

Day of Rest Family Journal

Inspired by: Martin & Sylvia's Day of Rest Series

This journal belongs to the

_____ **family**

sparklestories
ORIGINAL AUDIO FOR CHILDREN



Welcome to your Day of Rest Journal!

We're so glad you've made the commitment to dedicate a day a week to slow down, spend time with family, and recharge. This will probably look different for each family and each family member, so it's important to keep an open mind and listen to each other (yes, your brothers and sisters matter, too) about needs, challenges, and successes along the way.

To help you out, we created a Martin & Sylvia audio story series, "Day of Rest", to inspire, inform, and offer practical ideas to help make this whole process easier for everyone. Many models for days of rest or Sabbaths originate from religious traditions. However, Martin and Sylvia's family creates a more "secular Sabbath"—a unique model of their own creation.

It doesn't matter what day you choose as your rest day or what you define as rest. Some families, like Martin & Sylvia's consider a day of rest to be one with "no business work" and others "no cleaning." The most important thing is to create a day that helps everyone in your family renew and revitalize.

Follow along with Martin and Sylvia this year and use this journal to help create a Day of Rest ritual with your family. We guarantee it will become one of your favorite days of the week.

Let's get started!

January

Kick off the month with a family discussion about the idea of a Day of Rest. Brainstorm some ideas about what rest looks like for your family and dream together about the perfect day. Then spend some time answering some fundamental questions to get started. Martin and Sylvia's family discuss the question, "What are your favorite things about Christmas other than gifts?" Here are some other questions to inspire conversation:

What is work?

Spend a few minutes defining the idea of "work" in your household. Make a list of things you each consider "work"—don't forget to include daily chores and other ordinary activities.

What is rest?

Take some time to define the idea of "rest" together. Write a list of restful or replenishing things, or as Momma says, "things that are special and relaxing and make us feel renewed." For some this may mean free time or quiet time. Others may prefer to visit friends or family. What would bring this sense of rest to each of you personally and as a family?

Make some decisions.

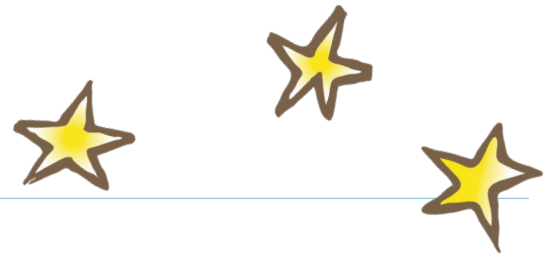
Momma and Daddy propose a way for their family to begin. They decide to add one Restful Thing and eliminate one Work Thing for their special day. Follow their lead! As the year progresses, you can tweak and add and change things.

Choose your day.

While Momma and Daddy don't get into the specifics in this episode, it will be helpful for the rest of us to choose a day. It may be the same day each week or some of you may wish to mix it up depending on what the week's schedule looks like.

No matter what you choose for your family, remember that this is an experiment. You can always adjust your practice along the way!





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February

It's time for your first round of tweaking. What's going well? What isn't? Have you run into any roadblocks? If so, that's okay. There are always changes that need to be made along the way, as we can see from the experience of Martin and Sylvia's family.

Here are a few tips you can pick up from them in February.

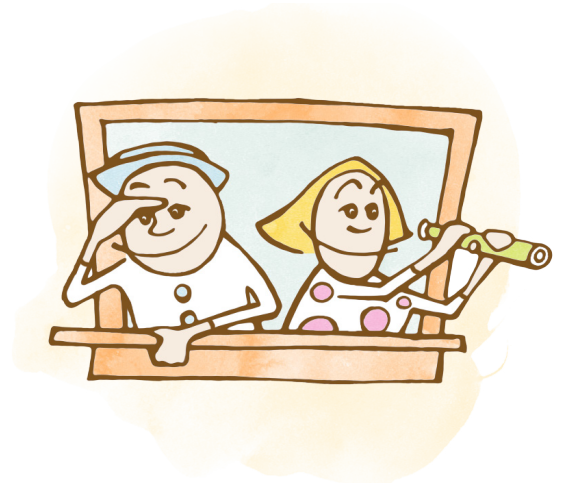
Check in with your family. The beginning of the month is a good time to talk with your family about your Day of Rest practices.

