

*Daring to Rest™*

# THE REST CAVE GUIDE

BY KAREN BRODY





# I NEED QUIET SPACE TO BE ALONE.

I hear this all the time from women.

And one of the reasons so many women feel they cannot rest — especially mothers of young children—is that there is no quiet space in their home.

This is why it's essential to mark your territory. Many women have spent years not resting or collapsing on their beds unconsciously to rest because their home is not set up for it.

Virginia Woolf said it best—that a woman must have a “room of her own.”







## *rest cave:*

A quiet place where you can drop the worn-out woman, come to when you need a time out, get back into rhythm, and listen to the knowing voice that emerges from deep stillness.

*"Resting in this space provides me a moment—or 20 minutes—to take a breath, relax, and come back to self."*

*—Natalie, Tennessee*





# *7 TIPS*

FOR CREATING YOUR REST CAVE



# THE INTENTION

- Remove all distractions
- Press the reset button
- Be yourself
- Unload layers of exhaustion and engage in deep rest through yoga nidra practice
- Give birth to new ideas, new plans, and new yearnings

*"My rest cave supports me because it is physically cozy and comfortable plus has just the right view and soft lighting to set a relaxing mood. ."*

*—Maureen, Massachusetts*





# 1. IDENTIFY YOUR SPACE

Ideally, it is a quiet space that can get dark (or at least dim) and includes a spot in which you can lie down comfortably.

Allocate space in a room that you use for other activities.

Call dibs on the spare room if you have one.

If you live in a small space, make it portable: Prepare a box of items that you take out and set up on your couch, on your bed, or on a carpeted floor.

If you live in an area in which the weather supports it, pitch a tent in your backyard or designate a space in your garden.







## 2. HONOR THE BLANKET

The most essential item is a blanket. You might consider using one that is exclusively for your yoga nidra practice—a blanket in color or style that represents you. Yoga nidra is a sleep-based meditation practice always pointing you back to your most authentic self, so what you add to your Rest Cave are symbols that represent the true you.





### 3. DECORATE

Select items that elicit delight, yet create a simple, aesthetic space. These can be pillows, plants, a tapestry or rug, a favorite painting. Some women string lights to turn on after yoga nidra in order to journal.





## 4. CREATE A REST ALTAR

This is an element from which you can come back to your center and honor rest.

On your altar you can place items that are meaningful and relaxing, such as a journal, photos, candles, crystals, essential oils, and items from nature (flowers, stones, sand).

Use a beautiful tray to create a portable altar.





## 5. CHOOSE TRAVEL ITEMS

It's a good idea to have at least one item that you can take with you when you travel. One of my students told me: "I was nervous about how I was going to keep up my yoga nidra practice when I traveled without my cave, so I created a travel Rest Cave. I bought a beautiful tapestry, laid it on the floor in the hotel room, put my crystal on my heart, and easily connected back into cave time practicing yoga nidra meditation. I learned the cave can go anywhere."





## 6.FINE TUNE

Sit in your Rest Cave. Lie down under your blanket. Simply notice how it feels. Is it a place you feel safe and can surrender to rest deeply? Is the surface you're lying on comfortable? Play with the space until it feels right (it will continually evolve). After you practice yoga nidra a few times, you might consider what else you can do to make it even more restful, like stringing some soft lights.





## 7. GET CREATIVE

Having shared these tips, I want you to know that for years my Rest Cave was in my parked minivan, seat leaning completely back, with ear buds, outside my son's soccer practice.

Sometimes you can't access the ideal cave, but please don't let that stop you.





# *THE MANY WAYS* TO EXPERIENCE YOUR REST CAVE



*a place to*

# PRACTICE YOGA NIDRA

Years ago, when I first discovered yoga nidra as a worn out mother with a long history of panic attacks, I couldn't believe I found a tool that looked like a nap, but offered so much more.

This simple, guided meditation takes you into deep-sleep brainwaves and beyond, but with a trace of awareness. Using a combination of breath work, body sensing, and visualization, you're guided into a cradle of deep rest—a deep meditative space where you can release exhaustion on all levels, including decades of negative programming (like that “I'm not worthy”/“I'm not enough” tape that causes you to lose power).







*continued*

I couldn't believe how well-rested I started to feel when I practiced yoga nidra. And, my decades of panic attacks? Gone.

As I practiced more, I realized that my yoga nidra needed a designated space in my home—a Rest Cave. This quiet, alone space for just ME was crucial to rebooting my physical, mental, and spiritual health. It also reminded others in my home that I was prioritizing rest, and it modeled rest to my kids.

