

The Impulse Pause Journal

Two weeks. Every urge, paused. The gap is where the wisdom lives.

"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."

— Proverbs 4:23

Impulse spending is rarely about the thing you buy — it is about the feeling you are trying to change. This journal is a mirror, not a ban. For two weeks, every time you feel the urge to buy something unplanned, you pause and fill in one entry BEFORE buying. Then you wait. Most urges pass — and the pattern reveals itself.

THE PAUSE — FOUR STEPS, EVERY TIME

- 1. NAME IT** Before you buy, write down what you want and what it costs. Seeing it in ink breaks the autopilot.
- 2. FEEL IT** Note the emotion you felt right before the urge. Stress? Boredom? Reward? The trigger is the real purchase.
- 3. WAIT** Give it 24 hours for anything over £30 / \$30. Sleep on it. The urge has a short shelf life.
- 4. DECIDE** After the pause, choose with a clear head. If you still want it and it fits the plan — buy it, guilt-free.

COMMON EMOTIONAL TRIGGERS — circle yours in each entry

Stress · Boredom · Sadness · Loneliness · Reward-seeking · Social pressure · Excitement · Tiredness

YOUR ENTRIES *Fill one in every time the urge strikes — before you buy.*

1 DATE _____ URGE STRENGTH (1-10) _____

WHAT I FELT THE URGE TO BUY _____ COST _____

THE EMOTION RIGHT BEFORE _____ Stress / Boredom / Sad / Reward / Social / Other

WHAT I ACTUALLY NEEDED IN THAT MOMENT _____

AFTER THE PAUSE, DID I BUY? Yes No WHAT I LEARNED _____

2 DATE _____ URGE STRENGTH (1-10) _____

WHAT I FELT THE URGE TO BUY _____ COST _____

THE EMOTION RIGHT BEFORE _____ Stress / Boredom / Sad / Reward / Social / Other

WHAT I ACTUALLY NEEDED IN THAT MOMENT _____

AFTER THE PAUSE, DID I BUY? Yes No WHAT I LEARNED _____

The Impulse Pause Journal — continued

3 DATE _____ URGE STRENGTH (1-10) _____

WHAT I FELT THE URGE TO BUY _____ COST _____

THE EMOTION RIGHT BEFORE _____ Stress / Boredom / Sad / Reward / Social / Other

WHAT I ACTUALLY NEEDED IN THAT MOMENT _____

AFTER THE PAUSE, DID I BUY? Yes No WHAT I LEARNED _____

4 DATE _____ URGE STRENGTH (1-10) _____

WHAT I FELT THE URGE TO BUY _____ COST _____

THE EMOTION RIGHT BEFORE _____ Stress / Boredom / Sad / Reward / Social / Other

WHAT I ACTUALLY NEEDED IN THAT MOMENT _____

AFTER THE PAUSE, DID I BUY? Yes No WHAT I LEARNED _____

5 DATE _____ URGE STRENGTH (1-10) _____

WHAT I FELT THE URGE TO BUY _____ COST _____

THE EMOTION RIGHT BEFORE _____ Stress / Boredom / Sad / Reward / Social / Other

WHAT I ACTUALLY NEEDED IN THAT MOMENT _____

AFTER THE PAUSE, DID I BUY? Yes No WHAT I LEARNED _____

6 DATE _____ URGE STRENGTH (1-10) _____

WHAT I FELT THE URGE TO BUY _____ COST _____

THE EMOTION RIGHT BEFORE _____ Stress / Boredom / Sad / Reward / Social / Other

WHAT I ACTUALLY NEEDED IN THAT MOMENT _____

AFTER THE PAUSE, DID I BUY? Yes No WHAT I LEARNED _____

7 DATE _____ URGE STRENGTH (1-10) _____

WHAT I FELT THE URGE TO BUY _____ COST _____

THE EMOTION RIGHT BEFORE _____ Stress / Boredom / Sad / Reward / Social / Other

WHAT I ACTUALLY NEEDED IN THAT MOMENT _____

AFTER THE PAUSE, DID I BUY? Yes No WHAT I LEARNED _____

The Impulse Pause Journal — continued

8 DATE _____ URGE STRENGTH (1-10) _____

WHAT I FELT THE URGE TO BUY _____ COST _____

THE EMOTION RIGHT BEFORE _____ Stress / Boredom / Sad / Reward / Social / Other

WHAT I ACTUALLY NEEDED IN THAT MOMENT _____

AFTER THE PAUSE, DID I BUY? Yes No WHAT I LEARNED _____

9 DATE _____ URGE STRENGTH (1-10) _____

WHAT I FELT THE URGE TO BUY _____ COST _____

THE EMOTION RIGHT BEFORE _____ Stress / Boredom / Sad / Reward / Social / Other

WHAT I ACTUALLY NEEDED IN THAT MOMENT _____

AFTER THE PAUSE, DID I BUY? Yes No WHAT I LEARNED _____

10 DATE _____ URGE STRENGTH (1-10) _____

WHAT I FELT THE URGE TO BUY _____ COST _____

THE EMOTION RIGHT BEFORE _____ Stress / Boredom / Sad / Reward / Social / Other

WHAT I ACTUALLY NEEDED IN THAT MOMENT _____

AFTER THE PAUSE, DID I BUY? Yes No WHAT I LEARNED _____

11 DATE _____ URGE STRENGTH (1-10) _____

WHAT I FELT THE URGE TO BUY _____ COST _____

THE EMOTION RIGHT BEFORE _____ Stress / Boredom / Sad / Reward / Social / Other

WHAT I ACTUALLY NEEDED IN THAT MOMENT _____

AFTER THE PAUSE, DID I BUY? Yes No WHAT I LEARNED _____

12 DATE _____ URGE STRENGTH (1-10) _____

WHAT I FELT THE URGE TO BUY _____ COST _____

THE EMOTION RIGHT BEFORE _____ Stress / Boredom / Sad / Reward / Social / Other

WHAT I ACTUALLY NEEDED IN THAT MOMENT _____

AFTER THE PAUSE, DID I BUY? Yes No WHAT I LEARNED _____

Two-Week Reflection

The data does not lie. This is where the real change begins.

Which emotion triggered the most urges? Name it honestly — it is your real spending driver.

What time of day or day of week did the urges cluster? Evenings? After payday? The timing is the clue.

How many urges passed without a purchase after the 24-hour wait? Count them. That is money saved.

Roughly how much did pausing save you over the two weeks? Add up the items you did not buy.

Which single purchase are you most glad you paused on? Name it — that is your costliest habit.

One specific rule you will keep going forward (e.g. "No unplanned buy over £30 without sleeping on it"):

HOW TO READ YOUR RESULTS

Most urges passed after the pause

Your discipline is strong. The pause is now a habit.

About half passed

Normal. You are catching the pattern. Watch your top trigger.

Few passed — you bought most

The trigger is emotional, not financial. Address the feeling.

"The urge always feels permanent. It never is. Wait, and watch it pass."

— HOUSE OF WISDOM

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