RESULT

You're a Bear

DR KRISTY GOODWIN



Bear

(BI-PHASIC, OR SOMETIMES REFERRED TO AS 'THIRD BIRDS')



65% OF POPULATION

GO TO BED
11:00pm

WAKE UP
07:00am

PEAK-PERFORMANCE HOURS
10:00am - 03:00pm

Do your deep work and focus sprints in the mid-morning to midday period and your shallow work first thing in the morning, or late in the afternoon.

These results are based on Dr Michael Breus' book The Power of When.

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OPTIMISED CHRONOTYPE

- DAILY SCHEDULE -

It is estimated that around 65% of the global population is a bear, or sometimes referred to as a 'bi-phasic' person or 'third bird'. You're part of the majority of the population as it's estimated that more than 50% of the population have a bi-phasic energy curve, which is somewhere between being a lion (morning person) or an wolf (an evening person).

As a bear, you naturally wake up around 7-8am, feel most energised around mid-morning and are happy to go to bed in the later hours of the evening (a 7:30am breakfast meeting makes you cringe!

PEAK-PERFORMANCE HOURS	ENERGY TROUGH HOURS	OPTIMAL SLEEP TIMES
10:00am-03:00pm	**03:30pm-04:30pm**	**11:00pm-07:00am**
Your energy and focus are at their peak mid-morning through to the early afternoon. Your mental prime time is mid to late morning. This is when you're best to tackle your 'deep work' (mentally taxing tasks) and should try to build a fortress around your focus at this time by disabling as many digital distractions as possible. This is an ideal time to solve problems and to think critically about any issues that need some deep thought. It's also an ideal time to make decisions, or a powerful impression if meeting others for the first time.	Your energy and focus are likely to dip in the mid to late afternoon. This is when you may start to feel tired and may become more easily distracted. This may also be the time where your motivation starts to wane and you start looking for biscuits and/or coffee to get some sugar or caffeine to sustain you through this lull. This is a typical part of your circadian rhythm. This would be an ideal time to take a longer break, engage in some physical activity (to bolster your focus), or attend to some of your 'shallow work' such as emails, phone calls, meetings (that don't require too much mental rigour, or deep thought).	Ideally, you want to have a digital curfew, around an hour before you sleep (so 10pm if you're intending on being asleep by 11pm). Sleep is vital for our psychological wellbeing, productivity, focus and physical health. We must ensure we're getting not only the right amount of sleep (the recommendation for adults is 7-9 hours/night), but also getting good quality of sleep (at least 4-6 completed sleep cycles) and accumulating our sleep during our chronotype's optimal sleep times.

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YOUR OPTIMAL CHRONOTYPE-BASED

- WORK SCHEDULE -

Based on your chronotype (Bear), it's suggested that you set up your ideal work day according to the following guidelines. This is not a prescriptive timetable as you may not always have full control over your workday schedule. However, where you can set up your day and your calendar, the following parameters are advised as it will allow you to do the most demanding tasks when your energy and focus are at their peak. Try to communicate your chronotype's needs to your partner, family, friends and team to help them to better understand your needs and encourage them to find out their chronotype.

TIME	SUGGESTED TASKS
PEAK-PERFORMANCE HOURS **10:00am-03:00pm**	Deep work tasks should be tackled during this time. Tasks that may include critical meetings/calls with decision makers (not progress meetings), meetings/calls involving negotiations, or meetings/calls that require intense mental rigour, or a high level of EQ (emotional quotient) should be scheduled in the mid-morning to early afternoon. Any mentally-demanding tasks that require analysis, logic, synthesis, comparison or evaluation such as data analysis, writing a report or proposal, replying to a complex email, or reading or presenting research. This is the prime time for your deep work as your brain's executive function skills (impulse control, working memory and mental flexibility) are at a peak. This is an ideal time of the day to make important decisions.
ENERGY TROUGH HOURS **03:30pm-04:30pm**	Shallow work tasks should be tackled during this time block (or first thing in the morning if you start work before 10am). Relatively simple or routine tasks should be scheduled between 3:30-4:30pm (where possible). This may include tasks such as replying to simple emails (save the complex emails for your peak-performance hours), performing administrative tasks, making client or team calls. Your executive function skills decline during this window of time so you're much more likely to succumb to digital distractions. This is an ideal time to take a longer break and also engage in some physical activity to bolster your focus for the afternoon and/or remainder of the workday.
PRIME CREATIVE TIME **04:30pm-05:30pm**	Your creativity is typically at a peak between 4:30-5:30pm. Try to defer tasks that require innovative thinking, insight or creativity to this time of the day. This is an ideal time for collaborative team discussions, presenting various options or solutions to clients, or for scheduling conversations (meetings or calls) where you know you'll need to think in a non-analytical or non-systematic fashion.

