

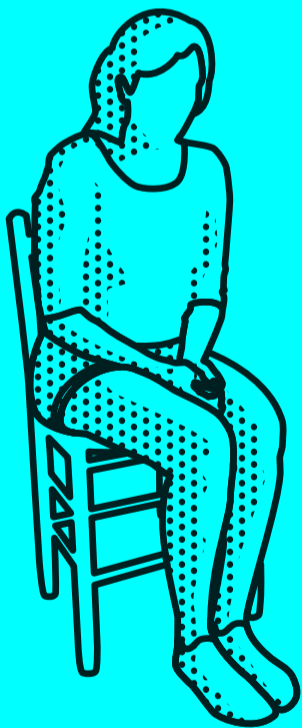
make yourself big

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changing your
mindset through
power posing

powering the mind through the body

virtually every human interaction involves reciprocal social evaluations, but the stakes are often higher in one direction than the other. that is, one party often has more power to impact the future of the other, by virtue of controlling access to coveted resources like college admissions, jobs, or venture capital. in a job interview, for example, the interviewer has power over the job candidate's future and, consequently, the importance of the interviewer's evaluations of the candidate dwarfs the importance of the candidate's evaluations of the interviewer. however, in the moments before walking into one of these particularly important social evaluations, like an interview, many people—already aware of their relative powerlessness—shrink in their chairs or hunch over their phones, adopting nonverbal postures that can cause them to feel even more powerless.



but what if they did
the opposite—

**stretching
out and
occupying
more space
rather than
contracting
and taking
up less?**



in both human and non-human primates, expansive, open postures reflect high power whereas contractive, closed postures reflect low power. but, just as smiling both reflects and produces positive affect, these postures not only reflect power; they also produce it:

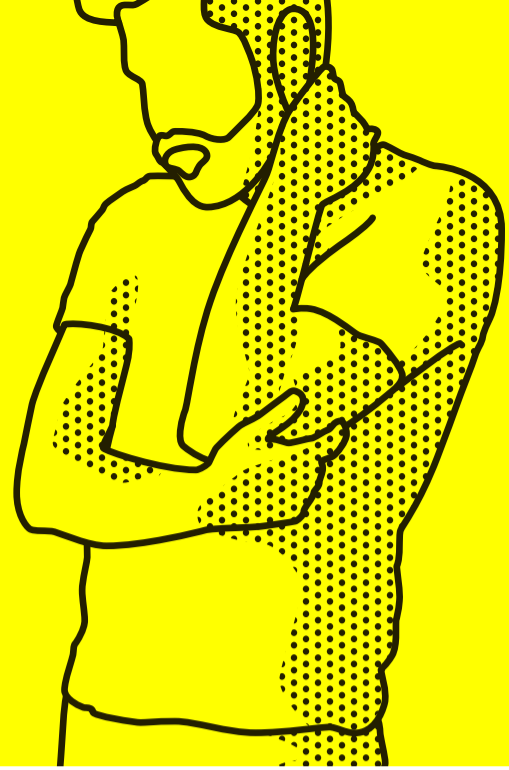
adopting high-power poses increases feelings of power, risk-taking behavior, action orientation, pain tolerance, and testosterone, while reducing stress, anxiety, and cortisol.

adopting high-power poses produces stronger effects on thought abstraction and action orientation than do classic power manipulations that do not involve nonverbal behavior, such as role assignments and recall primes. powerful men and women tend to have higher testosterone, the dominance hormone, and lower cortisol, the stress hormone, and this particular hormone profile is related to a greater willingness to take risks, to seek out challenges and to thrive in stressful situations – all key elements of effective leadership.