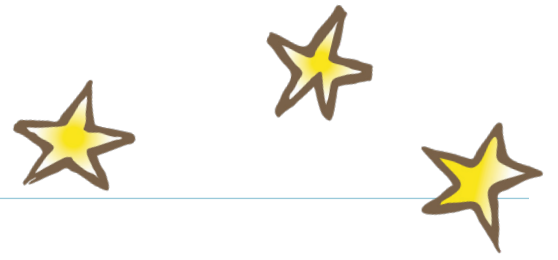
Think ahead. Momma discovers that she doesn't enjoy doing laundry on her Day of Rest—but neither does she like seeing the piles of dirty clothes during her peaceful moments. Think about what kinds of things your family likes to have in place before your Day of Rest. Do you want to set up a crock pot meal? Or finish some gardening work?

Create rest for the whole family. Follow Daddy's example by discovering great ways to enjoy family-together time without taking on extra burdens.

Figure out your social dynamic. Some people are introverts, some are extroverts, and some fall in the space between. It sounds like Sylvia would spend all day, every day with her friends if she could, but that's not quite the case for Momma. Talk together as a family about how you best get energized.

Remember NOW time. No matter what you decide to plan for your Day of Rest, take Sylvia's advice and pay attention to "now time." Wherever you are, you can find rest by fully enjoying and experiencing the present moment.





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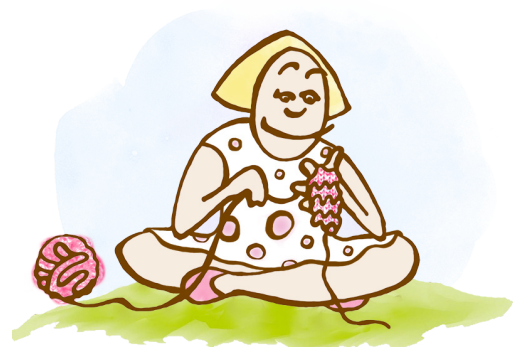
March

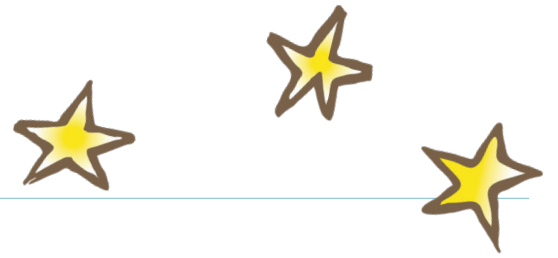
Your Day of Rest has been under construction for several weeks. By this point you may be realizing It's not always easy to be clear about what is restful for a whole family, but keep at it. There are sure to be some duds along the way for your family, just as there are for Martin and Sylvia's. Remember, perfection isn't the goal and the process of learning to rest together is worth the effort.

This month, Martin and Sylvia's family have been considering the nature of work. What is work? When is something work and when is something fun? Or, as Sylvia complains, "Work is fun and fun is work." If your family is anything like theirs, it might be a good time to snuggle up with a bowl of buttered popcorn and have a heart-to-heart chat. You might want to take a few notes during the conversation. Here are a few questions to get you started.

- What kinds of work bring you joy?
- What are some things that are fun for others in the family, but that feel like work to you? And are there any ways to make those things more fun for you?
- Are there some things that feel like fun to me, but are more like work for others? How can I be sensitive to that?
- What kinds of work are fun to do as a family?

Martin and Sylvia's family learn that some kinds of work can bring relaxation and restoration. It's possible to enjoy practically anything as a family if you listen to each other, pay attention to what you're working on, and take plenty of time to do it.





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April

In your own journeys toward building a Day of Rest, you have doubtless encountered bumps in the road like unexpected responsibilities or activities, or even, like Momma this week, illnesses that derail plans. This can bring up feelings of disappointment for everyone, but there are positive ways to handle it.

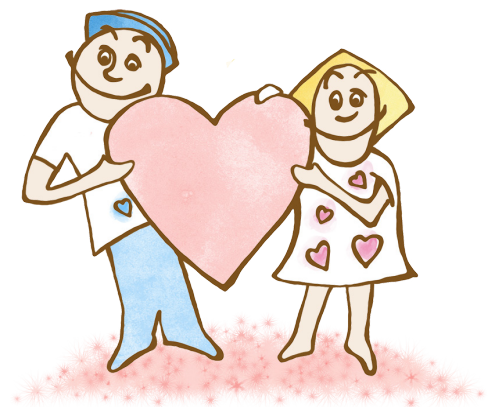
Listen to your body and rest like Momma. Momma is pretty quiet in this episode, but notice: Momma is sick and she actually rests her body. She doesn't force herself to get up and do all the things even though she knew Martin and Sylvia would be disappointed. She treats herself like a human being who is sick and needs rest. Everyone should do that.

