



SHOW ME YOU MEAN IT
GRACIE BARRA BONDI

STANDARDS • DIET AND MINDSET

CLEAN ATHLETE

No alcohol, smoking, vaping or recreational drugs.
Stop everything first, then bring back only what
helps your training, on purpose.

SAME FOR EVERYONE

6 MIN READ

01

WHY IT MATTERS

This sits under two pillars at once. It's part of your diet, because it's what you put in your body. It's part of your mindset, because how you handle stress, boredom and pressure decides whether you reach for something.

Alcohol, smoking, vaping and drugs cost you sleep, recovery and learning, and an eight-week plan has no room to absorb that. Late nights before training cost you the same things. We're building elite athletes, so the bar is set where it needs to be.

02

THE STANDARD

NON-NEGOTIABLE

- **No alcohol, smoking, vaping or recreational drugs**, from day one of your eight weeks, at any age.
- **Stop everything first, caffeine and nicotine included.** You show you can stop something before anything comes back.
- **Bring back only what helps your training, on purpose.** Caffeine (agreed with me and your dietitian) and, for adults, nicotine (agreed with me, your GP and your dietitian), in a set amount. Nothing else comes back.
- **Under 18: no caffeine and no nicotine in any form**, unless your dietitian says caffeine is okay for you.
- **No late nights before a training day.** Or before school, work or anything else you've committed to.
- **No workarounds.** No skipping meals or sweating it off in a sauna to make up for a big weekend.

If you're not willing to stop when your eight weeks start, it's best not to start the plan yet. That's okay. Come back when you're ready. I won't be checking your weekends, so this one is on you.

03

HOW TO DO IT

STEP 01

KNOW WHICH CONVERSATION YOU'RE IN

UNDER 18

You shouldn't be touching any of it: alcohol, smoking, vaping, nicotine or drugs. Honestly, I don't expect to be having this conversation with you at all.

18 AND OVER

Alcohol and nicotine are legal for you now, so this is a separate conversation, and it's about discipline and self-control. Legal doesn't mean it fits the plan. For your eight weeks the standard is the same: stop everything first. Recreational drugs are still illegal, and still a no.

STEP 02

STOP EVERYTHING FIRST

Everything stops when your eight weeks start: alcohol, smoking, vaping, drugs, nicotine, energy drinks, caffeine pills and pre-workout. Coffee and tea too.

This is the test. If you can stop something completely, you're in control of it, and we can talk about bringing part of it back. If you can't stop, that tells us something useful too (step 4).

THE METHOD

HOW TO STOP

- Alcohol, smoking, vaping and drugs: stop on day one.
- Caffeine and energy drinks: cut down over a week or two, not all at once, or the headaches will get you.
- Nicotine: tell me, and get help to stop. Quitline is free and your GP can help.
- Check your sleep and your pre-training snack. Tired and hungry is what usually feels like "I need an energy drink".

STEP 03

BRING BACK ONLY WHAT HELPS, ON PURPOSE

Once you've stopped, a few tools with a real performance benefit and minimal health downside can come back. Only after we've talked it through with the right professional: your dietitian for caffeine, your GP and dietitian for nicotine. It comes back in a set amount, at a set time, written into your plan. It's not there to get a fix. It's there to supplement and benefit your training.

- **Caffeine:** a measured amount before a hard session, agreed with me and your dietitian. Under 18, my answer is no caffeine, but that's your dietitian's call.
- **Nicotine, adults only:** a controlled dose, never smoked or vaped, agreed with me, your GP and your dietitian.
- **Everything else is a no.** Alcohol, smoking, vaping and recreational drugs don't come back during the plan.

Strength and conditioning happens in the weights gym. On the mat at the School we're doing technical work, which is almost every session we run, and you don't need to be wired for that. If you feel you can't train without something, that points to another problem, usually sleep, food, or both.

STEP 04

ASK WHAT YOU'RE USING IT FOR

When something has a hold on you, it's natural to feel you're fine. That's how these habits work. There's usually an emotional trigger behind it, and it's rarely about the substance itself. Needing something to cope is common, and it isn't a flaw in you.

So the useful question isn't "is it that bad?" It's "what am I using it to get away from?" That's mindset work, and it's worth talking to someone about (see the services at the bottom of this page).

"I NEED IT TO GET TO SLEEP."

