

„Rest is Resistance – A Manifesto“
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*Your body is a site of liberation.
It doesn't belong to capitalism.
Love your body.
Rest your body.
Move your body.
Hold your body.*

I hope you are reading this while laying down!

Rest saved my life. This is my truth. I don't need anyone else to verify this nor do I need complicated theories to support what I know to be true in my heart, my body, and my Spirit. My pilgrimage with rest as a form of resistance and liberation practice is a deeply personal one. It is one that started way before anyone heard of The Nap Ministry on social media. Resting was my attempt to solve a problem in my life and like most Black women before me, I worked within the realms of my own life and history to create a way.

While in a brutally busy graduate program, with financial issues, family illness, and the threat of racial violence always swirling around, I started to experiment with rest. My commitment to rest as a form of resistance came from my everyday experiences of being a part of the machine-level pace of our culture and surviving the trauma of the terror of poverty, exhaustion, white supremacy, and capitalism. I took to napping all over campus while in seminary and when I was home. I believed deeply that I would rest because I was exhausted physically and spiritually, and I saw no other way to make it. I was beyond rational thought about whether I would be able to thrive from this and simply leaped without a net.

I was fueled by the deep history of cultural trauma I was studying while in seminary. I was reading slave narratives while studying Jim Crow terrorism and falling asleep with the book on my chest. I was guided by Harriet Tubman, proclaiming after waking up from a prophetic dream: “My people are free.” The audacity to proclaim freedom via rest in the now. Rest has been revolutionary for my soul.

This book is a testimony and testament of my refusal to donate my body to a system that still owes a debt to my Ancestors for the theft of their labor and DreamSpace. I refuse to push my body to the brink of exhaustion and destruction. Let the chips fall where they may. I trust myself more than capitalism. Our refusal will make space for abundance. We will have to leap and trust rest. May the ground underneath hold us, and if we must collapse, may a soft pillow be there. This book is a scream on a bullhorn for the collective to join me in disrupting and pushing back. The Nap Ministry is a warm blanket swaddling us all back to our deepest selves. A more human place. A resting place.

It is never easy to explain why I started The Nap Ministry. It is so layered, nuanced, and organic. I have been asked the question of its origin thousands of times by strangers, journalists, and social media followers. Everyone is thirsty for the quick details of why I would dream up a project about napping. I am elated the story has not been an easy and direct answer, because like decolonizing, it will take enormous effort in the form of radical healing, change, redemption, and collective care.

Everything always starts with the personal. The origins of The Nap Ministry begin with the story of my family in fragmented parts. The microhistories and small details of our lives hold the keys to our redemption. My rest resurrection begins with my desperation to find relief from my own exhaustion via curiosity, experimentation, and self-preservation.

I come from a legacy of exhaustion. My maternal grandmother, Ora, the muse of this work, a refugee from Jim Crow terrorism, rested her eyes every day for thirty minutes to an hour in an attempt to connect and find peace. My great-grandmother Rhodie, I am told, stayed up late nightly on her farm in deep Mississippi with a pistol in her apron pocket to creatively solve any problems from the Ku Klux Klan. The reality of our survival from white supremacy and capitalism

is deeply shocking to me. I am in awe at what our bodies can hold. We must lighten our loads. Survival is not the end goal for liberation. We must thrive. We must rest.

As a child, I would watch my grandmother Ora as she sat on her plastic-covered yellow couch and meditated for thirty minutes every single day. She fled her home in Mississippi with thousands of other African-Americans during the Great Migration of the 1950s. Ora floated up North on a spaceship built from uncertainty and hope as she landed in Chicago. She magically raised eight children, while dodging poverty, racism, and the invisibility of being a Black woman in America. Her commitment to “resting her eyes” every day for thirty minutes was radical. Her ability to demand space to “just be” was a form of resistance.

While my grandmother rested her eyes, I would tiptoe around her home trying not to wake her up. I always thought she was sleeping while sitting up. I was curious about her rest practice and thought she was so eccentric. Whenever I would inquire if she was sleeping, her response was always the same: “Every shut eye ain't sleep. I am resting my eyes and listening for what God wants to tell me.” While all the world around her was attempting to crush her Spirit, she rested and resisted the beast of grind culture. She taught my mother to rest, she taught me to rest. I am humbled to be a vessel to guide thousands on their own rest journey as we embrace rest as a way to make us all more human.

My inspiration to rest is deep and expansive. I'm inspired by invention and the opportunity to craft something new from scratch. I'm inspired by remixing and being subversive. I am inspired by disruption and tenderness. I am inspired by imagination. I am inspired by grief, mourning, and lament. I believe deeply in vulnerable, generative spaces for healing. I am inspired by rest, daydreaming, and sleep.

