



Wake up refreshed and ready to go...

On average it takes 20 minutes for good sleepers to start pushing up zzzz's but for others, it's not that easy. Some people lie awake for hours before getting to sleep, some wake in the middle of the night unable to doze off again and others wake too early in the morning. Insomnia, a persistent inability to sleep well, affects mood and the ability to function well, so if you struggle to get a good night's sleep now is a perfect time to do something about it.

Bedtime is for sleeping not for thinking

If you ask a person who sleeps well what they think about when they go to bed they will tell you, "Nothing." They understand that *bedtime isn't the time for thinking, it's time for sleeping!* Individuals who sleep poorly often complain of an overactive mind and lie awake at night ruminating, going over and over what happened during the day, how a situation could have been handled better or what needs to be done tomorrow. Repetitive thinking like this can lead to a rise in blood pressure and the release of stress hormones, which makes falling asleep even more difficult and creates a vicious cycle. To overcome this pattern, allow yourself time during the day for thinking, planning and reflecting. Making a list before going to bed, detailing what you'll do tomorrow or writing about what's on your mind, can also be helpful.

Sleep efficiency is the goal

The goal is to sleep for as long as possible during the time you set aside for sleep, known as sleep efficiency. Stick to a bedtime, clear your mind before bed and avoid screen time late in the evening. Using alcohol to settle before bed is another common habit of which to beware. The problem? Once the alcohol is metabolised, it can result in middle of the night waking and If you buy into believing that having a drink is the solution to feeling stressed, you miss out on other more effective ways to manage the ups and downs of daily living. If you wake up or still have trouble getting off, use the Rainbow Relaxation method detailed in *Resilient Families* Issue 18. Overcoming insomnia may not be easy, but it is worthwhile when you wake up refreshed and ready to go! *Michael Yapko, Ph.D., Audio programme, *Sleep Well*

- ✓ Sleep is essential for a healthy mind and body.
- ✓ Repetitive thoughts → stress hormones → poor sleep.
- ✓ Good sleepers don't use bedtime for thinking time; they allow time during the day.

"Think in the morning. Act in the noon. Eat in the evening. Sleep in the night."

William Blake

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There's a neat little strategy that kicks worry and anxiety for a six if you know how to use it. You'll find it in... **Sticky Strategies** You can also join the free weekly blog for more helpful tips [here](#).



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