Yoga nidra is the umbrella, so to speak, for every experience in my Rest Cave. It sets the stage for thinking clearly again, refueling, and ultimately standing in my power.



# *a place to* "BIRTH"

Although I'm often met with humorous looks when I assert this, the Rest Cave takes Virginia Woolf's "room of her own" one step further: A woman needs a womb of her own.

Women give birth to many things: babies, books, and businesses, among many other brave and creative endeavors. The best births are born out of a quiet, sacred space.

*"My rest cave makes it easier for me to come into yoga nidra because it is all set up and ready for me. The only thing I need to do is lie down!"*  
—Sheila, Florida





A photograph of a bouquet of flowers in a glass jar. The jar is wrapped in burlap with a white lace band. The bouquet includes pink, yellow, white, and blue flowers. The background is a rustic stone wall.

## *a place to* **RECEIVE**

Thinking of your cave as womb space will increase the potency of yoga nidra meditation.

The uterus is where women birth babies, but even more so the uterus holds the energy of birth. It is here that you can transform and heal your wounds, including ancestral wounds. Women have carried centuries of shame, abuse, fear, guilt, and judgment, struggling to love ourselves in a patriarchal system.

The womb is where we create and women are creators. Yoga nidra can help to purify and nurture our wombs. However, we must be open to receiving this healing.



*a place to*

# RECLAIM YOUR WILD WOMAN

Every time you feel branded as that crazy, over-thinking, over-sensitive woman, now you can head to your Rest Cave to practice yoga nidra instead of shutting up or letting others judge you.

Guess what? Women are intuitive, not crazy. It's when we shut down this wild knowing part of ourselves that we feel nuts. The more you lie down, the more you gain perspective on your life. What felt huge softens. And your ability to bring your wild woman along as you lead becomes nonnegotiable.







# *a place to* **HONOR YOUR CYCLE**

I ask women to chart their menstruation and menopausal women to note when the moon is full each month.

This is the time to stay in your Rest Cave longer—even just ten more minutes with either a longer yoga nidra meditation or journaling.

These are moments in our lives when our hormones are calling us to slow down, and they are also moments of great opportunity when women are ripe for transformation. Think of it as your Red Tent.



*a place to*

# EMBRACE YOUR SHADOW

Once in the cave you may see shadows  
—similar to shadows made by the light  
of the opening in a cave.

It's common to think of shadows as  
bad. If someone is scared we may say,  
“She's afraid of her own shadow,”  
which is why I suspect there is a  
mystery and trepidation around  
entering caves.

*"It is here that my inner relationship is  
nourished, revitalized, and strengthened so  
that my outer relationships can be approached  
with more clarity, ease, and trust."  
—Judith, New York*







## *continued*

By entering your Rest Cave you are saying “I’m not afraid of my Shadow anymore,”—the Shadow of course being dark emotions and thoughts. It’s in this embrace of darkness that we see the real light, the truth.

Giving yourself cave time—a time for inner exploration—is one brave step towards accepting the darkness in you. Once you do this, then when you leave your cave you’ll discover how truly beautiful it is in the world.



