Break Light: Calm technology for behavior change

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The Problem

The risk of **injury** due to long-term computer use is widely known. Most of the risk can be alleviated through proper posture and ergonomic equipment, but **sitting still** for hours at a time, even in the best posture, is still **dangerous.** For many, getting up and **moving frequently** during computer use remains **a challenge.**

Calm Technology

Calm tech is **soothing** and **comforting** to use, in contrast to the **frustration** frequently inspired by **computers**. Calm technology exists at the **periphery** of attention until it becomes important, then it supports a **smooth shift** to the **center** of attention.
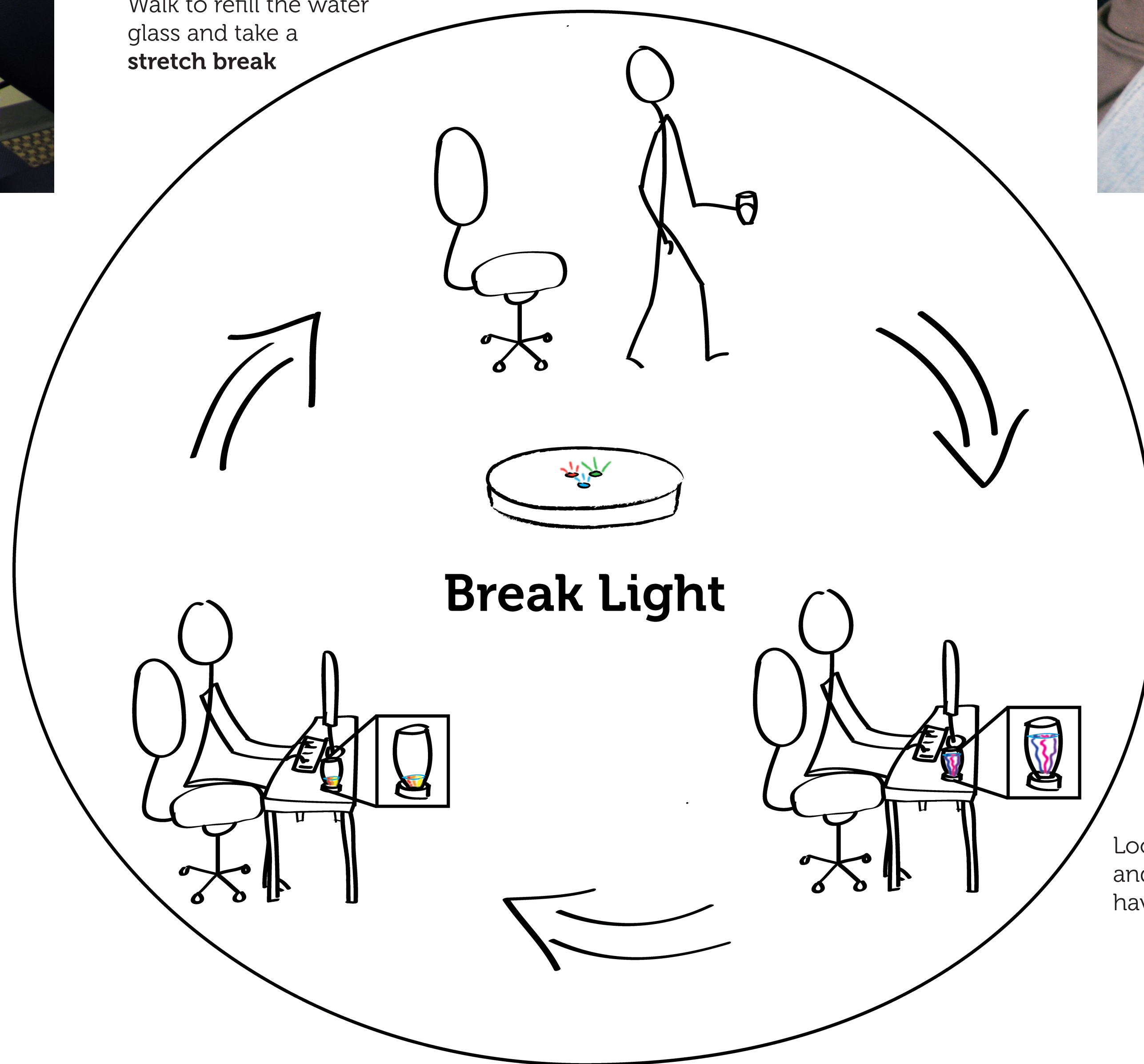
What is a Break?

