

THE MIGRAINE RELIEF SERIES · STIMULUS & REACTION

Book 48 of 48

48

A Plan, Not a Watch

*Closing the loop on self-monitoring, and building an
identity that isn't made of assumptions*

ROD GABRIEL ZR

Author of Living with Visual Aura Migraine



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BOOK 48 OF 48

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Closing the loop on self-monitoring, and building an identity that isn't made of assumptions

Designed with spacious type, warm colors, and generous white space for visual comfort — especially for readers navigating aura, light sensitivity, or neurological strain.

A note on care. This mini-book shares one person's lived experience and general wellness practices. It is not medical advice, and it is not a substitute for diagnosis or treatment by a qualified healthcare professional. Migraine has many forms and causes. Always consult your doctor about your symptoms, your triggers, and any medication or treatment decisions.

© ROD GABRIEL ZR. Part of The Migraine Relief Series, a companion collection to *Living with Visual Aura Migraine: Finding Relief Through the Rough Times* by Rod Gabriel ZR.

BEFORE WE BEGIN

A letter to you

This closing book brings the whole practice together around one final, quietly important idea: a plan is something you build once, calmly, and trust. A watch is something you carry every moment, checking constantly, unable to put down. This whole series has been about trading one for the other.

But there's a deeper layer worth naming before we close: somewhere in months or years of constant self-monitoring, it's easy to build an entire identity out of assumptions — 'I'm someone who's always about to have an episode' — rather than out of what's actually, evidently true. This book is about gently dismantling that identity, and building something truer in its place.

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The difference between a plan and a watch

A plan is written once, on a calm day, and trusted afterward. A watch demands to be checked again and again, offering no lasting reassurance no matter how many times you look. This entire series has quietly been an argument for trading the second for the first.

*A plan you trust needs checking once.
A watch you don't trust needs checking
forever.*

The identity built from assumptions

Here's a quieter cost of constant vigilance, easy to miss while it's happening: over enough months of scanning yourself for danger, it's possible to start believing, quietly and completely, that danger is your baseline state — that you are, fundamentally, someone perpetually on the verge of an episode, rather than someone who occasionally has one.

Assumption versus evidence

Assumption: *'I am someone who is always about to have an episode.'*

Evidence: a written record of how many days, weeks, or months actually pass without one, most of the time, for most people with migraine.

The correction: *'I am someone who sometimes has episodes, and who has a plan for when I do.'*

What's actually, evidently true about you

Assumptions feel like facts because they're familiar, not because they're accurate. It's worth actually counting, rather than assuming, what your real pattern has been.

PAUSE & REFLECT

Counting the actual evidence

Roughly how many days in the last month were genuinely affected by a migraine episode, counted honestly?

What does that number say about the story I've been telling myself about how often this happens?

Writing your one-page plan

The whole practical heart of this series, condensed onto one page you write once and trust from then on.

My one-page plan

My usual aura pattern, briefly, for comparison: ...

My early steps if a real episode begins: ...

My red-flag signs that mean call a doctor today, not later: ...

My public-places plan: exit line, quiet spot, kit, contact person: ...

The sentence I say to myself when a sensation appears: *'I have a plan. I don't need to be watching constantly.'*

A closing practice: hanging up the watch

A short, physical practice for the moments the old habit of constant checking tries to return, because it will, and that's alright.

□ Hanging up the watch · 90 seconds

Notice the urge to check — your vision, your body, anything.

Breathe in: *'I have a plan.'*

Breathe out: *'I don't need to be watching constantly.'*

Physically, if it helps, imagine setting something down — a watch, a magnifying glass — and letting your hands be empty for a moment.

Return to whatever you were doing before the urge arrived.

Who you get to be instead

Not someone who ignores their body. Not someone who lives in a permanent state of bracing, either. Someone with a plan, resting on real evidence rather than assumption, free to spend most of their attention on an actual life instead of a hypothetical emergency.

You are not someone waiting for the next episode. You are someone living a life, who has a plan ready for the occasional day that life includes one.

YOUR SPACE

My notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.



CLOSING

Keep going, gently

This closes the Stimulus & Reaction collection, and the full forty-eight-book Migraine Relief Series. The gap between sensation and story, once built, doesn't close back up easily — you'll find it again each time you need it.

Put down the watch. Pick up the plan. And go live the life that was waiting for you in that gap all along.

*This completes **The Migraine Relief Series**, all forty-eight books. For the memoir at its heart, find **Living with Visual Aura Migraine: Finding Relief Through the Rough Times** by Rod Gabriel ZR.*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ROD GABRIEL ZR

Rod Gabriel ZR spent years running the same automatic loop: a flicker in his vision, an instant verdict (*aura, it's starting*), and a body already bracing before a single fact was in. What changed things wasn't learning to ignore his body. It was learning to build a small, deliberate space between the sensation and the story he told about it — and discovering that space was exactly where choice lived.

This closing collection returns to the voice at the heart of *Living with Visual Aura Migraine*, at the intersection of practical neuroscience, quiet mindfulness, and plain common sense. He is not a doctor, and he is careful never to teach anyone to ignore a real warning sign. His one aim is simpler: to help readers stop treating every sensation as an

emergency, without ever stopping them from treating a real emergency as one.

Want the whole journey?

This guide is adapted from the complete book, *Living with Visual Aura Migraine: Finding Relief Through the Rough Times* — the full story, with every practice, every episode, and every lesson in one place.

The Migraine Relief Series

1 · The Calm Before the Flicker 2 · Listen to the Whispers 3 · The Fear of the Next Episode 4 · Storms in Beautiful Places 5 · The 5-Minute Relief Kit 6 · More Than My Migraine 7 · The Space Between Seeing 8 · Prayers & Mantras for the Storm 9 · Invisible Warriors 10 · The 30-Day Gratitude Journal

The Identity Series — on reclaiming yourself from the condition:

11 · The Mask You Didn't Know You Were Wearing 12 · The Watchtower 13 · Who Was I Before? 14 · Taking Off the Heavy Coat 15 · The Person on the Horizon

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Plan, Not a Watch

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