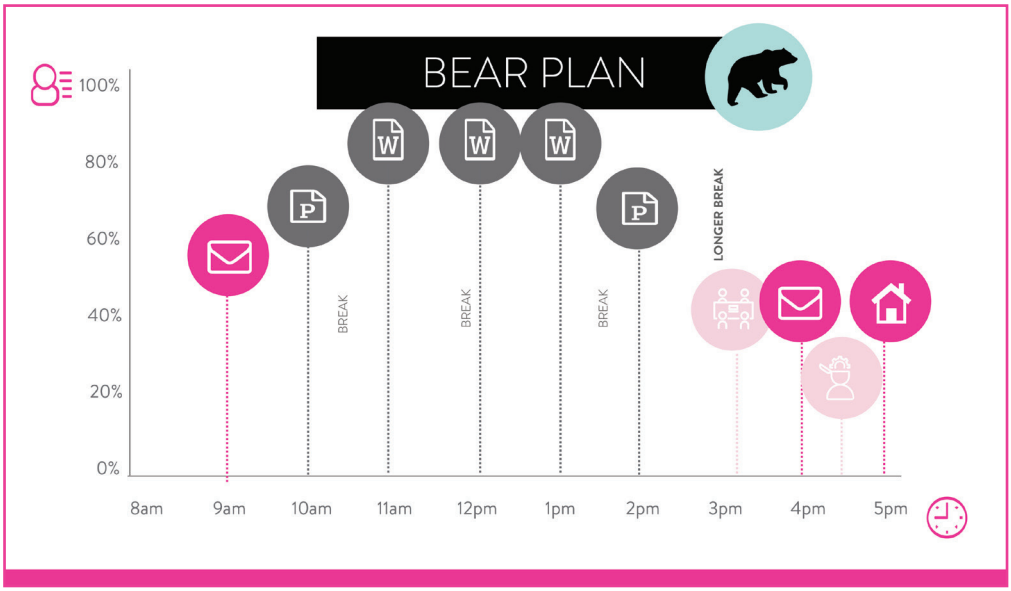
KEY

= deep work

= shallow work

= creative work

BREAK LONGER BREAK breaks every 90minutes





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TACTICS TO OVERCOME

Your Energy Trough

Research consistently tells us that we need to take regular breaks. We have energy peaks and troughs because of our ultradian rhythm (which means we go through peaks and troughs in our energy and focus in roughly 90 minute intervals). Ideally, we would be taking regular breaks every 90 minutes (possibly less, depending on your personal ultradian rhythm). Your energy will decline significantly between 3:30-4:30pm most days.

Boost your focus by increasing your exposure to light (natural or artificial). Consider going for a brisk walk outside just before 3:30pm, sitting near a window, turning on additional lights or repositioning yourself near a light source.

Do a ten-minute movement burst to increase your blood flow and boost neurotransmitters that will help you focus like dopamine and norepinephrine. This could include going for a walk, walking the stairs, doing some resistance band training or some yoga poses.

Close your eyes for just 10 seconds. This allows the temporal and occipital lobes in your brain to have a rest. These two lobes help with auditory and visual processing and they take up 40% of the brain's architecture. So after a day on Teams/Zoom calls, or working on your computer this part of the brain can need some rest.

