

HOW TO WAKE UP EARLIER (& FEEL GOOD ABOUT IT)

Many people would like to get up earlier in the morning. This might be motivated by fitting in exercise, making the morning routine less rushed, creating a more positive mindset to start the day, getting to work/school earlier (or on time), or simply enjoying some quiet space in the day. Even for long-term Night Owls, it is usually possible to train the body to wake earlier and feel brighter in the morning, but it does take a little effort and commitment.

Bear these factors in mind for 2 weeks and see if you become the early-bird you never thought you'd be.

1. WHY DO YOU WANT TO GET UP EARLIER?

Getting up earlier should feel like an opportunity, not a punishment. What advantages will earlier rising time bring you? Time for exercise or creating a less frantic, more positive start to the day?

3. USE AN ALARM

- Put the alarm across the room so you have to get out of bed to turn it off – then you are UP.
- Minimise using the snooze button.
- Choose an alarm sound you like - gentle music or nature sounds work well.

5. SUNLIGHT

Exposure to SUNLIGHT, or other *bright* light (e.g. from a light box) for 30 minutes after getting up. Bright light suppresses production of the sleep hormone melatonin and is very effective for training the body clock to wake earlier and boosting energy.

7. WIND DOWN

- Dim the lights & limit close screen time (phone, computer, ipad). Bright light in the couple of hours before bed can suppress melatonin & impair sleep.
- Put a buffer zone for relaxation between the business of the day and bedtime.

8. BE ACCOUNTABLE

Text your partner, friend or colleague to let them know what time you were up each morning. Or consider making a challenge with a friend and motivate each other. Arrange to meet up for an exercise session or early breakfast.

2. SHIFTING YOUR SCHEDULE

Advance your rising time 15-30 minutes earlier every 1-2 days until your desired rising time has been reached. Then stick to this time like glue for 1-2 weeks, EVEN on WEEKENDS. This strategy takes some time, but the effects on your energy while you're making the adjustments will be minimal. Once you feel that you are waking easier in the mornings you can introduce a bit more flexibility (perhaps an extra 30-45 minutes in bed on the weekend).

4. PLAN THE FIRST 30 MINS

What helps you to 'wind-up' into the day? Something invigorating or that you look forward to. Glass of water, Stretch, Clean teeth, Open curtains, Straight into the shower, Clothes laid out ready the night before for your morning exercise, Sun, Push-ups/sit-ups to get the blood and oxygen flowing, Coffee machine/kettle on, Yummy breakfast.

6. SLEEP INERTIA

Sleep inertia is a normal transitional state between sleep and wake that causes grogginess. Food, drink, activity, & pleasant stimulation (eg uplifting music) can help. As best you can, flick your attention outwards, away from signs of tiredness for the first hour on waking.

