

The Happy Highly Sensitive Life Podcast

How to Really Rest as a Highly Sensitive Person + What Human Design Says About Rest
Podcast Transcript

Episode 15

Hi friend!

How restful are your weekends?

Do you wake up on Saturday mornings planning to do your chores and errands first to get them over with, and then, before you know it, you get to Sunday and you realize you never stopped doing tasks? On Sunday night, you feel tense about starting a new week because you had zero down time to recharge.

I have been there.

If you're someone who likes productivity hacks, perhaps you know Brian Tracy's advice to eat your biggest frog first as a way to overcome procrastination. Do any hard stuff you need to do first. You use your highest energy of the day on the hardest task. Then you do any easier stuff. And if you use this approach in your work life and your personal life, an unintended side effect is that your life becomes all about doing hard things first and putting inspiration, creativity, and joy on the back burner.

When I learned about Human Design and about how the body's most powerful energy motor, the Sacral, turns on in response to opportunities that light you up. I started to rethink how I use my free time for rest, switching up my priorities to focus on doing what feels good and restorative first before doing any tasks.

We live in an anti-rest culture and are conditioned to pack our days full and to be productive 7 days of the week.

If you want to truly rest, that means being a pioneer and rest advocate in the circles you live in. Living in a different way than you saw your parents live. And in a different way than you see friends and colleagues live.

Everywhere you look, people are turning into ghosts of their former selves from all the hustling, existing on coffee during the day to keep going and wine at night to wind down and relax and this creates the impression that's the only way to live.

But the good news is that there's a cultural pushback occurring. People are talking more and more about creating an anti-hustle culture. One that prioritizes well-being and having more by doing less. One that lets people actually rest when they've got a cold or are recovering from surgery and where parents understand that their children are not lazy with a poor work ethic if they follow what their body says it needs and rest when they're tired. This is a movement that has the potential to be a very good thing for empathic highly sensitive people, giving more acceptance to the notion that resting doesn't mean weakness or laziness, but instead is an act of care and self-love, and an expression of how you value yourself and your physical and emotional health.

And so in today's episode, I'm talking all about rest. You will learn...

- What Human Design teaches us about energy and rest
- How I define rest
- 6 signs you need to rest.
- Why it's essential to prioritize real rest, to remain vital, especially right now.
- 2 types of rest and why you may need both
- 25 ideas for resting

Let's dive in.

If you want to understand how your energy functions on a deeper level to rest in a way that's a fit, Human Design sheds a light on this in a way I've never seen before. As I mentioned in Episode 12, on Exhaustion, Hustle + Burnout, Human Design reveals how your energy functions in your body through the 9 energy centers that work like the chakras.

4 of those energy centers are motors. The most powerful motor in the body is the Sacral.

About 70% of the population has what's called a Defined Sacral Center, these are the Generator and Manifesting Generator types. A Defined Sacral gives you consistent energy to be on the go from sun up to sun down. But there's a distinct way that you turn on your Sacral motor energy. And that's when you feel an inner heck yes in response to opportunities that show up in your life. Feeling lit up, turns on that Sacral

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motor. When you follow good feelings and use your HD strategy and authority to make decisions, your Sacral motor gets turned on.

This idea of following good feelings to activate your energy goes against the pressure our culture creates to persist against all odds, doing hard things and overcoming challenges to prove your worth.

This mind shift reminds me of the mind shift I learned when studying positive psychology that says you can excel farther and faster if you build your life around your strengths rather than spending your energy trying to improve your weaknesses. All my life I saw weaknesses as something that needed to be overcome. We get that message, right? Put time into overcoming your deficits. But it makes so much sense to name and own your strengths and then build your life around them. That's the way to thrive and you go further faster living from those strengths.

Little shifts in perspective like this can give you a nudge to love yourself and create more ease in your life.

Ok let's get back to talking about the Sacral. About 30% of the population has an open or unDefined Sacral Center. These are Projectors, Manifestors, and Reflectors. An Undefined Sacral Center gives you a more limited amount of energy and when you run through that energy, you need to rest to refill your tank. Your energy is served best when you learn to work smarter, rather than harder.

My dear friend, if you are a projector, manifestor or reflector, you may feel like you've struggled to keep up with the energy levels of the hustle and grind culture. Since 70% of the population has a Defined Sacral you have a very high chance of being raised by someone with a Defined Sacral.

People with Undefined Sacral Centers have felt such relief when they've run their Human Design chart and learned they had an Undefined Sacral. They finally understand why they feel so energetically different from other people. Knowing this can give you a new level of self-compassion.

So let's talk now about the Sacral and non-Sacral's rest needs.