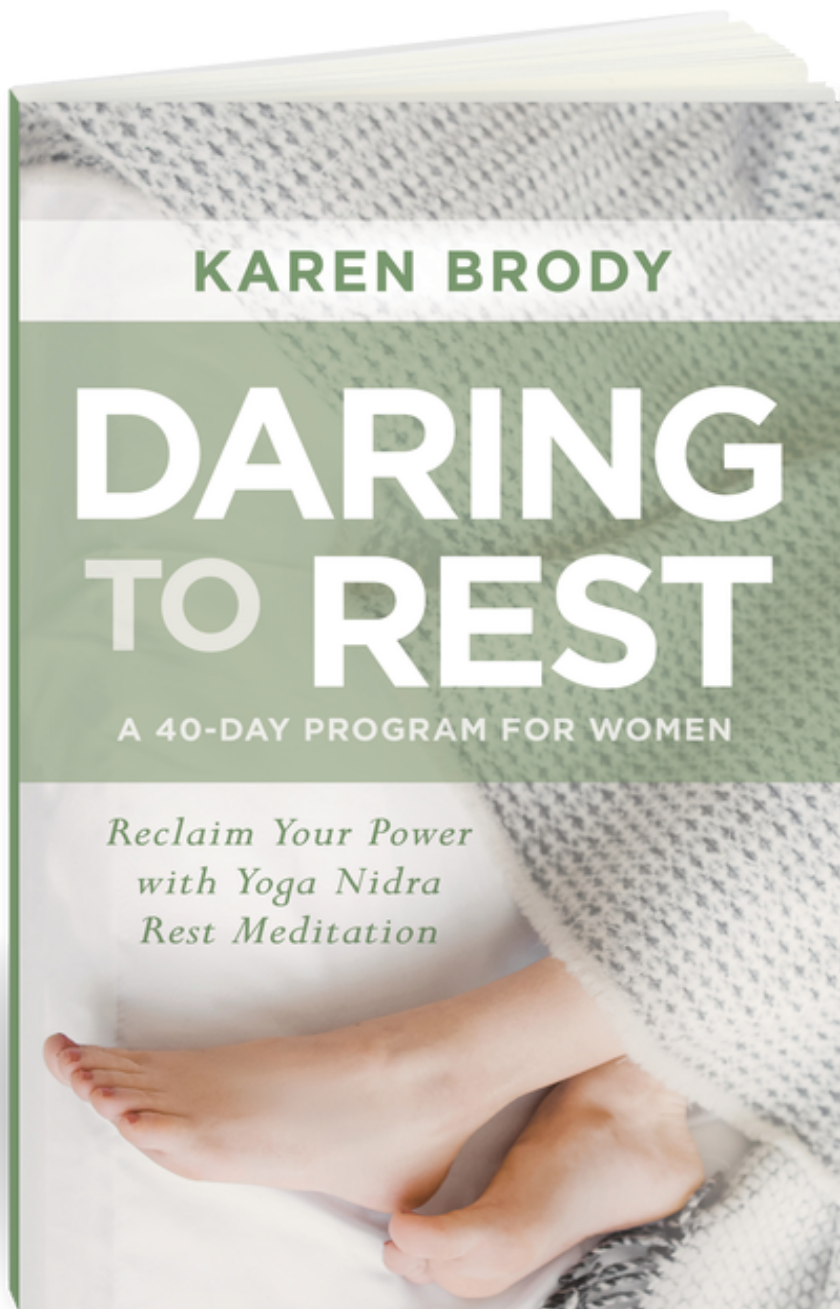


## *HERE'S TO YOUR REST CAVE!*

I love seeing how each woman creates her own unique Rest Cave, and I know the more we share photos and stories from our Rest Caves the more we can create a Daring to Rest Sisterhood—a movement of women committed to deep, life-changing rest. Please consider sharing your Rest Cave photo on your favorite social media channel with **#DaringToRest**.

*With gratitude,  
Karen*





Karen Brody is a women's well-being and leadership expert and the founder of Daring to Rest™, a yoga nidra-based self-empowerment program for women.

Her book *Daring to Rest: Reclaim Your Power with Yoga Nidra Rest Meditation* is now available at booksellers everywhere. It includes three online yoga nidra meditations to support your journey.

Visit [daringtoforest.com/newbook](http://daringtoforest.com/newbook) to learn more about Karen and download the book's first meditation for free.



The background of the entire image is a close-up, high-contrast photograph of a thick, knitted blanket. The texture is intricate, showing various cable and rib patterns. The lighting is somewhat dramatic, with deep shadows and highlights that emphasize the three-dimensional quality of the knit. The overall color palette is muted, consisting of various shades of grey, taupe, and dark brown.

