hype man. If you have trouble encouraging yourself, imagine you were encouraging a loved one who was struggling.

Example 3

Main Objective = Complete computer programming certification and play zero videogames

(Sunday afternoon at the time you've scheduled work on your programming)

Vent

Okay c'mon, that new game is out and we HAVE to get it. Biff said it's so good that he played it for 12 hours straight.

You've been looking forward to this game for a year and a half since it's been announced. The fact that it's here is kind of like a national holiday for you. It makes total sense for you to just put your little main objective on hold and have some fun.

Plus, you've been crushing it in your programming bootcamp. You obviously have this shit down, there's no reason for you to be so strict with yourself.

Response

My dude, I know you think you want to play that game, but you actually don't. You're 30 years old and stuck in a job you hate. A big reason for that is because you've spent so much time levelling up video game characters that you've neglected leveling up your LIFE.

This is why we are quitting the videogames and focusing on getting this programming certification. The reason we've been killing it so far is BECAUSE we aren't gaming. You know that if we start playing this game, we are going to be putting hours a day into it.

Even if we tried to moderate, it would make us try to sprint through our programming assignments so we could get back to playing instead of actually taking our time and doing good work as we have been.

However, we do need a break so let's go see that new movie that came out after we get our assignment done. A few hours on a movie is nothing compared to what we would put into a video game but it will still be fun and give us that little break we are looking for right now.

We're doing awesome - let's stick to the plan and keep hustling!

—

Being a constant hardass drill sergeant is not the best strategy for most people. You need to know when to compromise and offer GOOD rewards. In this scenario our protagonist has decided that he needs some kind of break but realizes that he doesn't want to abandon his main objectives.

These kinds of decisions may feel weird if you are not used to being a leader of yourself. As you get better at it, you'll not only become vastly more effective, you'll actually come to LIKE working for yourself!

Technique Synergy and Progression

The techniques that we've covered here truly begin to shine when you begin practicing all three regularly.

Practicing the retroactive technique will help you identify your main patterns of failure. This in turn will help you predict where you'll experience struggle which opens the opportunity to create more effective preemptive entries.

The preemptive and retroactive entries make it much more likely that you will be conscious at your critical moments rather than just blow by them on autopilot. Even if you are highly conflicted but are conscious enough to do a responsive entry, you can usually pull things off okay.

In fact, you can even include a responsive entry as part of your plan that you set in a preemptive entry - i.e. "Okay, you're likely going to get triggered at this time, we are going to take a deep breath and then write down what you are feeling in your journal followed by a response as a leader and friend".

Here's a general progression you might experience while practicing these techniques:

1. Initial state of autopilot bad habit

- Practice Retroactive & Preemptive entries
- 2. Start having success in new behavior & developing consciousness around your critical moments and failure patterns
 - Further refine your new metascript for how to think and act
 - Begin practicing responsive entries in moments of struggle
- 3. Greatly increase the level of success you have with your main objective with far less frequent slips
 - Identify core limiting beliefs and most authentic motivations through your reflections
 - Develop empowering beliefs and focus in on the most poignant motivations in your entries
 - Solidify your brain bridge and new metascript
- 4. Internalize the new way of living and achieve success on autopilot
 - Pick a new main objective and continue your journey in a new area!

Looking for More?

Alright, so that's about it for this guide. I hope this has given you the inspiration and clarity you need to start journaling in a powerful and focused new way.

The main limitation of what I've shared with you (outside the handful of examples) is that you'll have to come up with what to say to yourself and what goals to set. Additionally this doesn't cover the mechanics for processing deep wounds and trauma, though you'll definitely be doing some of that incidentally by following this guide.

If you want my help with some of these other pieces then make sure you that you check out my other material.

My plan is to ultimately develop specific "metascript modules" that look at optimizing your mindset around different main objectives (like quitting porn, becoming more productive, being more confident etc.).

But until then, you can find a ton of content on my [YouTube channel](#), my [Reforged Man](#) course, and my [Vanguard community](#) where you get a ton of exclusive content and access to me.

Play big,
Mark Queppet