THE DEFINED SACRAL AND WHAT THEY NEED TO REST

70% of the world has a Defined Sacral. If you do, you may find that exercise recharges you.

My Human Design instructor, Karen Curry Parker, is a Manifesting Generator with a Defined Sacral, she's also a highly sensitive person. She talks about how one of her best ways to rest and recharge is to have a long bike ride.

If you're a Sacral type, you need to burn through Sacral energy by moving and will sleep better at night and focus better during the day if you move your body more to use up that Sacral energy. You are more likely to do well with intense forms of exercise, if they appeal and feel fun to you. But you can still overdo it if you choose activities you think you should do but don't really want to do.

I've already mentioned that you turn on your sacral motor in response to opportunities that show up that you feel good about and get a "heck yes" about.

To recharge, you need to tickle your Sacral with passion projects, whether that's being creative or writing or making or listening to music or playing a sport that lights you up. To become more alive, you need to invest time into activities that bring you joy. And while there's satisfaction in seeing that a chore is done, you live higher and truly release stress when you spend time doing activities that are both satisfying and joyful.

Is it possible for Sacral types to overdo it? Absolutely. If you make a decision to do something from your mind, rather than listening to your body and from your Strategy and Authority. It's very possible and it's also possible for other people to take advantage of your high Sacral energy by filling your plate with activities that aren't aligned for you. You will wear yourself out and experience burnout.

Now let's talk about non-sacral types and what you need to rest. Projectors, Manifestors and Reflectors.

NON-SACRALs AND WHAT THEY NEED TO REST

With an open Sacral, your energy ebbs and flows. And you take in and amplify the energy of those with Defined Sacrals so you may feel like you have boundless energy. This makes it hard to judge when enough is enough. Then you collapse from exhaustion and it's overwhelming and confusing to find yourself there.

Heading into a weekend and rest period, because you absorb the energy of others through your open centers, to rest, you need to clear your energy field from the energy of other people.

It's very appropriate to prioritize being alone, even steering clear of the energy of television since you pick up on energy there too. Start where you are and meet yourself there, giving yourself permission to have zero expectations of yourself about what you need to do. Letting go of comparing your energy to other people's energy.

You may dislike the idea of exercising. It may feel like it takes everything in you to exercise. If this is you, trust that and honor that. If you want to move stress out of your nervous system, there are other ways. Tense your muscles until your body shakes or trembles. Shake your body. Do gentle walking, if it appeals. Because it can be hard for you to know when enough is enough when it comes to expending energy, you may only discover you've done too much movement after you're done. This is especially true if you workout in a group with people who have Defined Sacral Centers. Keep a journal to track your physical signs of fatigue and how movement impacts you and take what you discover to pare back or add a little more accordingly.

In rest time, as much as possible, spend time with positive loving people who lift you up. Since you absorb their energy.

In a minute, I'll share ideas for rest and get into specific rest activities for a defined and open sacral.

But before I go there, I want to mention that if you're empathic, you'll want to clear your open centers from the energy you've picked up from other people with deliberate rest.

THE NEED FOR REST FOR EMPATHS

If you have an open Spleen, Solar Plexus, or Identity Center, you can feel drained by experiencing the energy of others through these open centers. If you want to learn more about how being empathic shows up in the Human Design Body Graph, listen to episode 11 on being empathic and coping.

I have an Open Identity Center and need to rest when I've been around intense charged energy of other people.

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If you're like me, you have a preconceived idea about how much rest you *should* need. I can be a little surprised by how much I need to feel recovered after I've been in the intense charged energy of other people. In my experience, recovery happens faster if I truly let go, without worrying about how long it will take until I can get back to my to do list. Sometimes this is easier said than done, I will admit.

So what exactly is rest?

MY DEFINITION OF REST

My definition of rest is creating an energetic break from activities and people that tax your physical and emotional energy, to deliberately restore your energetic resources. For this episode, when I'm talking about rest, I'm focusing on how you spend your weekend time since that's the time that can get absorbed by chores, errands, excessive social obligations in lieu of real rest.

If you get to Saturday morning and you're prepared to eat the big frog's first, you plan to knock your biggest to-dos off your list first and to relax second, if you're a open Sacral type (Manifestor, Projector, Reflector), I say, let someone else do your big frogs. Recruit someone to do your taxes for you, to take your car in to get the oil changed or inspected. Have your groceries delivered. Let someone else do the big frogs for you.

And if you're a Sacral type, and you're dreading doing certain things on your list, what if you did something else first to tickle your Sacral. Rest, move your body or play first and see if it's quicker and easier to get the chores done after you're rested and restored.

Signs you need to rest.