Then you have a sleep problem, and we fix the sleep properly with the routine in [Sleep](#). We also travel overseas to compete, and drugs don't travel with us, so it isn't an option anyway.

"I'M ADDICTED TO SMOKING."

Then quitting is part of the plan. Same for vaping. You don't have to do it alone: Quitline is free, and your GP can help.

STEP 05

PLAN YOUR LATE NIGHTS

You can still go out with your friends. A party or a late night on Saturday, with no training on Sunday, is fine. A late night during the week, when you have training, school, work or anything else on the next day, is not. If we go to bed at 3am and training is at 6am, that night has already cost us the session.

Training on no sleep means a higher injury risk, a worse session, and slower thinking, so you learn less from the session you did turn up to. No workarounds either: skipping meals or sweating it off in a sauna after a big weekend swaps one cost for a bigger one.

ASK YOURSELF

BEFORE YOU SAY YES TO A LATE NIGHT

- Is there training, school or work tomorrow? Then not tonight.
- Will you still get your sleep? If not, leave early or pick another night.
- Can you have a great night without anything on the no list? If not, go back to step 4.

STEP 06

RUN YOUR OWN PLAN

It's easy to look at a successful athlete and copy their habits, including the ones that don't help. Their results come from their whole plan, and nobody can tell you which parts made the difference. Your plan is built around you.



FROM THE COACH

My answer is the one I gave myself in my camps: I'm not here to copy someone else's plan. I'm here to create the best possible conditions for me. For me that meant no smoking, no vaping and no drugs. For you it means the same.

RICKY

04

COMMON MISTAKES

- ✗ **Using weed or alcohol to get to sleep.** That's a sleep problem. Fix the routine instead.
- ✗ **Living on energy drinks.** Four or five a day usually means short sleep or poor food. Fix those and cut down over a week or two.
- ✗ **Bringing caffeine back without a plan.** A can whenever you feel flat is a fix, not a tool. Agree the amount and the timing first.
- ✗ **Showing up to technical class on pre-workout.** You don't need to be wired to learn, and under 18 it's off the list.
- ✗ **Late nights before a training day.** Bed at 3am, training at 6am. Save the late nights for when the next day is free.
- ✗ **Making up for a big weekend.** Skipping meals or sitting in a sauna is two costs instead of one.
- ✗ **Copying another athlete's habits.** Their plan isn't yours. Build the best conditions for you.
- ✗ **Saying "I'm fine" when you can't stop.** Talk to a parent, your coach or one of the services below.

CHECKLIST

DO THIS**EVERY WEEK**

- ☐ No alcohol, smoking, vaping or recreational drugs.
- ☐ Stopped everything first. Anything I brought back was agreed with my coach and the right professional, in a set amount.
- ☐ Not living on energy drinks. Under 18: no caffeine (unless my dietitian says so) and no nicotine.
- ☐ No late nights before training, school or work. Late nights only when the next day is free.
- ☐ If I reached for something, I asked myself what I was trying to get away from.
- ☐ If I'm struggling to stop, I've talked to a parent, my coach or a service below.

NOT PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

I'm a coach, not a doctor or a drug and alcohol counsellor. If you're finding it hard to stop something, or you're using it to cope with how you feel, that's not a discipline problem. Talk to a parent and your GP, and use these free, confidential services:

Quitline (smoking and vaping)

13 7848 · [NSW Quitline](https://www.cancer.nsw.gov.au/how-we-help/prevention/stopping-smoking/quitline) (<https://www.cancer.nsw.gov.au/how-we-help/prevention/stopping-smoking/quitline>)

Alcohol and Drug Information Service, NSW (24/7)

1800 250 015 · [Your Room](https://yourroom.health.nsw.gov.au/getting-help/Pages/adis.aspx) (<https://yourroom.health.nsw.gov.au/getting-help/Pages/adis.aspx>)

headspace (ages 12 to 25)

headspace.org.au (<https://headspace.org.au>)

Kids Helpline (ages 5 to 25, 24/7)

1800 55 1800 · kidshelpline.com.au (<https://kidshelpline.com.au>)

Lifeline (24/7)

13 11 14

Caffeine and nicotine

Before bringing either back for performance: caffeine is agreed with me and your dietitian; nicotine (adults only) with me, your GP and your dietitian. See [Diet](#) for who to contact.