

Dare to be you

For women who want their mission on earth and a
heart-centred way to be it

7 Tips to Help You Sleep

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*A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable
faith in their mission can alter the course of history.*

- Mahatma Mohandas Gandhi (1869 – 1948)

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7 Tips to Help You Sleep



1. Black-out Time!

We're animals and animals recognise it's time to sleep when it gets dark. Black-out curtains/blinds can help. So can a good eye mask. Dimming lounge lights an hour or so before bed-time also signals it is getting-ready-to-sleep time.

2. Chill-baby-chill...

The evening is wind down time, letting your body know it will soon be time for sleep. So wind down! No social media, internet or sending emails which stimulate your cognitive brain centres when you should be doing the opposite. Breathe deeply in and out 5 times to trigger the relaxing part of your nervous system. Repeat. Listen to soothing music and/or CDs especially created to chill us, e.g., wave sounds and/or falling rain sounds.

3. Electrical Equipment

Remove all electrical equipment or switch off completely, plugs out. 'Standby' lights and the 'glow' from electronics pass through your eyes (even when shut) and delay the release of the hormone melatonin which induces sleep.

4. Your Bedroom

Have the temperature about mid 60sF. You'll be restless in a warmer room. Use a fan on hot nights.

Switch off all lights. However, use a very soft nightlight out of direct eye range to reassure you if total darkness is upsetting.

Make sure your mattress and pillow are both comfortable and support your body to rest. And de-clutter your room, if necessary, because seeing clutter before bed time will agitate rather than calm you!

5. Sleep Food and Stimulants

Carbohydrates such as pasta are sedatives. In one American study, they found muffins and bananas made volunteers the drowsiest at bed-time. Indeed, a banana or a small bowl of wholegrain porridge made with coconut milk works for me if I'm unable to sleep.

At the same time, avoid stimulants which will keep you awake like eating meat late in the evening and the dreaded caffeine in coffee, tea, fizzy drinks and processed foods. Also avoid MSG, often used in Chinese cooking. Check those ingredients labels too!

6. Get Up

If you're unable to fall asleep at any time during the night, don't toss and turn or lie there wide-eyed. It builds an association between your bed and not sleeping. Get up and go into another room. It's better to lie on a couch, eyes closed and listening to soothing music or sounds (as above) for some rest or read inspirational quotations to nourish your spirit.

Eat some of that sleep food and drink a very hot non-milk drink as quickly as you can. That fools the body into thinking you've had a feast. When you feel snoozy, get back to bed. Repeat as often as necessary.



REMEMBER:
*What you
eat is how
you sleep!*

7. Be Gentle With Yourself

People have different sleep requirements. Although the average is said to be 8 hours, I now find I naturally sleep about 7. And some famous people, like Maggie Thatcher, can lead a very active life on just 5.

The only check for if you've had a good night's sleep is if you wake feeling refreshed and ready for the day. So, be gentle with yourself as to how much sleep you 'should' be having.

And be gentle with yourself if you wake tired and not up for the day at all. It's likely you're experiencing low mood or how you feel might be a sign you're experiencing depression. My latest book, ['Bounce Back from Depression – The No Nonsense Guide to Recovery'](#), is crammed full of information, tips and exercises to help you do what it says on the tin!

Go well and gently...

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shawn". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

REMEMBER:

*Always, but
always, be
gentle with
yourself...*

*“Even after all this time,
The Sun never says to the Earth,
‘You owe me!’
Look what happens
with a love like that.
It lights the whole sky.”*

- Shams-ud-din Muhammad Hafiz (c 1320-1389)

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