How do you know you need to rest?

Here are 6 signs it's time to rest.

1. You're irritable and impatient with people you're close to. If I have trouble giving my best behavior to Adam, that's a sign. Also, if I stop feeling natural joy being with my favorite people. If Adam and I are picking at each other. If I'm being critical and all his habits feel annoying to me when they wouldn't normally.

2. Running into people feels like too much stimulation. For me, I know I'm tired if the idea of passing someone out walking feels like too much stimulation. If I'm trying to repel people, sending "stay away" vibes to every human who crosses my path. If going to the grocery store, I have no energy for pleasant conversation or eye contact with the checkout person and I wish I were in a room by myself.

3. Cravings for sweets, which feel like a lifeline to decompress, to feel treated and to lift your mood, even if they only provide momentary relief. Cravings for sweets and chocolate are really cravings for energy.

4. Everything feels like an obligation and feels hard. I'm not looking forward to anything on my calendar.

5. You have physical symptoms of needing to rest. Like having trouble focusing, dizziness, trouble finding words and stringing together sentences, or difficulty making eye contact.

6. Tired mindless scrolling. I've noticed mindless scrolling may start in the car or at all places. Trying to stay alert at stoplights. And then once I get home, I don't have the energy to stop myself from the mindless scrolling. This is when I'll suddenly find myself scrolling in areas that aren't great for me. The news social media, etc.

These are all signs that it's time for rest.

What are your unique signs you need to rest?

TYPES OF REST

There are two kinds of resting that I do.

The first is more passive, sedentary and solitary. Usually involves staying home.

The second type is active recharging. Getting out of the house, moving my body. It shifts my energy and gets me ready to enter back into my everyday routine.

As an open or Undefined Sacral, you may focus your rest around the first more sedentary and solitary type.

As a Defined Sacral, you may start out with more passive types and then move into the second more active strategies.

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If I don't have a lot of time for stillness, going straight into active recharging can clear out the cobwebs. But I need to do an activity I'm excited about, otherwise I'm irritable and grumpy about it.

Let's talk about the first type which is more sedentary and solitary.

If doing absolutely nothing appeals to you, start where you are by asking yourself, what's the thing that feels good to do right now? Just focusing on what feels good to do in this moment. Nothing to accomplish. Just the restoration of your body and soul.

I often need to take a stair step approach being more sedentary first in my rest and then moving gently into more active types of rest.

I put more passive forms of rest into two categories: lower vibe and higher vibe rest activities. A lower vibe activity has the potential to take down my mood or leave me feeling flat. A higher vibe rest activity inspires me and opens me up and delights me in some way.

Let me share examples of each.

Low vibe activities for me are things like scrolling social media, or the news or watching, reality tv. I'm likely to default into these activities if I'm completely spent. I just don't have the willpower or forward momentum not to fall into this place. I don't have it in me to do anything else. But these are activities that are not likely to improve my mood, or inspire me and are more likely to weigh me down further.

When I'm being more conscious of wanting to feel more high vibe, I'll choose TV that inspires me in some way with creativity. Cooking shows, home decorating shows, or organizing shows are better for me.

Sometimes I start here because I'm even too tired to read. Reading is definitely a higher vibe activity.

Have you noticed for yourself that there are passive recharging activities that are higher vibe and lower vibe?

One night 20 years ago, after work, I broke from my normal ritual of watching tv and eating candy. I shut the tv off and turned on music and leisurely leafed through my favorite poetry book while I cooked dinner. I still remember the pleasure I felt from that evening and how it restored my energy in a higher frequency and more satisfying way.

So here are some examples of ways to passively recharge.

1. Sit and enjoy the cleansing silence.
2. Lay on a blanket under a tree to ground yourself and stare up at the branches or at the sky and watch the clouds. Sit on your porch and rock in a rocking chair or swing. Or if you're not up for going outside, lay on the floor in a sunbeam or sit in front of an open window and listen to the sounds of nature. The energy of nature will rebalance and release unwanted energetic frequencies.
3. Snuggle and cuddle your pet or, if you're up for it, your favorite person to release oxytocin and show your nervous system the stress has passed.
4. Sing your favorite song or chant or hum. It activates your vagus nerve and triggers your relaxation parasympathetic nervous system.
5. Make a list of all the things you're grateful for since gratitude boosts your mood.
6. Listen to music that you love. Have a good cry to release stress.
7. Do gentle stretching to soothing music or lay in Savasana. Close your eyes and power nap for 15 minutes.
8. Sit on the floor in a corner of the room and look at a magazine or a stunning picture book to feel inspired. I love looking at beautiful cookbooks.
9. Watch funny animal videos and laugh. Just anticipating laughing raises endorphins. Laughter shows your nervous system that the world is a safe place to be and finishes the stress response cycle.
10. Flip open to a random passage in your favorite poetry or spiritual book and think about how the message applies to your life.
11. Dunk your face in cold water. It activates your vagus nerve and triggers your relaxation parasympathetic nervous system.
12. practice deep breathing exercises.
13. Clean the energy of your environment by smudging yourself and your home with white sage. You can clear out negative energy that you've picked up from other people or clear the energy just because you want to shake things up.
14. Hold crystals. They raise your bodily vibrations.