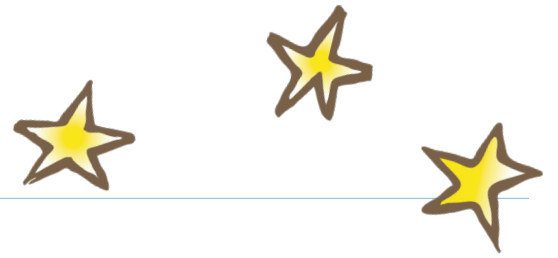
Keep Calm and Pause like Daddy. Martin and Sylvia's father could have blown his top when they started complaining about having their potluck and painting plans canceled, but he didn't. He paused and then "he took a breath and tried to consider how they felt." This split second of perspective was just the thing Daddy needed to turn a potentially explosive situation into an opportunity for learning, growth, and flexibility. Try this at home!

The Five Stages of Disappointment. In this mild experience of grief and disappointment, Daddy teaches the Five Stages to his children as a fun way to explore their feelings and move through them offering them a chance to express those feelings in a bit of play-acting.

Teach your own kids about The Five Stages of Disappointment and give them a tool that will help them manage difficult experiences for the rest of their lives. The Five Stages are:

1. Denial ("I don't believe it!")
2. Anger ("I am so angry!")
3. Bargaining ("Tell you what...")
4. Sadness ("I'm the saddest one in the land!")
5. Acceptance ("Momma is sick and we need to cancel the potluck. I accept that.")





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May

In this month's Day of Rest story, Martin and Sylvia's family experience challenges when they realize their individual visions of restful bliss are incompatible with each others. Through awareness, compassion, and trust, the family is gently led into a place where their hopes are fulfilled — although not always quite in the way expected.

In May, spend some time talking as a family about your visions for the upcoming season. What activities would you like to do? What will restore you, both individually and as a family unit? Pop some popcorn and plan some relaxed time to brainstorm. Make sure to leave enough space to hear from each individual as you take notes on these precious dreams.

Here are some other ways to get the inspiration flowing.

Sleep on it. When Martin and Sylvia's family found themselves at an impasse, they took a little break to let emotions simmer down and ideas bubble up. It's amazing what insights can arise during those subconscious hours.

Model generosity. Even if you think they aren't watching, your children are studying you quite carefully. Serving another person in the family by doing something selfless can be a truly magical way to breathe a gust of generosity into your family culture.

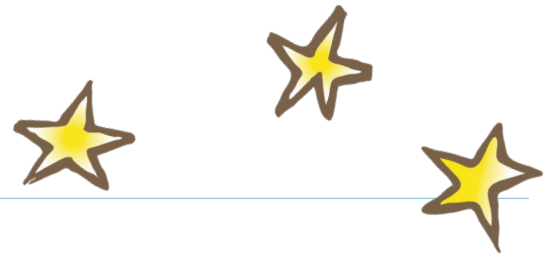
Engage in playfulness. Look for ways to imbue your day with whimsical details that will inspire others (like Daddy writing a note to Mommy from the fairies). It will make the task more fun for you, as well!

Allow your family to serve you. Notice and express gratitude for those little ways that your family might be listening to your own desires for rest and receive them graciously.

Listen for ideas that promote your own rest. Prepare a little gift for yourself in advance that can be revealed on your day of rest—a special book you've been wanting to read or a coupon for a family lunch at a favorite diner.

With a little imagination, anything is possible!





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June

In June's Day of Rest, Martin and Sylvia's whole family learns that although their tendency to expand ideas into intricate plans may be exciting, it can also be exhausting. Sylvia christens this desire "to complify" and begins seeking ways to simplify instead.

The impulse to complify, make this more complicated than needed, is very appealing to those of us who love abundance, complexity, and richly-layered experiences. However, when a family's goal is a "Day of Rest," it's sometimes best to embrace human limits rather than reach for the stars—at least for one day.

Here are a few strategies to help simplify your Day of Rest plans.