**power
posing**

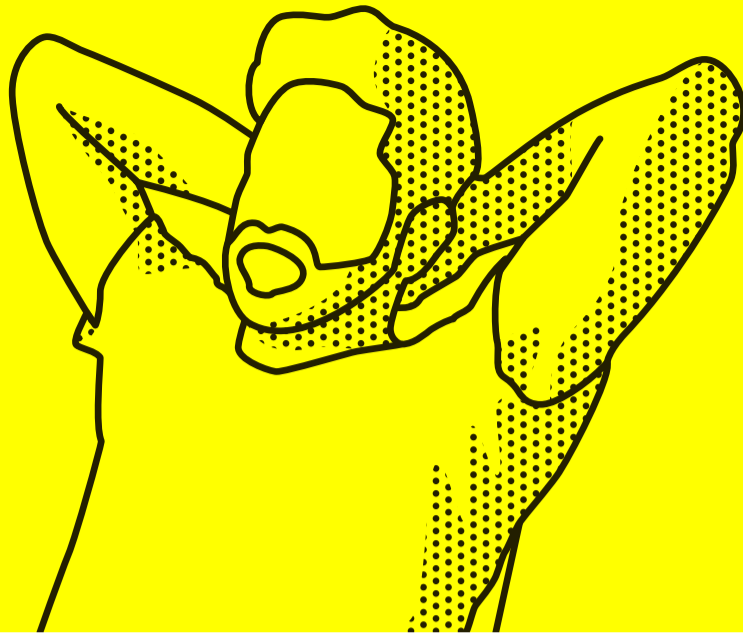
the 'fake
it til you
become it'
technique

although there are person to person differences in these hormone levels, they're not set in stone. in fact, they fluctuate, from day to day, hour to hour, and even from minute to minute, which means you can alter your own hormone levels using something as simple as movement, putting your body into bigger more open postures, or what we call power poses.



One: **understand the science**

when you're nervous and insecure, your cortisol can shoot up, and your testosterone can even go down. when you're feeling powerful and confident, the opposite happens. so, by putting yourself into a power pose, you signal confidence and power not just to the people around you, but also to your own brain. in effect, you are configuring your brain to deal with and even thrive in any leadership challenge you face.



two:

warm up beforehand

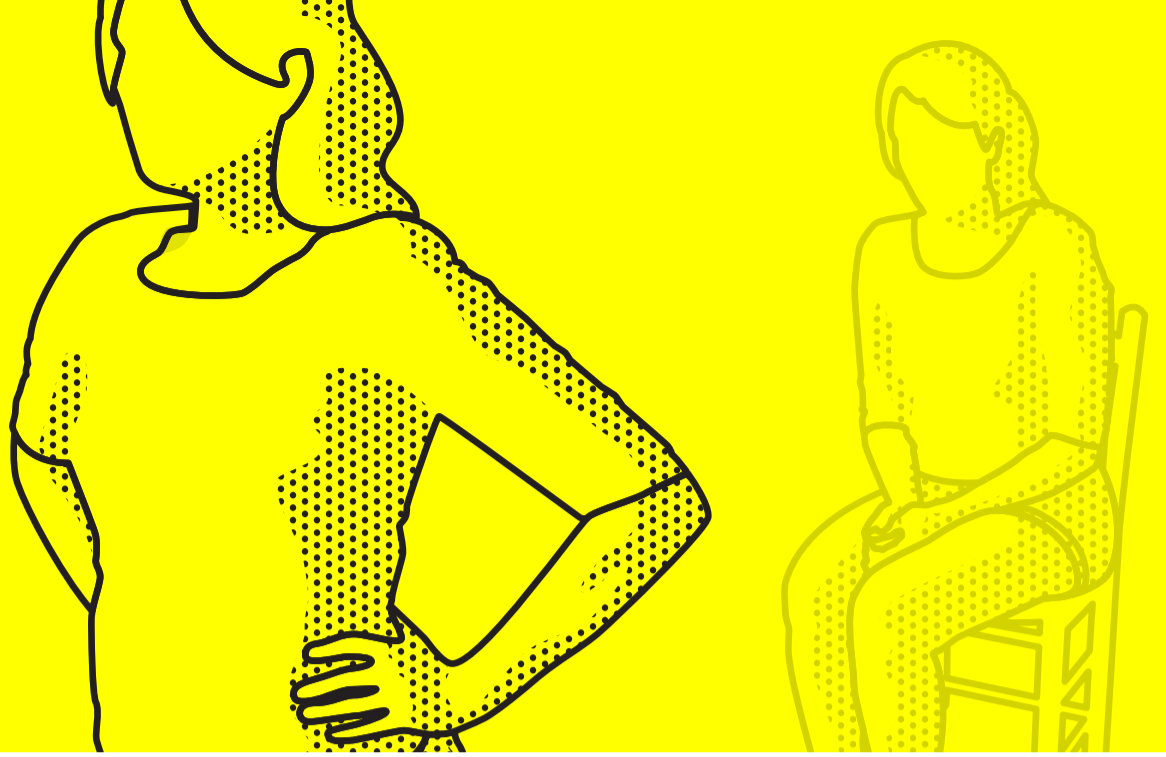
the most effective power poses are the big ones, so before that big team meeting or board presentation, you should close the door to your office or find a private corner and really stretch yourself out. make yourself as big as you can. stand with your legs spread and your hands on your hips, or lean back in your chair and put your feet on your desk. testosterone rises, cortisol drops.



