Your dopamine menu

Fill this in on a good day, not a bored one. Name each item like you'd want to order it ("one loud song while the kettle boils" beats "music"). Three to five per section is plenty. Page 2 walks you through it if you blank.

1 2 3 4 5 circle how much it tends to deliver, like a price **$** costs money **plan** needs planning ahead

Appetizers

Quick, with a built-in end

under 10 minutes

_____ 1 2 3 4 5

_____ 1 2 3 4 5

_____ 1 2 3 4 5

_____ 1 2 3 4 5

Entrees

Leaves me feeling good after

the stuff that satisfies

_____ $ plan 1 2 3 4 5

_____ $ plan 1 2 3 4 5

_____ $ plan 1 2 3 4 5

_____ $ plan 1 2 3 4 5

_____ $ plan 1 2 3 4 5

Sides

Makes boring bearable

add to a dull task

_____

_____

_____

Desserts

Fine in portions

timer set first

_____ ___ min

_____ ___ min

_____ ___ min

Specials

Now and then

bigger, rarer, usually $ or plan

_____ $ plan

_____ $ plan

Stuck choosing?

Flip a coin between your first two entrees. Picking is the expensive part.

Desserts aren't banned.

Just set the timer before you open the app, not after.

Gone stale?

Swap two or three items every couple of weeks. Novelty wears off for everyone.

Build your menu in about 20 minutes

Five steps, in order. Write fast and messy here, then copy the keepers onto page 1.

1 Design: list what actually worked

Look back over the last few weeks. Be specific enough to order.

Times I felt good afterward

What I do when I'm bored (future desserts)

2 Sort it into the five sections

Has a built-in end (a song, a round, a lap of the block)? Appetizer. No end? Dessert, whatever you'd like to call it. Mark each line A, E, S, D or SP.

3 Omit: cross off what you won't really order

Would you pick it on a random Tuesday? If not, cross it out or move it to specials. Aspirational items turn the menu into homework.

4 Prep: change the number of steps to start

Fewer steps for the good stuff, a couple more for desserts.

Make easier (item, then what I'll move)

Make slower (dessert, then the cover charge)

5 Advertise: put it where boredom happens

If you have to remember the menu exists, you won't. Tick where copies go.

☐ Fridge ☐ Desk ☐ Arm of the couch ☐ Phone lock screen (photo of page 1) ☐ Computer wallpaper

Calendar reminder to look at it again on

Swap stale items on

Maybe later

Retired favorites and seasonal stuff

off the menu for now, not gone