Get a good picture of all the hopes and dreams in play. What does each person hope for on your next Day of Rest? Are there any plans already in place? Even if there are surprises in the mix, talk together to get a full understanding of everyone's dreams for the day.

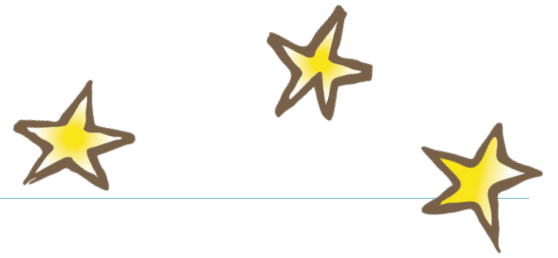
Get clear about your vision. Talk together with your family and figure out what would make your day of rest a success? What elements need to be included in order for you to feel satisfied at the end of the day?

Understand your limits and make choices. Sort through your family's chosen elements for the perfect rest day. Keep the non-negotiables and eliminate the extras. Listening well and discussing together will help you find solutions that work for your whole family.

Enjoy your day thoroughly. Once you've made your decisions intentionally, dive in and experience your day in all its fullness!

If you missed some things that needed to be pruned away this week, there's always another Day of Rest just seven days away.





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July

If you're interested in exploring different traditions in your Day of Rest as Martin and Sylvia's family does, here are a few tips to get you started.

Take stock of your values. Make sure you're clear on your family's values and purpose for the day. Martin and Sylvia's family set their goal of experiencing deep, restorative rest. This will help guide you as you sift through the variety of ideas that come your way.

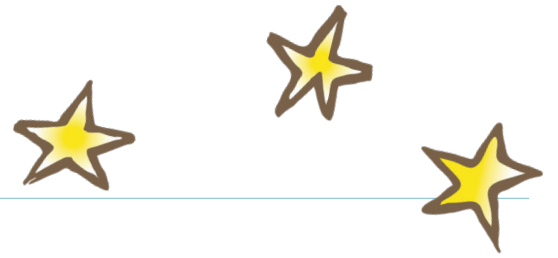
Get curious. Martin and Sylvia have cultivated friendships with a variety of people, and this includes people with different religious traditions from theirs. Look at your own set of friends. Who in your circle has different traditions than you? Which acquaintances would you like to get to know better? If you're really at a loss for live humans to talk to, consider reading a few books or watching quality films that help illustrate practices from another tradition.

Ask questions. Harness your own curiosity and invite a friend over for a meal. Ask them some of your deepest questions. You'll be surprised at how interesting the conversation is and how close your friendship grows from this shared moment.

Try it on for size. Once you've collected a few ideas from others, talk together as a family about experimenting with these practices during your own Day of Rest. What rituals suit you? What doesn't fit as well? Allow for a trial period of a few weeks to get into the groove with a new practice or to decide to abandon it.

Remember, the goal in this process is to find creative ways to live out your own family's Day of Rest purpose, so you're allowed to be discerning and keep only the things that work well. You're the experts on your own family and that means you get to be the final authorities—together.





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August

Joy is compounded as we watch others delight in our creation. Even the process of carefully crafting an experience (like a Day of Rest) can result in increased joy when a few favorite people are invited along for the ride. Martin and Sylvia's family experienced this phenomenon when they shared their Day of Rest practices with their close friends and ended up blessing the socks of off them.

If you're interested in sharing your Day of Rest with friends, here are a few tips to get you started.

Establish patterns. Take time to work out the kinks in your own Day of Rest practice before opening it up to others. Once you are of one mind (to a reasonable extent), you'll know you're ready for the new adventure of inviting friends along.

Anticipate roadblocks. Friends may have their own ideas about what's allowed during your family's Day of Rest. What if someone is on their phone? What if they move too fast without taking any breaks? Imagine these scenarios (serious or ridiculous) ahead of time and get clear about what your family is willing to do or not do to modify your own rituals.

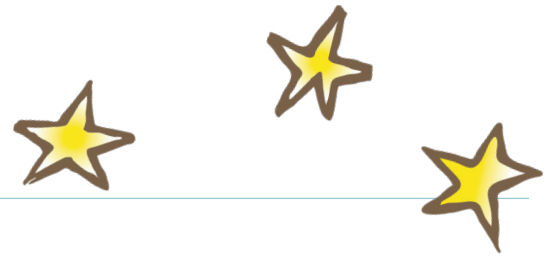
Invite without requirement. An invitation to friends should not be a demand. Give your friends an open door to walk through and join you, pressure-free.