three:

tone it down a bit in public

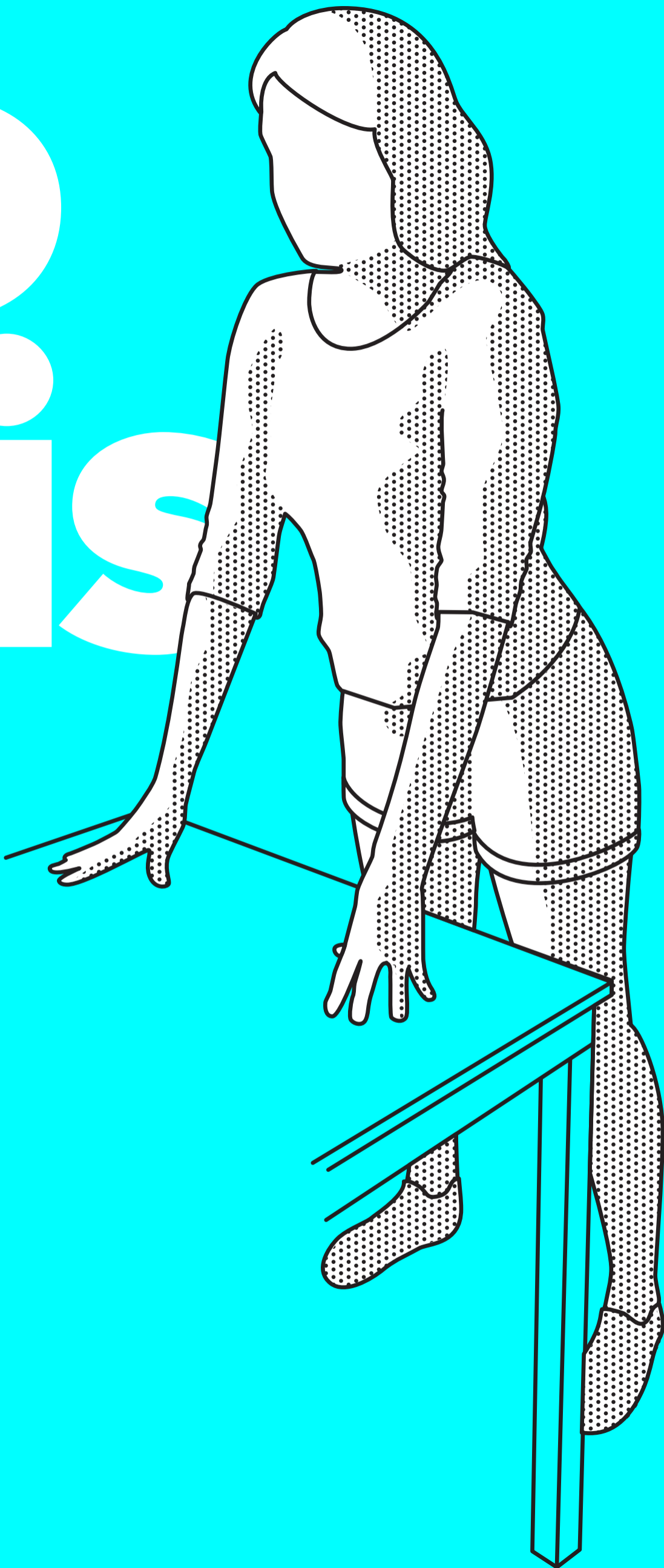
once you're leading that group, you don't want to look like you're trying to dominate it. just be as squared off and big as seems natural. lift your chin, stand tall, rest your hand on the back of a chair or another prop. use open gestures. testosterone stays up, cortisol stays low.