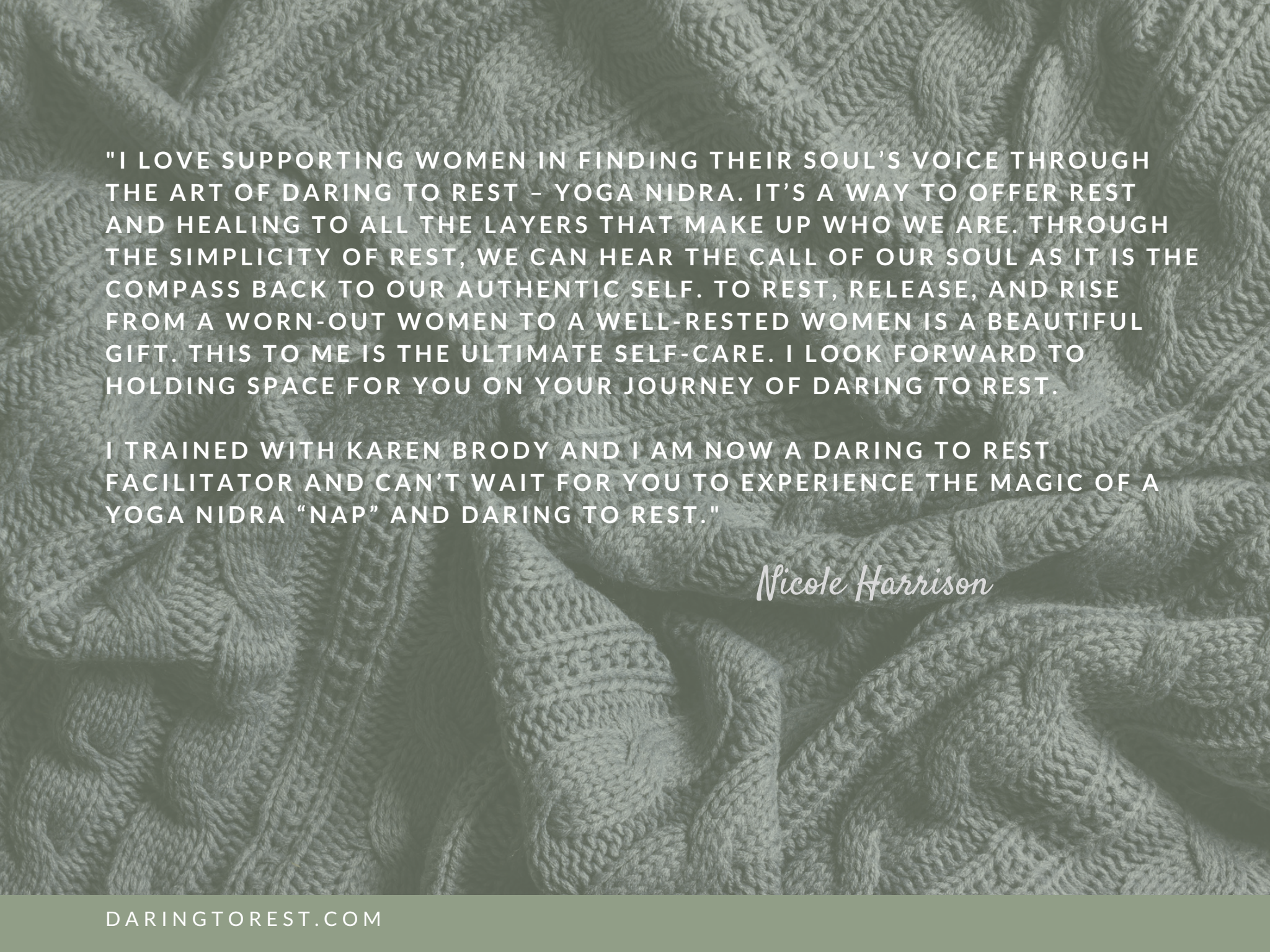
THE WORLD NEEDS YOU AND WHAT YOU  
HAVE TO OFFER. BUT IT NEEDS THE FULLY  
ALIVE, WELL-RESTED YOU, NOT THE  
EXHAUSTED YOU.

IMAGINE A WORLD WHERE WOMEN MAKE  
REST A PRIORITY AND OPERATE MORE FROM  
THEIR FULL POWER.

THAT'S THE NEW WORLD YOU'RE ABOUT TO  
ENTER IF YOU DARE TO REST.

*Karen Brody*





"I LOVE SUPPORTING WOMEN IN FINDING THEIR SOUL'S VOICE THROUGH THE ART OF DARING TO REST – YOGA NIDRA. IT'S A WAY TO OFFER REST AND HEALING TO ALL THE LAYERS THAT MAKE UP WHO WE ARE. THROUGH THE SIMPLICITY OF REST, WE CAN HEAR THE CALL OF OUR SOUL AS IT IS THE COMPASS BACK TO OUR AUTHENTIC SELF. TO REST, RELEASE, AND RISE FROM A WORN-OUT WOMEN TO A WELL-RESTED WOMEN IS A BEAUTIFUL GIFT. THIS TO ME IS THE ULTIMATE SELF-CARE. I LOOK FORWARD TO HOLDING SPACE FOR YOU ON YOUR JOURNEY OF DARING TO REST.

I TRAINED WITH KAREN BRODY AND I AM NOW A DARING TO REST FACILITATOR AND CAN'T WAIT FOR YOU TO EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC OF A YOGA NIDRA "NAP" AND DARING TO REST."

*Nicole Harrison*