Get some 'greentime'. Time in nature will not only boost your focus (it's called the 'attention restoration theory') but it will also reduce your stress- just 40 seconds in nature has been shown to reduce cortisol levels.

Take a nap (but not a 'nappuccino', where you have a coffee and then have a nap because by the time the caffeine kicks in you'll be woken up). Ideally, your nap could be 15-20 minutes in duration. This can increase your alertness for up to four hours. Do this closer to 3:30pm than 4:30pm as you need to build up your sleep pressure so you can easily fall asleep at night. If you nap too close to your preferred sleep time, a nap can significantly delay the onset of sleep.

Engage in a five to ten-minute meditation or mindfulness activity.

ADJUSTING YOUR RHYTHM

Your chronotype is biologically determined and cannot be shifted. Your genetics, environment, age and sex combine to influence your chronotype. However, you do have some control over your circadian rhythm and can make some slight adjustments to when you sleep. Please note, you cannot shift from a lion to an wolf.

Our bodies rely on zeitgebers, which are environmental cues, to align our circadian rhythm to the external world. For example, light exposure, mealtimes and social interactions are part of our daily schedules that can influence our circadian rhythm. Adjustments to these can have incremental impacts on our circadian rhythm.

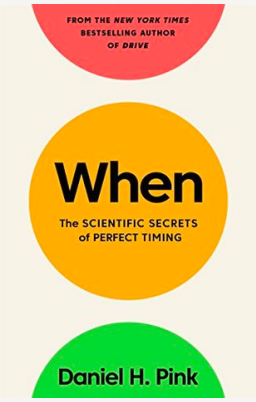
Some bear want to shift more towards being a lion or AM-shifted person (morning person whose energy peaks at the start of the day). The following suggestions will help you to go to bed and wake up a little earlier. It is strongly advised that you do not deprive yourself of sleep in an effort to shift your schedule, or attempt to radically shift your chronotype's optimal routine. If you do want to adopt a more AM-shifted circadian rhythm, you could consider the following ideas:

- Shift your evening routine so you try to fall asleep 1-2 hours earlier (9-10pm). Do this gradually over time, in roughly 15-20 minute intervals.
- Expose yourself to natural sunlight in the morning (between 7am-11am). If natural light exposure isn't an option then exposure to artificial lighting in the morning can help- consider turning on energy-saving, fluorescent lights.
- Avoid bright lights (especially blue light from digital devices) in the 2-4 hours before your sleep so you can prevent sleep onset delays.
- Do something you enjoy, or engage in physical activity when you first wake up, to activate your focus. Both types of activities can bolster dopamine levels which can aid with focus.
- Move your evening meal by 1-2 hours earlier than you ordinarily would.
- Complete all physical activities at least three hours before you want to fall asleep.

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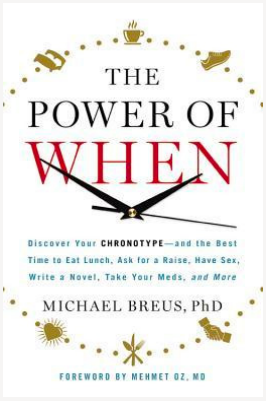
MORE READING

INFORMATION IN THIS REPORT IS GLEANED FROM THE FOLLOWING BOOKS AND RESEARCH:



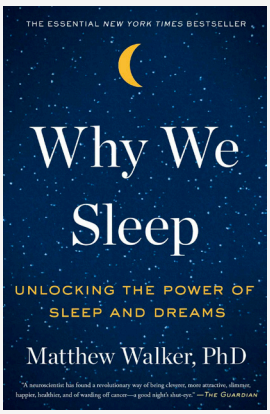
WHEN: THE SCIENTIFIC SECRETS OF PERFECT TIMING

DAN PINK



THE POWER OF WHEN

DR MICAHEL BREUS



WHY WE SLEEP

DR MATTHEW WALKER