four: **make it a habit**

people in leadership roles must feel and display confidence as often as possible if they expect their teams to follow them. so, think more about your body. stop hunching over your laptop or huddling over your blackberry. open up, take up more space, and your hormone levels will start to look like a leaders.

do
this

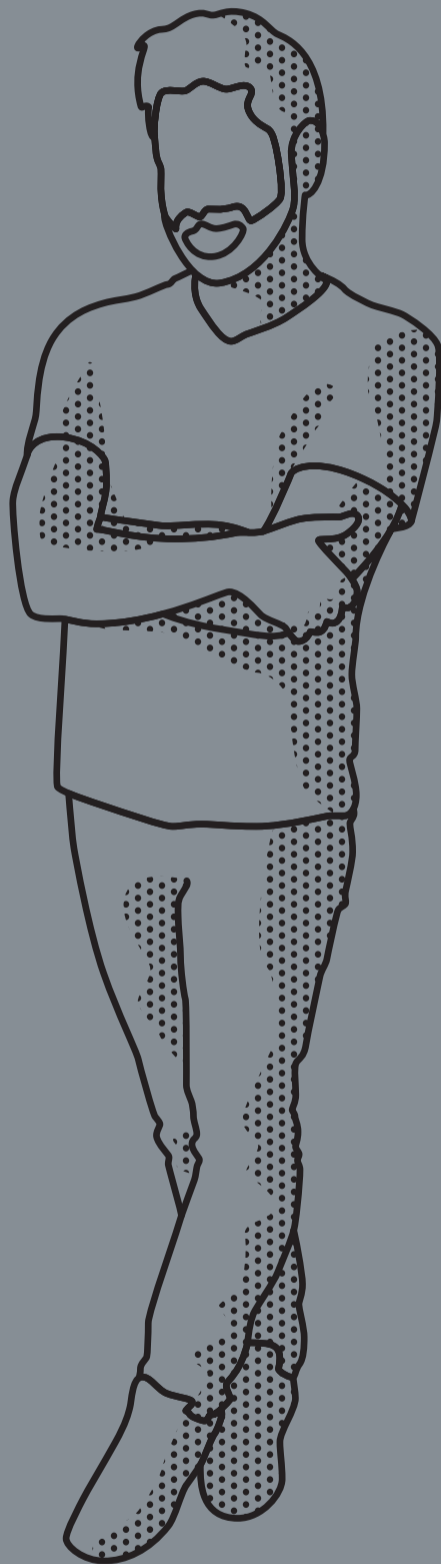


testosterone

