



After a week of non-stop meetings, frequent interactions with clients and colleagues, what helps you recharge?

As an introvert myself, what restores me is simply having some quiet time alone without any interruption. A close friend of mine is the complete opposite. What helps her is connection. She would feel much energized after sharing a meal with friends, joining fun activities, or simply being surrounded by people. That's how she lets go of tension and feels lighter.

We often hear familiar suggestions for self-care such as getting more sleep, taking a break, going on holiday, exercising, practising mindfulness etc. They are all great tips. It's just that rest and recovery are deeply personal.

Our personalities, responsibilities, and daily demands all influence what recovery looks like. A parent caring for young children or ageing parents may

just want a moment where they are not solving someone else's needs. Someone who is managing a health condition, chronic fatigue, or energy limitations that others may not see, may need more frequent, shorter breaks throughout the day, rather than back-to-back meetings or the pressure of being "constantly reachable".

That is why generic wellness advice does not always feel relevant to everyone. Before deciding what helps you recharge, it may be more important to understand what has actually been draining you. Once we understand that, recovery becomes much more intentional.

So, what can we do differently?

# REST

LOOKS DIFFERENT  
FOR EVERYONE



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## 1 Be clearer about what is actually draining you

Dr. Sandra Dalton-Smith, in her book *Sacred Rest*<sup>1</sup>, offers a helpful reminder that rest is much broader than sleep alone. Her framework describes different forms of depletion, including physical, mental, emotional, social, sensory, creative, and spiritual fatigue, which explains why simply "taking a break" does not always leave us feeling restored. For example, if you feel tired even after resting, but your work has started to feel empty, repetitive, or disconnected from what matters to you, the depletion may be spiritual rather than physical. What you may need is not more sleep, but time to reconnect with meaning, purpose, or the bigger "why" behind what you do.

The clearer we are about what is draining us, the better we can recover intentionally.

## 2 Catch yourself when guilt takes over

Many of us stay online longer while working from home, reply to messages immediately, or say yes when we are already drained because we worry about how it might look to others. This kind of pressure can be exhausting in its own way. Catching yourself in those moments is often the first step towards changing the pattern. Then gently ask yourself: Is this truly necessary, or am I responding to guilt? Sometimes the healthier choice is giving yourself permission to step away, reply later, or simply choose rest without needing to justify it.

## 3 Protect small recovery moments before exhaustion builds up

Recovery does not always need to be big. Going on a holiday might help, but what often makes the bigger difference are the smaller habits we repeat consistently. Creating breathing space between meetings, taking lunch away from your screen, stepping out for a short walk, or setting a clearer log-off time can help prevent deeper depletion. What's more important is to choose those that work for you.

## 4 If you lead others, be mindful of the signals you send

Workplace culture is often built up by small everyday behaviours. You may send emails late at night simply because that's when you work best, but your team may read that as, "I should be online too." Small habits like using "schedule send," protecting focus time, or openly modelling healthy boundaries can make a bigger difference than we realise.

At the heart of it, recovery is personal. What drains us is not always obvious, and what helps us recharge will not look the same for everyone. Perhaps part of building a more inclusive workplace is making a little more room for those differences.

### References:

<sup>1</sup> Dalton-Smith, S. (2017). *Sacred Rest: Recover Your Life, Renew Your Energy, Restore Your Sanity, FaithWords*.