Open yourself to new ideas. Keep an open mind when friends suggest trying new things or doing them differently. Staying open can bring a welcome new element into your ritual and your friends will feel like they contributed—a win for all.

Enjoy your friendships. Be grateful for your time together no matter what. The clarity you have in your own values and the trust you have in your friendship will allow for the flexibility you need to offer an invitation and roll with the outcome.

Go ahead and take a risk. Your friends might just thank you for introducing them to a life-changing practice.





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September

The start of a new school year and the approaching holiday season can be overwhelming no matter how much you love it. This month, Martin and Sylvia's family use creativity to get in the groove of the festivals they know and love while also looking for ways to preserve their precious rhythms of rest and renewal.

Here are a few tips to get you started in your thinking about days of rest during the upcoming festival season.

Brainstorm through your calendar. Write down upcoming festival days and regular traditions you participate in and add these to your family calendar. If events are weather-dependent (apple-picking, anyone?) have a back-up plan just in case.

Do some play-acting. Your family might enjoy acting out some of the highlights of this season. Not only is this fun (and a little silly), but it will get your head in the game as you anticipate the joys and challenges of the festivities.

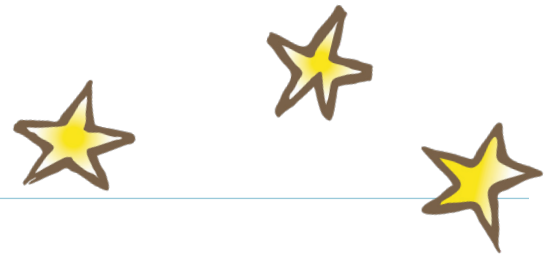
Prepare for the unexpected. Look at your calendar and note any festivals that fall on your usual Day of Rest. Decide what to do about those on a case-by-case basis—move your usual Day of Rest to a different day that week or figure out how to engage in the celebration in a restful way.

Simplify. Prepare elements for celebrations ahead of time or buy a few components that you typically make. If you have an Apple Pie Day like Martin and Sylvia's family and it falls on a Day of Rest, you might like to make the pie dough the day before (or buy it pre-made) so that your family can focus on the restful tasks of peeling, slicing, baking, and (of course) eating.

Revisit your strategies often. Make a regular habit of looking at your calendar to anticipate challenges to your Day of Rest and come up with solutions ahead of time.

In our fast-paced world, prioritizing rest is a counter-cultural act, but enjoying the benefits of this kind of renewal is worth the time spent thinking ahead and acting out of your deepest values.





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October

There is a special kind of wonder that often comes up in Martin and Sylvia's world, a special attention to small beauties found within nature, relationships, and home. It's this kind of magic that becomes a special focus of the Day of Rest in October for Martin and Sylvia's family.

Here are some ways you can give extra focus to the moments of magic and wonder in your world this month.

Stay true to your patterns. By this point, it's likely you've established a few regular habits. Keep these up this month, they will give you a structure for your wonder-seeking.

Take a deep breath. Establish a few triggers that will make you pause, take a moment to breathe, and notice the world around you. The trigger might be a chiming clock, a moment before a meal, or even the inspiration of one of your children.

Notice the natural pauses. Notice moments when you naturally stop—sitting down with a cup of coffee, opening a book, or climbing into the car before turning on the ignition. Again, observe the world around you with gratitude.

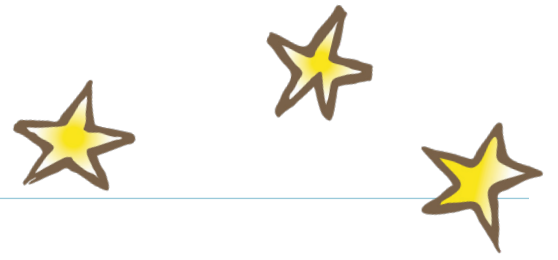
Reflect. Make a list of your wondrous observations as a family. Recording your moments of gratitude will help you to be even more attentive in the future.

Plan a few elements of surprise and delight. Inject a bit of magic into your family's rest with something fun and unexpected—a sprinkle of glitter at the breakfast table or an unexpected dance party. A little something out of the ordinary can go a long way in creating a meaningful memory.

