

# 7 Types of Rest and How to Achieve Them

It's hard enough to make time to get sleep – so how are you supposed to make time for the seven different types of rest needed? Here's an overview of Sandra Dalton-Smith's (author of [Sacred Rest](#)) kinds of rest, and how to incorporate them into your life.

## Creative Rest

If you've ever felt like you're just out of good ideas, you've experienced being creatively drained. Most people know it as being uninspired or having a creative "block." And if you've been there, you know that pushing through doesn't always work. People are especially prone to this when their careers overlap when doing what they love, as a "side-hustle economy" has grown into the only answer for economic instability.

Ways to get creative rest:

- Get out into nature. Take a walk through a park, along the beach, or go for a hike.
- Do something just for fun. What would you make if you didn't have to sell or share it?
- Immerse yourself in other people's creativity. Visit a museum or get together with friends who inspire you.

## Mental Rest

Feeling distracted, overwhelmed, or like you can't focus? You likely need some mental rest. When you're mentally drained, you may feel like you have "brain fog" or like every task takes twice as much effort to complete.

Mental rest allows you to disconnect from cognitive demands and allow your brain to slip into that default mode network. For people in information-driven work or who spend a lot of time on the computer, this kind of rest can be especially helpful.

Ways to get mental rest:

- Take short breaks throughout the day. Set a timer to remind yourself to step away and take a few deep breaths.
- Create some space in your brain by writing down your thoughts on a notepad or in a journal.
- Give yourself extra time to disconnect. Put your devices away an hour before bed and allow an extra day or two at the start or end of a vacation to decompress.

## Physical Rest

It's probably easiest to tell if you're short on physical rest – your body will let you know if you're in pain or not getting enough sleep. Physical rest can be either passive or active. Passive physical rest means time spent asleep, including napping. Active physical rest, on the other hand, is any activity that improves your physical well-being, like massage, exercise, stretching, or yoga. Utilizing both kinds of rest will make the biggest difference in your physical energy levels.

### Ways to get physical rest:

- Get some sleep! Use an app or fitness tracker to keep track of your sleep schedule and quality.
- Incorporate mild exercise into your routine at least three times a week.
- Plan time for professional self-care treatments like massage, chiropractic care, and acupuncture.

## Social Rest

Craving some “me time?” You're probably in need of social rest. Every person has a variety of relationships in their lives – family members, coworkers, friends, and acquaintances. Managing your energy is about finding the right balance between the relationships that drain you and the relationships that nourish and inspire you. Try not to judge your balance by what anyone else is doing as we all have different social needs and preferences. Reach out to people who make you feel good about yourself and try to spend more time with them.

### Ways to get social rest:

- Say no. If you're feeling depleted, turn down an invitation or two and recharge at home.
- Change up your hangouts. If you usually go out for dinner and drinks, try meeting up for a workout class or paint-and-sip.
- Don't multitask when you're spending time with friends. Leave your device in your pocket or limit the size of the group you're hanging out with.

## Emotional Rest

In times of extreme stress, it's not uncommon to get irritable or overwhelmed. When we get emotionally taxed, the effects tend to quickly spill over into other areas of our lives. We have a hard time staying focused and productive when we're not at our emotional best.

Emotional rest tends to come down to setting effective boundaries. When you feel emotionally drained, it can be a sign that you said “yes” to something that should have been a “no.”

### Ways to get emotional rest:

- Take a “yes” break. Give yourself space to consider what you can handle by asking for time to consider requests before you agree to them.
- Share how you are feeling in a safe space. Vent to a friend or write out your feelings in a journal.
- Develop the ability to sit with difficult emotions by practicing mindfulness.

# Sensory Rest

You know the mild anxiety you feel when you get a notification on your phone? Chances are, you're experiencing that kind of sensory input round-the-clock. Even though digital devices get a bad rap, ambient noises, bright lights, traffic, and even other people talking can add to the sensory overload.

Ways to get sensory rest:

- Turn off the notifications on your phone or even try a digital detox. Even five minutes can help you feel more refreshed.
- Meditation can help you learn to notice – and not be swept away by – external stimuli or internal chatter.
- Try out a sensory deprivation therapy, like a float tank, if you need a full reset.

# Spiritual Rest

When we feel disconnected from the rest of the world, it can leave us feeling unmoored. Spiritual rest provides us with a sense of purpose and belonging. Feelings of love, acceptance, and understanding help ground us. Without it, we are prone to existential crises.

Ways to get spiritual rest:

- Join a spiritual community, faith-based organization, or group that aligns with your interests.
- Volunteer for a cause that's personally meaningful to you.
- Work with a coach or mentor to reconnect your short-term goals to the bigger picture.

# Tips to Schedule Rest into Your Workday

Understanding that rest isn't just about sleep means that you can't pile it all on at the end of the day. You can prevent yourself from being truly drained by incorporating opportunities for rest into your workday. Here are four ways to make different types of rest a part of your day:

- **Use technology to your advantage.**

There are a number of apps that help tune out distractions or remind you when it's time to rest. If you want to keep it simple, try setting a timer to remind yourself to take a break.

- **Create a "hard stop."**

Setting boundaries at work can be difficult – particularly when you work from home. If you have a tendency to work past closing time or pile on extra hours, try scheduling something after work. Shifting gears can help you get into "rest mode."

- **Bundle different types of rest.**

Be intentional and creative about using your time off to maximize your rest. If you have a free afternoon or a day off, combine one or more types of rest. You could try taking a walk with a friend (social, creative, physical) or volunteer (mental, spiritual).

- **Rest early and often.**

Don't wait until you feel depleted to start filling your tank. Plan short breaks throughout the day and look ahead to see when you might want to take a few days off. Allow a buffer between activities and meetings so you don't get overwhelmed.

Making sure you get all the different types of rest requires a shift in mindset. When you embrace the idea that being busy doesn't necessarily mean being productive, you can build rest into your day without guilt. Even a few minutes of the different kinds of rest can help you be more productive, creative, and satisfied with your day.

Would you like some help getting started building rest into your day?

See how Life Coaching can help!

**Let's set up a free Discovery Session.**

Interested in a presentation for your group on the topic of rest and breath?

**Let's connect!**

