

Resting and energy

In rest we relax and let go, but we also feel energized—a good field for growing our meditation.

Lying down

The atmosphere that comes with lying down to meditate is distinct.

Instead of “me paying attention,” we notice that “there is awareness.”

Instead of working to hold the mind still, we find freshness and quietude in the mind after resting. Even when the thinking mind is active or dreamy, we notice a deeper awakesness and wisdom.

Experienced sitters may miss what seemed like a clarity in sitting. But is clarity or control? If it is “me controlling my experience,” then where can our meditation go? Expert mind control can leave us untransformed.

Our usual fears about lying down to meditate are:

(1) “What if I fall asleep?” and (2) “What if I’m wasting my time?”

Sleeping

Experience shows that, yes, it is very likely that we will sometimes fall asleep and perhaps even snore! Sleeping is not a sin, and snoring is just one more sound of nature. In the meditation hall, we can welcome sleep as well as waking and the many, often fertile, states of mind between sleep and waking. If you know you snore loudly, lie on your side or belly.



Our daily lives are often so fast that we do not even feel how deeply tired we are. Therefore, as we connect and tune in, we often seem to feel more tired the more we rest. We need to “rest through” our accumulated exhaustion to start to uncover another way of living and moving.

And sometimes deep meditation starts to happen when our “small self” is asleep.

What is fruitful?

Have you ever woken up and—before your list of things to do and your small mind came in—have you felt for a moment a breezy, cheerful ease? These moments are closer to genuine meditation than our usual attempts to train the mind. Can we unplug from the should, from pressure and negativity and counting, from the mind that is deeply anxious about ideas of right and wrong? Shall we tune into the richness of our own experience, and learn to let the aliveness of our own experience teach us our genuine human qualities and values and directions? We start to accept that we will only truly understand after we experience, and that the experience is much more important—more fruitful—than the description.

Then an inner ease and flow can freshly guide and empower our lives, rather than wasting our lives being dominated by ideas and the past.

