

Sleep

Sleep Hygiene

Avoid stimulation – TV, computers, excited conversation an hour before bed.

Relax – with a warm bath or listening to soothing music.

And change patterns – do something different in terms of your night time routine – and then stick to this routine.

Treat sleep as precious and necessary for your physical and emotional health. And if after everything, sleep is still bad, then this is telling you something important about the life you are living. Welcome the disruptive sleep as a messenger.

Don't spend more than 20/30 minutes lying awake in bed at one time. Get up and do something onerous and boring (reading a book standing up, cleaning the oven, doing your paper admin) for 20/30 minutes and then go back to bed. And if you are still awake 20/30 minutes later, then repeat. After a night or so, your subconscious will just turn off and let you sleep.

Watch what you consume

Eliminate natural stimulants altogether, like coffee, soft drinks (cola), chocolate, cocoa and tea. Even small amounts can affect some people and of course, if relevant alcohol. Also avoid cheese, ham, pickles, sugar, sausage, tomatoes as they contain tyramine a brain stimulant.

Eliminate night time hypoglycemia – ie a drop in blood sugar. Eat a snack before bed - oatmeal, wholegrain bread, tryptophan foods - turkey, banana, and cottage cheese and yoghurt which help produce serotonin.

Try 5HTP. Extra B6, niacin and magnesium needed to convert 5 HTP to serotonin or just take a good multi vitamin mineral.

And turn the worry off – write lists and put into the pending tray, let it go and do these exercises

The 3 senses Exercise

Feeling, seeing and hearing – each for a few minutes or less - one after another until you sleep

And a Good Visualisation

While lying warm and comfortable in bed, close your eyes and start to imagine that you are looking out across a plain at a big orange setting sun. Up above and all around is a darkening velvety blue night sky studded with twinkling stars. As you take a deep breath and breathe out, focus on the sun and say "Relax". Then move your eyes upward in their sockets and draw in the violet blue night with your breath as you say to yourself "Peace". Move your eyes down to the setting sun and try to notice if it has sunk any lower while you've been looking away and, as you breathe out, repeat to yourself "Relax" as before. Then look up to your night sky as you breathe in and repeat "Peace" as before. And keep doing this.