Our collective rest will not be easy. All of culture is collaborating for us not to rest. I understand this deeply. We are sleep-deprived because the systems view us as machines, but bodies are not machines. Our bodies are a site of liberation. We are divine and our rest is divine. There is synergy, interconnectedness, and deep communal healing within our rest movement. I believe rest, sleep, naps, daydreaming, and slowing down can help us all wake up to see the truth of ourselves. Rest is a healing portal to our deepest selves. Rest is care. Rest is radical.

We must stand and lay firmly in the space of creating a life filled with rest and radical care, even amid oppression. Rest Is Resistance is our tagline and mantra. Our call. Rest is a form of resistance because it disrupts and pushes back against capitalism and white supremacy. Both these toxic systems refuse to see the inherent divinity in human beings and have used bodies as a tool for production, evil, and destruction for centuries. Grind culture has made us all human machines, willing and ready to donate our lives to a capitalist system that thrives by placing profits over people. The Rest Is Resistance movement is a connection and a path back to our true nature. We are stripped down to who we really were before the terror of capitalism and white supremacy. We are enough. We are divine.

If we are not resting, we will not make it. I need us to make it. We must thrive. I know our collective rest will liberate us and shift consciousness. A rest movement. A spiritual movement. A political movement rooted in care and justice. The deprogramming from our brainwashing will take intention and time. Rest is a meticulous love practice, and we will be unraveling from our sleep deprivation and socialization around rest for the remainder of our days. This is a blessing. Rest is radical because it disrupts the lie that we are not doing enough. It shouts: “No, that is a lie. I am enough. I am worthy now and always because I am here.” The Rest Is Resistance movement is a connection and a path back to our true nature. We are stripped down to who we really were before the terror of capitalism and white supremacy. We are enough. We are divine. Our bodies don't belong to these toxic systems. We know better. Our Spirits know better.

The legacy of exhaustion stops with me. I invite you into the portal rest provides. Capitalism cannot have me. White supremacy cannot have me. Join me in reclaiming our DreamSpace. The time to rest is now.

BED ROTTING:
PRACTICING RADICAL
REST?
"Bed rotting" lying in bed for hours, scrolling, half-watching TV, doing nothing reframed as self-care or even an act of resistance. In a culture obsessed with hustle and productivity, refusing to get up or "maximize" your time feels almost political. But is it really, or are we just romanticizing burnout?

Hustle culture treats rest as indulgent. We're told to monetize our hobbies, optimize our downtime, and squeeze every last drop of productivity out of the day. To rot in bed is to reject this logic — to refuse to convert every waking moment into capital. In bed, time stops. You become useless in a beautiful way. Practicing radical rest is necessary. Rest doesn't need to be earned. Bed rotting, at its best, is a reset, a way to recover from overstimulation and constant demands. In a culture obsessed with productivity hacks and self-optimization, bed rotting is refreshingly unstructured.

Capitalism thrives on exhaustion, but it also thrives on escapism.

The same system that burns us out profits from our need to check out.

Streaming platforms, delivery apps, and social media are designed to keep you consuming.

If bed rotting is fueled by these industries, is it still a protest?

There's a fine line between recovery and retreat. Staying in bed to recharge is one thing; staying in bed to escape reality — work, anxiety, the news cycle — is another. Bed rotting isn't inherently healing. Sometimes it's just a symptom.

It's not glamorous. No ritual, no performance — just you, your bed, and the radical act of stopping.

But are you resting or hiding? Practicing radical rest or slipping into the capitalist system even deeper?

***Let yourself rot when you need to.**
***Linger under the covers.**
***Let your mind drift.**
***But don't mistake numbness for rest**
*** and don't let the thing meant to restore you become another way to disappear.**

No goals, no outcomes — and that's the point.
But when does rest become avoidance?

I often notice that I confuse rest with unproductivity. With stopping, withdrawing, lying still. Spending time in bed, scrolling on my phone, letting time pass and calling it rest. At the same time, I know that these moments rarely offer real regeneration for me. They do not necessarily restore my body, my attention, or calm my mind. Rest, I am learning, is not automatically quiet, still, or passive. In colonial and capitalist systems, rest has long been framed through productivity: as something that must be earned, justified, or optimized in order to function again. This produces feelings of shame and guilt around resting, especially when rest does not look "useful," efficient, or deserved. A decolonial understanding of rest questions these logics.

It asks who is allowed to rest, whose exhaustion is normalized, and which forms of restoration are recognized as legitimate.

Writing a letter to yourself becomes a way to reclaim time, listen to your own needs, and imagine forms of rest that are not governed by performance or productivity. The questions that follow invite you to reflect on how rest feels in your body and mind, what prevents you from resting without guilt, and what kinds of rest truly sustain you.

What would it mean to rest without having to justify it?
Are there forms of movement that feel more restful than stillness?
When do I rest out of exhaustion rather than care?

How does collective rest differ from resting alone?
Can rest be playful, loud, or social?