

FIELD PROTOCOL / NO. 01

The 48-Hour Attention Reset

The protocol we use on the land, adapted for home.

Root Astro

HUDSON VALLEY, NEW YORK

Attention is a finite resource.

Your attention is a finite resource, and modern leadership spends it faster than it recovers. Research from Gloria Mark at UC Irvine found that after a single interruption it takes an average of 23 minutes and 15 seconds to return to the original task. Most leaders are interrupted far more often than that, so sustained focus never actually happens. The cost is not just productivity. It is judgment: the capacity to hold a complex idea, sit with ambiguity, and think a thought all the way through.

The good news is that the capacity is not gone. In our experience it is frozen, not lost, and it thaws when the withdrawals stop. Psychologist Rachel Kaplan's work on attention restoration points to what actually restores it: environments of soft fascination, settings that hold your attention gently without demanding anything from it. A fire. Moving water. A long walk with no destination.

At Root Astro we build multi-day, device-free retreats around this. But you do not need our land to start. You need one weekend and the willingness to be alone with what surfaces. Here is the protocol, adapted for home.

Clear the ground first.

- 01 **Clear the calendar.** Tell the people who need to know that you will be unreachable from Friday evening to Sunday evening. Name a single emergency contact method (a family member with your location, not a phone in your pocket).
 - 02 **Close your loops.** Send the emails that would otherwise nag at you. Unfinished business is the loudest voice in a quiet room.
 - 03 **Prepare the essentials.** Simple food, a notebook, a pen, walking clothes. Nothing that entertains. Boredom is part of the mechanism, not a flaw in it.
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FRIDAY EVENING / DEVICE SURRENDER

Power down every screen. Phone, laptop, tablet, television, watch. Put them in a drawer or hand them to someone you trust. This is the step people negotiate with, and the negotiation is the tell. A device within reach keeps part of your attention on standby. Surrender means off and out of sight until Sunday evening.

Then do nothing. Eat dinner slowly. Go to bed early. The first hours are usually restless. That is withdrawal, not failure.

Three long, undemanding blocks.

Structure the day around three long, undemanding blocks:

Morning: Walk. Two hours or more, outside, alone, no destination and no podcast. Let your eyes rest on whatever holds them.

Afternoon: Hands. Do simple physical work. Split wood, tend a garden, cook something slow, clean something thoroughly. Work that occupies the body and leaves the mind unclaimed.

Evening: Sit. With a fire, a window, or the dark. No agenda.

Expect suppressed things to surface: worries you have been outrunning, decisions you have been deferring. Let them come. Real solitude is not the absence of people. It is the absence of performance. With no audience and no deliverable, what you have been avoiding finally gets a hearing.

An honest accounting.

Repeat the morning walk. In the afternoon, sit with the notebook and write down what surfaced. Not a plan. An honest accounting. If it helps, read it against the six dimensions we measure on the land: presence, connection, capability, clarity, resilience, reverence. Ask where you are actually strong and where the noise has been covering something.

PRESENCE • CONNECTION • CAPABILITY • CLARITY • RESILIENCE • REVERENCE

Sunday evening, retrieve your devices. Notice how they feel in your hand. That noticing is the reset.

WHAT THIS IS, AND IS NOT

Forty-eight hours is an audit, not a cure. Our experience is that genuinely restoring depleted attention takes days of real removal, which is why our residencies run longer and why the container matters. But one honest weekend will show you the size of the problem, and what is waiting for you under the noise.

When you are ready to go deeper, that is what the land is for.

GO DEEPER

**One weekend shows you the
size of the problem. The land
is where it gets solved.**

RETREATS

rootastro.org/retreats

Multi-day, device-free residencies in the Hudson Valley, built around the full protocol.

THE FIELDSTONE LETTER

rootastro.org

Our letter from the land. Field notes, protocols, and what we are learning as we build. Subscribe at the site.