

## How and when to rest

Resting should be an important part of anyone's fatigue rescue/pacing plan, as it helps us to ensure our energy expenditure is balanced throughout the day. This factsheet explains some key pointers to help you understand the type and frequency of rest you should be taking.

### When to rest

Broadly speaking we usually take rests for the following reasons:

1. Because our bodies are absolutely exhausted and telling us that we have no other option than to rest/lie down (reactive rest)

or

2. Because we've planned in rest times and take them even when we feel ok (proactive rest)

I'm sure you can guess that I'm a huge fan of doing more of the second option, to avoid the first option ever occurring!

The bottom line is that resting even if you don't feel you need it, is hugely helpful in avoiding any build-up of over-exertion and is more likely to keep you nicely steady as you carry out your day.

### Types of rest

In my view there are two different types of rest:

1. Active Rest - you might be sitting or lying down (relaxed) but you're *doing something*, e.g. reading, checking your phone, watching tv, listening to music

and

2. Empty Brain Rest - this is a term I've coined to explain the type of rest where you've eliminated as much external stimulation as possible. No external noise, or as little as possible.

By this definition, even guided meditations are active resting - because they include some form of external stimulation, in the form of an audio recording. Meditation is lovely and hugely beneficial, but it's **not** empty brain rest.

From my professional experience, having helped scores and scores of people cope better with their fatigue, seeing people take on board my advice to do more Empty Brain Rest never fails to help them - often to quite a remarkable degree. It really is one of the most

important and beneficial things I'll be sharing with you over these three weeks.

### **My advice**

When you're planning your days, as part of your pacing approach, make sure you schedule in plenty of proactive rest. Include lots of important helpful **active rest** - things from your 'Nice to Do' list, such as reading and watching TV. But, more importantly, schedule at least one or two periods of **empty brain rest**.

- **The honest news:** many people find it difficult to do empty brain rest at first - don't worry if this happens to you. Relax into it and even if you can only do a couple of minutes at first, it will still be helping.
- **The good news:** even once you're used to it, you don't have to do more than 5 or 10 minutes of empty brain rest for it to help.
- **The brilliant news!!** Once you learn more about how it's helping you, you can start to use empty brain rest strategically to help balance you after a particularly heavy cognitive task. We'll talk more about that in Week 3!

I'm sure you'll have questions about this, so please ask them in the group - or during this week's Live Q&A. But please start to incorporate more rest into your days and see how helpful empty brain rest proves to be for you.