

Making room for rest

A gentle response to overwhelm and depletion

We use energy in many ways: moving, thinking, feeling, relating and taking in the world around us. Rest can take different forms, too. Sleep matters, and we may also need quiet, fewer demands, emotional space or nourishing connection.

Why rest matters

Rest gives us opportunities to recover from effort and ease the demands on our attention and energy. Pauses can support concentration and help us feel less stretched. Making room for rest regularly is part of caring for ourselves, even when there is still work to do.

When everything feels like too much

Overstimulation can happen when noise, light, screens or activity feel like more than we can comfortably take in. Overwhelm can arise when demands, decisions or feelings exceed the capacity we have available. We may notice tension, irritability, difficulty concentrating or a wish to withdraw.

These experiences can be an invitation to pause and ask: What is asking a lot of me right now, and what could I reduce? Sometimes the first helpful step is less input, a quieter space, one fewer task or asking someone to share the load.

What would feel replenishing?

Replenishment means making room for what helps you feel supported or restored. Depending on the day, that may be solitude, a gentle walk, meaningful connection or permission to do nothing for a while. Something enjoyable can still be demanding, so notice how an activity leaves you feeling.

Pause. Notice. Choose.

What feels most tired: my body, my mind, my senses, or something else?

What could I have a little less of, or receive a little more of?

Choose one small pause, then notice whether it feels helpful.

The next page offers seven ways to think about rest. They can overlap, and your needs may change from day to day. Use them as invitations, not another checklist.

Rest does not have to be earned.

Rest is one part of support. Ongoing overwhelm may also call for changes to demands, clearer boundaries or help from others. If exhaustion persists or affects daily life, speak with a healthcare professional.

Seven types of rest

What kind of rest might you need today?

Rest can mean sleep, a little less input, or space to be yourself. Use these seven areas to notice what feels depleted and choose one small way to care for it.

Physical

REST

Let your body pause and recover.

Protect time for sleep, lie down, or try gentle stretching.

Mental

REST

Take a break from thinking, planning and deciding.

Write a brain dump or pause a task without checking your phone.

Emotional

REST

Make room for feelings without having to appear fine.

Name what you feel, journal, or talk with someone you trust.

Social

REST

Find a balance of solitude and nourishing connection.

Decline a plan or spend time with someone you feel at ease with.

Sensory

REST

Soften the amount of input you are taking in.

Dim the lights, silence notifications, or spend a few minutes in quiet.

Creative

REST

Enjoy beauty and inspiration without needing to produce.

Notice nature, listen to music, or enjoy art without making anything.

Spiritual

REST

Reconnect with meaning, belonging or something larger.

Try prayer, quiet reflection, or connection with nature or community.

A gentle check-in

The kind of rest I need most today is:

One small way I could make room for it:

You do not need to do all seven. Start where you are.