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Getting back in control of your sleepless nights

SWEET DREAMS



As the light in our spring and summer days lingers into the evening, our desire for a restful sleep to give us more energy for the next beautiful day increases. Sounds like a

dream... yet not one we all experience. In truth, many people dread the thought of going to bed at the end of the day because good sleep is actually not their reality. If this rings an alarm bell for you or someone you know, read on.

I would like to share some exercises that might help you. Let's begin with space awareness, an intimate peek inside the part of our nurturing environment where we spend most of our time.

Consider a time and place where you felt the most ease. Bring back the image of this to your mind's eye and sense the quality of that space and how you naturally felt yourself sinking into relaxation. As you imagine this place, look at what is around you. How is it laid out? What makes it appealing to you? It may be somewhere out in nature, in the forest, at a park or near an ocean. It could be a place where the decor was pleasing and/or a place that was created specifically for you and that was all your own. Take a few moments and let yourself sink into this memory and sense the quality of feeling this in your body.

Now while in this state, bring into your mind's eye your current space that you retreat to for relaxation and rest. What is the quality or feeling that arises in you? Does it change dramatically? If so, sense what is creating this change in how you feel inside. Either imagine your bedroom or take a moment to observe this space. Allow yourself to look at it as though for the first time with curiosity.

You might ask yourself these questions:

- a) Where is the bed located in the room?
- b) Is there space between the two sides of the bed and the walls?
- c) Is there more space on one side of the bed than the other?
- d) How much electricity is beside the bed? Electric alarm clocks, lamps, TVs?
- e) Is there wireless in the bedroom or near the bedroom?
- f) Are there any objects left over from previous or unhappy relationships?
- g) Is this room cluttered with things no longer useful?
- h) Is your bedroom a store room, a space just to 'crash' for a few hours?
- j) Is there a special corner for remembering your own sense of value?
- k) Are your dressers and closets full of old unused clothes ?
- l) Is the floor bare wood, tile or carpeted?
- m) Are you still using a mattress from a previous relationship?
- n) Are the colours your colours that create visual pleasure?

After answering these questions take some time to consider what you would like to create for yourself in your bedroom environment. How could you re-define this space to reflect a space that supports your comfort on every level and allows you to feel settled enough to let you relax naturally?

Take a moment to consider your average day and night. Your responses become recognition for developing more

awareness and understanding of effort, habitual patterns of movement and the connection between how you are 'actually' moving and what you 'think' you do.

a. Waking: Tomorrow notice yourself waking up. Pause a moment to check in prior to jumping out of bed. What's your first inclination? Do you wake and simply jump up running, or do you start by thinking of the day's activities ahead of you, review your dreams. Or do you tell yourself only five more minutes and search for more sleep?

Where does your mind go? What thoughts arise? What do you notice about how you engage your body from lying to becoming upright? Are you busy in thought without recognizing how you roll over, come to sit and then to stand away from the bed? Do you notice only the aches or pains that may arise and if so, what is your reaction? Do you push through the pain and effort to get into the position you wish to? Do you freeze and hold the painful area and reposition the effort elsewhere in order to push through? Simply notice.

b. Approaching Night Time: As the day winds into evening, begin to make a conscious effort to notice your thoughts towards the bedtime hour, observe what activities you become involved with. Is this your time to finish major projects, sit in front of the T.V. or get involved in discussions?


Ultimately, take your observations and intentionally create some new practices to enhance your sleeping hours. Becoming conscious of your motivation and making changes with a free will, you can reclaim your power in areas where you may have felt helpless. Combining your new awareness with a clear, relaxing environment to sleep in can change your stress-time into dreamtime.

Renee Lindstrom from Science of Organized Bodies is available for workshops, retreats, individual or group session. She is currently developing a sleep program to assist those in need. Go to www.insideawareness.com ...see ad below.

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