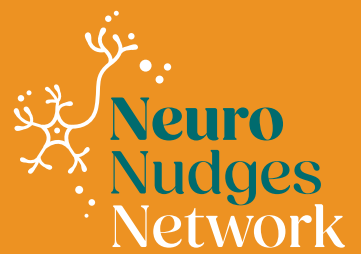


Rest & Recovery

A Neuro Nudges Tool to Optimise Your Brain



Purpose

This tool helps you normalise rest as a **proactive strategy, not a last resort**. By noticing early signals of fatigue and choosing the right recovery “dose,” you can recharge before burnout, make better decisions, and model sustainable performance. Think of your brain like a phone battery: when fully charged, you’re sharp and creative. Skip rest, and you slip into medium power - distracted, reactive. Ignore the signs, and you hit low power mode: one more demand may cause you to shut down.

Brain breaks and recovery are how you recharge before you run flat.

1 Notice the Signals (Body → Mind → Behaviour)

Ask yourself: What signs are showing up?

- **Body:** Tired eyes, restlessness, tension.
- **Mind:** Brain fog, difficulty focusing, struggling with decisions.
- **Behaviour:** Irritability, snapping at others, losing your sense of humour.

These are your brain's “low power mode” alerts.

2 Name Your State

- Slightly drained > need a **micro-rest**
- Running low (battery saver mode) > need a **meso-rest**
- Completely depleted > need a **macro-rest**

Rule of thumb: match the size of your rest to the size of your fatigue.

3 Choose Your Recovery DOSE

Micro-Rest (seconds to minutes): [Physiological sigh](#), [Box Breathing](#), stretch, mindful pause, [change focal range](#).

Meso-Rest (10–30 minutes): Walk, nap, [meditation](#), [NSDR \(Non-Sleep Deep Rest\)](#), digital break.

Macro-Rest (hours to days): Sleep, day off, holiday, true disconnection.

Brain Breaks Matter

Short breaks refresh focus and prevent decision fatigue. Even two minutes of genuine disconnection resets your prefrontal cortex. Try:

- Move your body – walk, stretch, or [dance](#).
- Rehydrate – refill water or make tea.
- Connect – a quick chat with a colleague or friend.
- Shift your environment – sunlight, fresh air, or posture change.

4 Re-enter with Intention

Before you jump back in, ask: What do I want to bring back after resting?

- **Mindset:** What values support my decisions? Which [Strengths](#) can I optimise? Am I overusing any? What [Saboteurs](#) or mental models might be in play?
- **Systems:** What habits or environments support or drain me? What new habits could I try (e.g., early morning sunlight, sleep routines)?
- **Connection:** Who can offer support, a prompt, or a reset?
- **Guardrails:** What might be attractive but unhelpful (e.g., social media)?
- **Prevention:** How can I tell when my battery needs a recharge?
- **Sustainability:** How can I sustain the changes I want through habits or rituals?

5 Sample Script

"I notice I'm scrolling aimlessly and struggling to focus. My brain feels heavy - this is low power mode. If I take a brain break and walk around the block (meso-rest), I'll recharge and return sharper, calmer, and ready to finish with focus."

6 Why It Works | Key Takeaways

- Rest is fuel for the brain.
- Breaks protect against decision fatigue.
- Sleep clears toxins and resets emotional balance.
- Recovery builds adaptability and long-term resilience

7 Reflective Practice Prompt

- What worked today - and why?
- What didn't work - and why?
- Score your day (before vs. after).
- Notice how habits shaped that score.
- What's one small nudge to move from, say, a 3 to a 3.5?
- What do you notice about your battery levels over recent days/weeks/months?

Brain Boosters

Read

- [Why We Sleep — Matthew Walker](#)
- [Rest: Why You Get More Done When You Work Less — Alex Pang](#)
- [Brain-Friendly Leadership — Silvia Damiano](#)
- [Microsoft Research | Your Brain Needs Breaks](#)
- [Healthy Mind Platter](#)
- [The Pomodoro Technique](#)
- [5-minute brain break: refresh your mind anywhere](#)

Watch

- [TED Talk: Sleep is Your Superpower — Matthew Walker](#)
- [Arianna Huffington: The Power of Sleep](#)
- [Dr John Arden: SEEDS](#)
- [Dr Andrew Huberman: How to Control Cortisol & Overcome Burnout](#)
- [Dr Andrew Huberman: Breathing Techniques & the Physiological Sigh](#)
- [Dr Andrew Huberman: How to Use Music to Boost Motivation, Mood & Improve Learning](#)

Try

- [Strengths Profile](#)
- [Positive Intelligence Saboteurs Assessment](#)
- [Muse App](#) (biofeedback for meditation & recovery – Katherine is loving this!)
- [i4 Neuroleader resources on sleep and agility](#)
- [Guided 10 Minute NSDR with Dr Andrew Huberman](#)
- [Box Breathing Technique — Navy SEAL method](#)
- [Calm](#) or [Headspace](#) for guided breathwork