

# BEYOND THE STARS

## ADULT SLEEP GUIDE



Beyond The Stars  
Jade Sleep Nanny

# WHY SLEEP IS IMPORTANT

We all feel it when we do not get a good nights sleep.

*Less Sleep = Less control of our Emotions.*

As humans (adults and children) - we become much more irrational. This is due to our Chimp (lymbic) part of our brains. This is held in our pre-frontal cortex, and reacts 20x faster than our more rational (human) side of our brains.

This is why we become more irrational and bad tempered when tired, we react more emotionally and tend to let our emotions rule that instead of our usual logical thinking.

This brings a stress cycle as adults - as when we react in such a way, it makes us more easily frustrated, and when we react that way it brings us even more negative feelings.

This is where lack of sleep can directly impact our mental health. We need sleep for positive mental health, and optimal brain function and capacity.

*Sleep and our Brain*

When we sleep - it is like brain detox. It is when our brain gets rid of unwanted chemicals - which is why we wake up feeling refreshed!

It focuses on cell division and replenishment, and plays a huge role in improving our immune system.

### *Sleep is Restorative Energy*

Sleep is how we conserve our energy. It is restorative. If we think of our sleep like a "tank of sleep" - when this is diminished we are running on empty. There is little restorative sleep and energy, we become overtired, more irrational and less able to think clearly. When our sleep "tanks" are full - we sleep better, better rested, restored energy and ability to function better cognitively. And the same goes for our kids too


This is why when we sleep poorly, we instantly feel the physical effects - we feel sluggish, tired and unfocused.

Sleep Helps Our Bodies Regulate  
In many aspects, our circadian rhythm, our immune system, and metabolism. Poor sleep can result in weight gain, and poor immune system which means sleep is also vital for our physical health as well as our mental health.

*"A well-spent day  
brings happy  
sleep."*

Leonardo da Vinci, Italian Polymath





# WHY IS IT SO HARD TO SLEEP?

There are many reasons why sleep can be of poor quality. Some can be medical, some can be more of a mental ability and impact. Sometimes it can be as simple as poor "Sleep Hygiene".

## *What is Sleep Hygiene?*

Sleep Hygiene includes your ideal sleep environment, day schedule and habits to help form a good, long deep nights sleep. Sometimes it can be simple changes to our day and habits that can help form that better night's sleep.

## *Day to Day Factors*

Many of us live busy lifestyles, and our day to day living and thoughts/schedules can impact our sleep.

- *Demanding Jobs & Pressures.* Not only can our minds not turn off from this, but we have early alarms set/working late which impacts our sleep habits.
- *Eating & Exercise.* Our habits around when we eat, and exercise can alter our body's rhythm. doing these at the right time can help sleep.
- *Parenthood.* The biggest thing I talk to families about. When our kids wake, we wake. Not only that, even once our little ones become peaceful sleepers - as parents we often can't shut off (anxieties, wanting extra time to ourselves, habits of waking stays much longer with us).
- All of these can lead to more stress & anxieties - which is one of the most common reasons for adults losing sleep

# OUR MINDS

Our brains need time to zone out, relax and take in the events of the day. We need time to be creative (do you always find the best ideas come when you finally turn off from everything else and let your mind work on its own?)

Having that time not only helps us sleep better when the time comes, but it helps us be reflective, responsive, better parents, friend and partner.

But sometimes it is hard to shut off. For many of us, laying down at bed at night is the only "shut off" time we get - which is why our minds then move so rapidly processing everything it needs to now that it finally has the chance.

If you have a busy lifestyle, the chances are our mind is running at super speed, with a super long list of things to think about. This impacts our ability to sleep when we finally get to that stage of the night.

Likewise, responsibilities and worries can equally do the same. When we have the responsibility of others, children, people who rely on us, our worries can become more present at this time. If there are external events, worries and anxieties - our brain often uses this time as a chance to finally let our brain process all of these feelings. Some of which may be hard to process, which is why we mask it during the day but giving our brain the space it needs at night-time brings all these thoughts forward.



# COMBATTING STRESS AND ANXIETIES

## Brain Dump

Writing things down before we go to sleep can help a lot.