cortisol



not this



cortisol

testosterone



do

think



testosterone

cortisol



not this

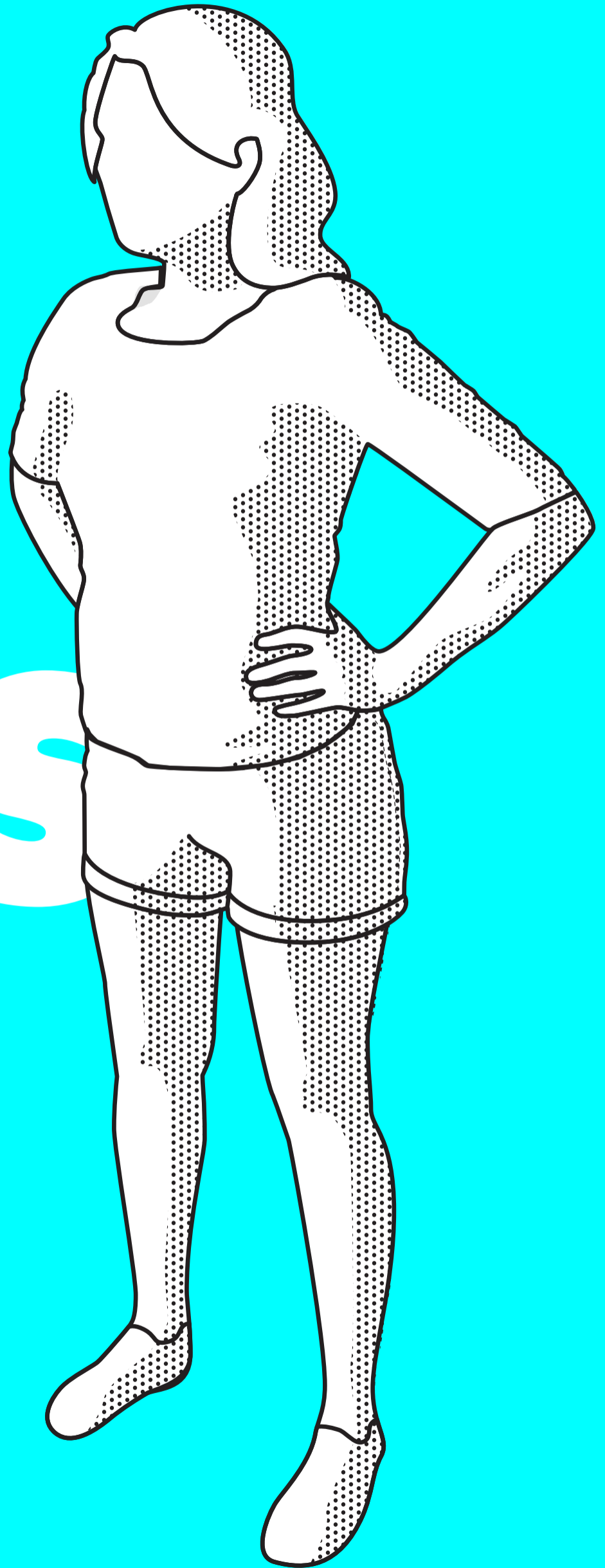


cortisol

testosterone



do
this

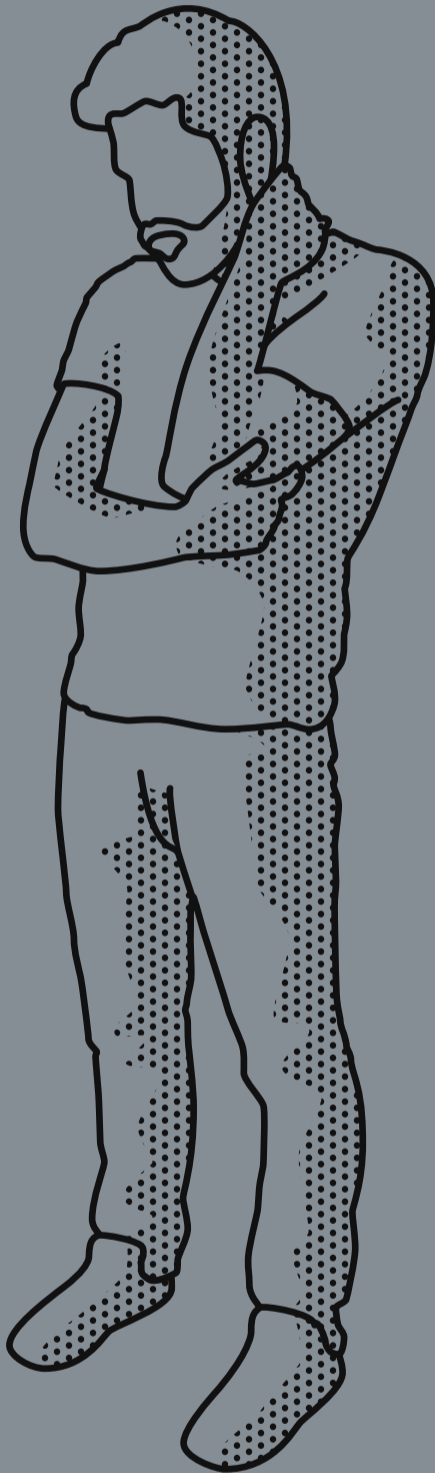


testosterone

cortisol



not this



cortisol

testosterone



designed by lockstep studio in brooklyn, ny.
www.lockstepstudio.com

Sources

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