

# 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) These are your brain’s “low power mode” alerts.



### Body

Tired eyes,  
restlessness,  
tension.



### Mind

Brain fog,  
difficulty focusing,  
struggling with  
decisions.



### Behaviour

Irritability, snapping  
at others, losing your  
sense of humour.

Which of these signals show up most often for me?"

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## 2 Name Your State Rule of thumb: match the size of your rest to the size of your fatigue.

### Battery Level



Medium



Low



Empty

### State



Slightly drained



Running low



Completely depleted

### Rest needed



Micro-rest



Meso-rest



Macro-rest

What's my most common state during the week?

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## 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  
[Dance](#)



#### Connect

A quick chat with  
a colleague or  
friend



#### Rehydrate

Refill water or  
make tea



#### Shift your environment

Sunlight  
Fresh air  
Posture change



What's my go-to rest strategy?

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What might I experiment with instead?

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## Re-enter with Intention

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

### Mindset:

1. What values support my decisions?
2. Which [Strengths](#) can I optimise?
3. Am I overusing any?
4. What [Saboteurs](#) or mental models might be in play?

### Systems:

1. What habits or environments support or drain me?
2. What new habits could I try (e.g., early morning sunlight, sleep routines)?

### Connection:

1. Who can offer support, a prompt, or a reset?

### Guardrails:

1. What might be attractive but unhelpful (e.g., social media)?

### Prevention:

1. How can I tell when my battery needs a recharge?

### Sustainability:

1. How can I sustain the changes I want through habits or rituals?

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### 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."

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### 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

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### Reflective Practice Prompt

What worked today - and why?

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Score your day (before vs. after).

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What's one small nudge to move from, say, a 3 to a 3.5?

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What didn't work - and why?

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Notice how habits shaped that score.

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What do you notice about your battery levels over recent days/weeks/months?

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## 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