Take it with you. The skills you practice while appreciating the beauty around you on rest day can be honed and used every day wherever you are. Chat about any "magic moments" during an evening meal or at bedtime.

If you open yourself to the magic and wonder, you're sure to encounter it.





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November

One of the best ways to show your thanks for life is to pay attention and bask in all it has to offer. What will you do today to embrace the life that has been given to you? This November, Martin and Sylvia's family are pausing after witnessing a tender yet challenging moment that awakens their awareness more fully to the precious gifts all around them.

Here are a few ways to take challenging times and turn them into something more positive.

Acknowledge the doldrums. As the natural world tucks itself in for the winter, it's hard to resist going right along with it in spirit. Use your distinctly human efforts and creative skills to acknowledge the gray, cold skies, but then be open and present to warmth and delight.

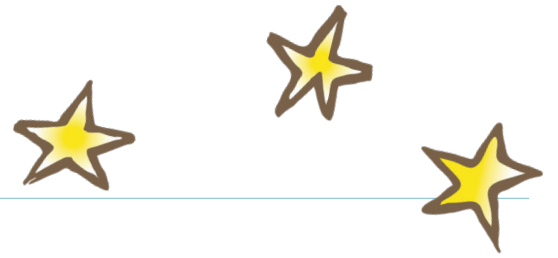
Shake up your routine. Embrace spontaneity when energy feels low. Look for opportunities to present themselves—a family outing to a new coffee shop, a visit to see an elderly friend, or a trip to a craft store. Varying your routine can work wonders to infuse your Day of Rest with a fresh sense of purpose.

Connect with the natural world. As the German proverb goes, “There is no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing.” Put on a few extra layers for your next Day of Rest and see what you can find out there.

Open your senses. Whether you are outside or in, listen fully, breathe deeply, look closely, touch gently, and taste eagerly. Using all of your senses to the full will help you connect to all that is good and glorious in the world.

Be together. Spend time together with your loved ones sharing what is most precious to you. It will give you all an increased appreciation for the goodness of life.





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December

This month, Martin and Sylvia take charge of a stressful family moment and guide their parents through the process of intentionally making space for rest in their week. Momma and Daddy are so pleased to watch their children's leadership skills in action, realizing that the discipline of rest has made it all the way into the family DNA.

It's no small thing to create space for rest in the busy month of December. Imagine a few ways to restructure your activities for even a few hours of restoration. Here are some ways to start.

Give your children ownership. Your kids might still be a little young to take complete charge, but if they are old enough to speak, they are old enough to offer opinions.

Invite them to lead in the process. Encourage your kids to ask questions or take notes with pictures. They'll turn to you when they need help, and in the process, they'll see how much the Day of Rest has become rooted in their habits.

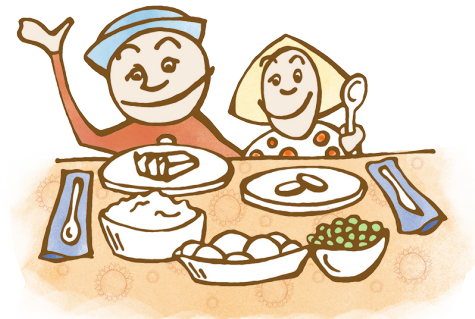
Make a plan for the whole month. Look at the full month calendar and move optional activities to different weeks to make space for rest.

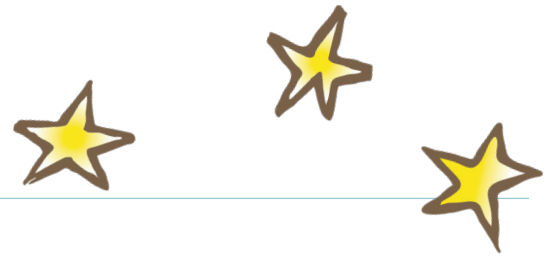
Discuss your non-negotiables. Revisit all the Day of Rest concepts you created throughout the year to give structure to your December rest days and serve as a refresher to all.

Integrate your values. Look for ways to knit your full life and your desire for rest into a cohesive whole (Sparkle tip: Ask your kids for ideas about how to do it!)

Watch for the magic of the season. Use the skills you've honed over the year, and be on the lookout for moments of warmth, joy, and connectedness throughout the holiday season. They can surprise you!

A Day of Rest in December is a wonderful way to make extra time to pay attention to the magic of the season.





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