

Rest Summary

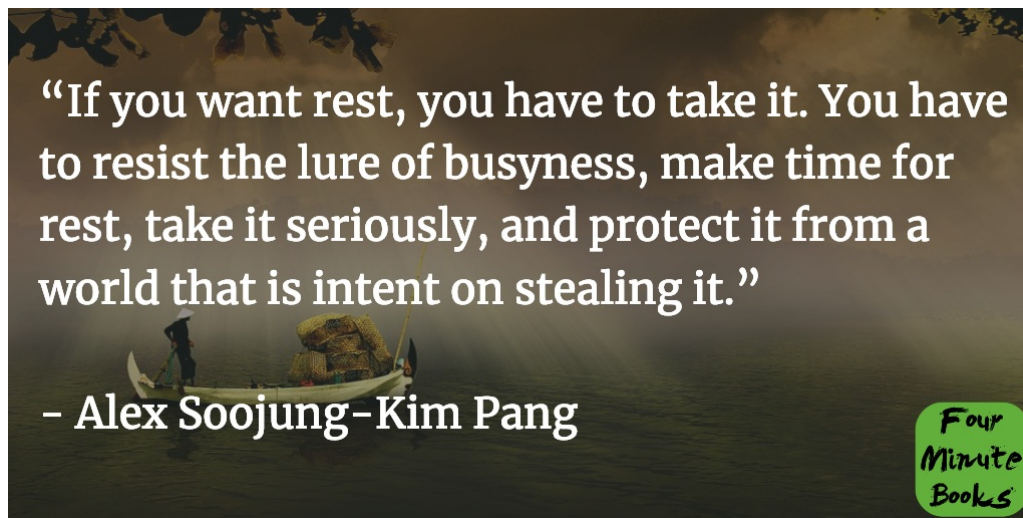


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1-Sentence-Summary: *Rest* examines why traditional methods of working too long and hard are inefficient compared to working less, resting, and playing to accomplish your best work.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



If you're like most people, you admire the person who leaves the office last. You think they work the hardest and get the most done. They seem to be the boss's favorite because of what they are willing to sacrifice for the company. After all, society tells us the path to success is working long and hard.

But what if I told you that you could accomplish more than your average workaholic, and do so in less time? It might sound crazy, but it's true. We accomplish the most when we take time out of our day to rest.

Alex Soojung-Kim Pang is a Silicon Valley strategist and the founder of The Restful Company. He helps people cultivate a more healthy work-life balance and reach their full potential. Pang encourages individuals to make time for play and creativity. In *Rest*, he combines neuroscience with examples from influential leaders to prove why time away from work, or "deliberate rest," is so critical to success.

We don't have to conform to a workaholic lifestyle. Working too much only leads to burnout. *Rest* shows how you will get more done when you make sure to give yourself enough time to slow down and enjoy yourself.

Here are the 3 biggest lessons I've learned from this book:

1. Working four hours with intensity is better than working eight distracted hours.
2. Quitting mid-inspiration is better for your creativity than you think.
3. Deep play saved one of the world's greatest leaders in a dark time and it can

save you too.

Get your pillow and mattress ready, because after learning these principles, you'll want to get more rest!

Lesson 1: Forget working all day long, work hard for four hours to get the most done.

You know what they say: If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Not in this case. While it feels like the longer you work, the more you get done, this is only what society has primed us to believe. Like the concept of retiring, the 9-to-5 has been the norm for decades, but science says it's outdated. When you work long hours, your productivity plummets.

To accomplish your best work, you should only put in four hours a day. **You will get more done this way because you will have the energy to focus intensely on whatever you do for this short amount of time.** Working four diligent hours will always be more effective than eight distracted hours.

Don't believe it? In a study, scientists working 35 hours a week were half as productive as those working only 20 hours a week. Those putting in 60 hours were the worst of all. These findings show rest is just as important as work for reaching your highest levels of accomplishment.

But what if you don't have control over when you clock in and out? Make sure you take time off during the day, for example for walking and lunch breaks. Then, when you return to whatever it is you were doing, you will find yourself more refreshed and ready to work.

Lesson 2: Taking a break in the middle of a problem allows you to find more creative solutions.

To get the most out of rest, we also need to find the best time to take a break. Were you ever in the middle of a difficult problem, had to step away, and when you came back the solution seemed obvious? I know I have.

Sometimes, we need to give our brains some downtime at the right moment to find the best answers. Rather than overextending yourself trying to figure something out, take a break. You'll be amazed at the solutions that come to you after your brain has subconsciously mulled things over.

In one study, researchers asked a group of students to come up with the most uses of a piece of paper as possible. One group worked on the problem for the allotted time uninterrupted, while the other was asked to stop and do something else for a while before coming back to the original task. The group who was interrupted proved to be far more creative with the paper than the other. This shows how useful it is to stop and take a break before returning to a problem.

When we stop working, our brain can still process our task. Our mind subconsciously examines problems and comes up with new ideas, even if we don't realize it. So the next time you need to take a break, don't feel bad about doing it in the middle of a challenge.

Lesson 3: Deep play can bring us relief in challenging situations.

Pang stresses the importance of practicing "deep play" by taking frequent, dedicated breaks. **Deep play is any enjoyable activity that immerses the mind and connects us to our past.**

One person who understood the importance of deep play was Winston Churchill, Britain's leader during World War II. Few people know this, but Churchill enjoyed oil painting in his downtime. He found the art therapeutic and even said it came to his rescue in a very dark time.

The reason deep play is so powerful at recharging our brain is it provides us with relief. We're still using our mind, but not in such a stressful way that we feel overwhelmed. This allows us to enjoy ourselves and revel in details while being creative.

We can practice deep play in plenty of other hobbies, such as rock climbing, meditating, or cooking. Follow the example of one of the most influential leaders of all time: deliberately make time to enjoy yourself. Your mind will thank you for it.

Rest Review

Rest is an original review of the benefits of taking a time-out from the daily grind. Pang goes against traditional thought patterns about work ethic to help us understand what will really help us accomplish higher quality work in less time. I'm excited to try out these principles to increase my productivity!

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Who would I recommend the Rest summary to?

The 45-year-old office worker who is burnt out, a 35-year-old father who struggles to take time for his family, and anyone who wants to become more efficient at their job.