Micropause: frequent, brief breaks to shift posture and refocus eyes
Stretch break: less frequent, longer breaks to stand up, move about, stretch
Rest break: least frequent, longest break to get away from work and relax

Design Goals

Motivate short, frequent, physically active breaks

Support flow & engagement

Preserve the user's workspace

Facilitate smooth transitions of attention

Promote transparency & personal autonomy

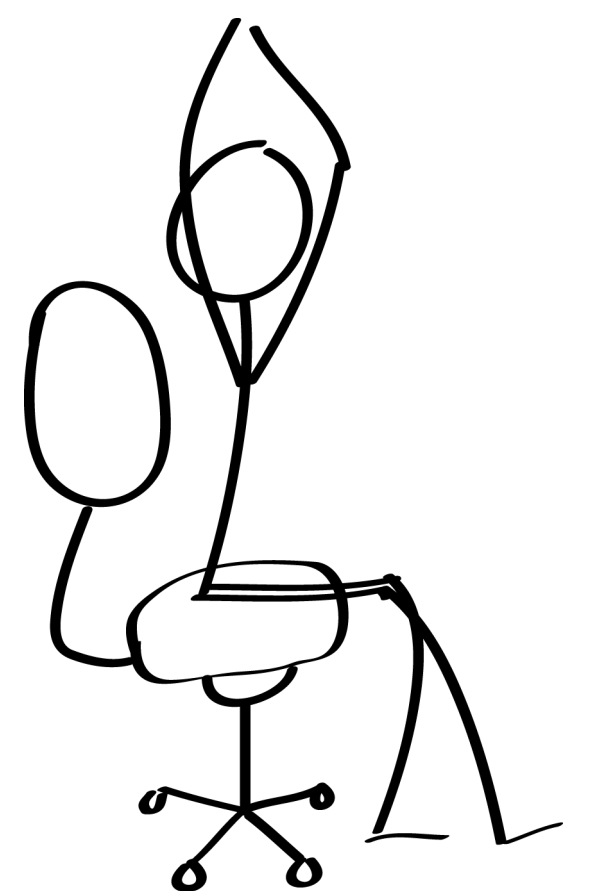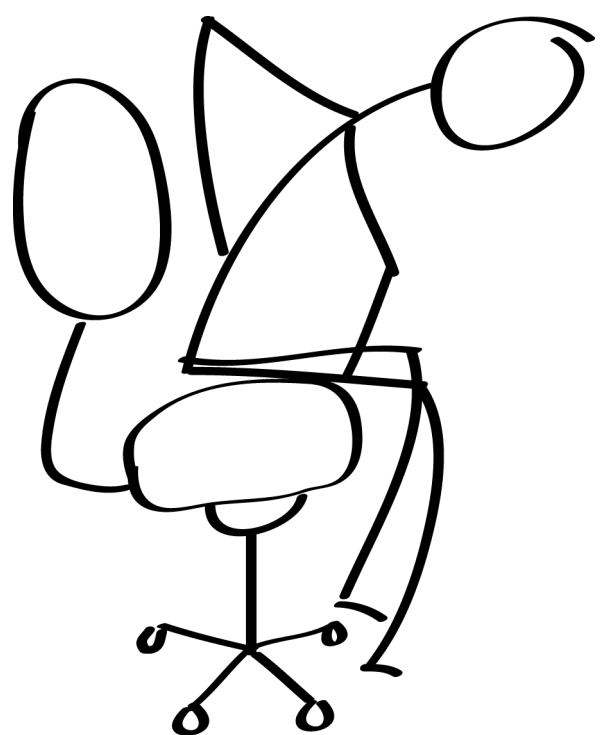Walk to refill the water glass and take a **stretch break**

As you drink the water, the Break Light's increased speed and brightness signal that it's time to get up and refill the glass.

Break Light

The Break Light shines up through a full glass of water in a slow, pleasant pattern, increasing the water level's visibility.

Look at the water and take a drink to have a **micropause**

Prototype