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15. Take an epsom salt or sea salt or himalayan salt bath can pull accumulated energy out of you. When you're feeling weighed down by energetic frequencies you've picked up during the day, taking a bath can really change how you feel.

The second group highlights active strategies that revitalize you by requiring present moment focus. Or moving you into a flow state. Others will work the stress out of your body. Or give you the experience of getting away and leaving all your worries behind.

1. Do your favorite workout and then take a hot bath with Epsom salts. Be prepared to feel deliciously relaxed.
2. Hike or walk in the woods.
3. Garden and ground yourself and change your energetic frequency by getting your hands in the dirt.
4. Drive to a mountain or head to a rooftop and watch a sunset. Remember your life is connected to something bigger.
5. Knit, quilt, needlepoint or do your favorite craft. Or Pull out watercolors or pencils and paint or draw to connect with a state of flow.
6. Do physical activity that requires you to be in the moment and connected to your body, but also challenged. This will get you into a flow state. Try tennis or a choreographed dance
7. Go star gazing from your car.
8. Buy flowers and arrange them or Work on a puzzle or play a game that feels fun.
9. Visit your local library and read and soak up the beautiful silence.
10. Get a massage or trade massages with your partner. Releasing oxytocin shows your body the stress is over.

I hope this gives you some ideas about the different forms that rest can take.

The most important thing is to check in with yourself and ask your intuition, what do I need right now to revitalize my mind, body and spirit?

There are deep societal changes that are occurring right now, with a global pandemic, a war that's unlike any we've seen in our lifetime, and massive social shifts occurring.

Real rest is essential for staying vital and staying connected to yourself. Being an empathic person, you make your biggest contribution by staying vital and in a high vibe place. Be the change you want to see in the world. If you want to see peace in the world, cultivate inner peace first.

Reframe rest as the ultimate expression of self-care and self-love. And an expression of how you value yourself and your physical and emotional health.

If it resonates, think of rest as a spiritual practice. After all, so many religious traditions think of rest as a sacred act and designate a day of the week just for being still.

If you're noticing signs you need to rest, and something needs to change, what would you shift or release about your life so you can embrace rest?

Your mind may say, "I can't make any changes, there's nothing I can do." But I'm here to lovingly encourage you to look past doubts and fears.

To imagine, what if your life could be more restful, easier, more satisfying?

What would that life look like?

If you can begin to imagine it, you can start to make it happen.

The world needs you to be rested and happy. If you're a gentle soul, it's okay to live a more gentle life. The body isn't designed to maintain well-being in a state of constant stress. We aren't meant to be living in a constant state of pressure.

If your entire life is eating big frogs, that's something to notice. How aligned is the life you've designed for yourself? Are you living your life or someone else's idea of what a good life should look like?

If you're curious about how Human Design can help you understand how you can create an aligned life, and if you want to go deeper to understand your unique Human Design, I've created a free guide to getting started with Human Design for HSPs. This guide offers more information about how to run your free human design chart and all 9 of the energy Centers and also information about your energy Type and how to begin using your Strategy and Authority to live in alignment. If you're a more visual than auditory learner, this guide will reinforce and expand on what you're

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learning in this podcast. Grab it by visiting HumanDesignforhsp.com. I will link it and all the episodes mentioned in today's episode in the show notes.

If your intuition is nudging you to go even deeper with it, commission me to create a custom 50+ page written guide to your Human Design. Receive a downloadable custom blueprint to guide you as you begin to incorporate the principles of Human Design in your life, based on your unique Human Design Chart. Learn how you're designed to create sustainable energy, to work and rest, cultivate relationships, build well-being, and conduct self-care. Plus, how to tap into your inner knowing, attract opportunities and fulfill your life purpose. I lovingly custom create every map myself.

I'm so so grateful we've spent this time together.

If you'd like to receive regular news from me, sign up for my email newsletter by following the link in the show notes.

You can also connect with me on Pinterest at Happy Highly Sensitive Life where I share short videos with tips and strategies for living and working with greater ease and alignment as an HSP.

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Bye now.