Write down your to-do lists for the next day, so that you have that sorted in your head and no other reason to think of that overwhelm.

You can even go further and spend time planning your weekly tasks, meal plans etc. So everything in these aspects are written down, the pressure to remember and think of these things is gone.

## Start and End your Day the right way

### Positive Affirmations

Write and Say how you want your day ahead to be, the kind of traits you want to show as a person.

"I am patient"

"I accept only positive thoughts today"

Reflect and bring positivity BEFORE bedtime, so that you can go to bed with a clear mind. Journaling can help with this a lot.

*" A good laugh and a long sleep are the two best cures for anything. "*

Irish Proverb



# IMPROVING SLEEP HYGIENE

## Sleep Environment

Dark, Calm & Cool - just as we would our children.

Keep visible clocks out of the room

Move our phones to the other side of the room

## Before Bed Habits

Don't use alcohol to sleep

Reduce electronics before bed. Blue lights hinder our melatonin production, and our ability to sleep well.

Do not go to bed with a full stomach - eating late can affect our bodies rhythm, and likewise drinking too much water before bed increases the chances of waking for the toilet. Have a balance, don't go to bed thirsty but be mindful of quantity.

Create your own bedtime routine so your body has that rhythmicity.

## Day Habits

Reduce Caffeine intake

Fresh air and exercise improves the onset of sleep, and sleep quality.

## Morning Routines

Keep a regular wake routine/schedule

Seek natural light as early as possible

Additional References - [thesleepcharity.org.uk](https://thesleepcharity.org.uk)

# MAKING SLEEP A PRIORITY

Sometimes, we lose our importance around sleep. As parents, when we are so dependant for others, and our child sleep needs - we often forget our own. Or, as our child is having sleepless nights, all we begin to think about is our lack of sleep! Then we dissociate our own needs in time. We learn to manage.





# SLEEP ENDUCING TECHNIQUES

Now remember, an optimal time to fall asleep is within 10-20 minutes of being in bed. This gives enough time for the body to wind down and the mind to fully relax. If we crash out within minutes, chances are we are exhausted. On the other hand, if it takes us much longer than that to fall asleep we are having troubles shutting off. Here are some methods to help.

## Toe to Top Method

- It's similar to a body scan, where you relax your body from the top of your head to the tips of your toes
- Alternatively, work from your toes up (this can actually work better)
- Envision your body slowing down with each part and shutting off. Work slowly from one end to the other.
- First, relax your face muscles, tongue, jaw and the muscles around the eyes.
- Lower your shoulders as far down as they'll go, then do the same with your upper and lower arm, one side at a time.
- Exhale, relaxing your chest then move down to your legs, starting from the thighs all the way down to your toes.
- Studies show after practicing this consistently for several weeks that the body starts to respond quicker and works for 96% of people.

# SLEEP ENDUCING TECHNIQUES

Mindfulness Meditation - Focusing on thoughts and feelings, eyes closed and visualisation. Deep breathing during this time helps the body relax. There are lots of YouTube meditation exercises or Apps such as Headspace to help in this - imagining yourself in a peaceful space and bringing all of your focus on this space.

Equally - Yoga is great for deep breathing and pranayama helps nthe body relax, and can help promote a great nights sleep!

Box Breathing - This is where you imagine a box, a square one with equal sides. As you imagine the b ox, hold your breath and count to 4 as you imagine yourself moving across one side of the box. Repeat round each side. The idea is that this helps bring focus away from racing minds as well as deep breathing to help the body prepare for sleep.

These slow breathing exercises are great for busy minds and those with insomnia. It helps so down your metabolism, nervous system and brain waves.

There are also great sleep tools for Adults, machines with specific noises, meditation, breathing exercises and lights to help - such as Dodow.

# SLEEP PLAN

## **What are my key challenges when it comes to sleep**

Is it falling asleep? Frequent awakening? Struggling to get back to sleep in the night/ early morning?

Four horizontal rounded rectangular input fields for writing answers to the challenges question.

## **My New Bedtime Routine**

What changes are you going to make? Practicing meditation? Brain dumping? Relaxation time?

A large rounded rectangular input field for writing a new bedtime routine.