

# BETTER SLEEP

a guided programme  
by  
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## THE GIFT OF THE NIGHT

*Between sleeping and waking: Lying in bed, with the gentlest of breaths focussed in the forehead, fall in to the centre of the heart as you fall asleep. Thus fall into freedom as you dream.*

Vijnana Bhairava Tantra

We start by reframing sleep difficulties: rather than focusing on a problem we switch to focusing on the potential gift each night offers: eight hours or so to devote to the life of body and soul. See if you can make this shift in perspective: what if the problem isn't not sleeping, but one of not knowing what to do with your awareness? How can Time become your friend, and How can you use your awareness to move in and out of sleep, and stay asleep, in the most healing and refreshing way possible? The exercises you learn in these Sophrology classes will help you do this.

## FROM COMMON SENSE TO SYNERGY

You may well be familiar with many of these tips for getting a better night's sleep, but take time to review this list, to see if you can make adjustments to your life-style. Each change may in itself make an almost indiscernible difference, but when combined with the other changes, and using the exercises you have learned in these sessions, the synergy they create can help to ensure you sleep better.

Ask yourself these questions:

- What time does my body want to go to bed? How can I make sure I don't resist this? If I wake after several hours, and then stay awake for several hours before falling asleep again, this may be normal and natural, and I may mistakenly think I am not sleeping as much as I really am. What can I do with my awareness if I wake in the middle of the night?
- What can I do to make my bedroom a sacred place, a liminal place that helps me enjoy other states of consciousness? How can I make it more soothing, quiet, able to be dark and cool, with the best mattress and pillow? Do I really need to sleep with my smart phone nearby? Have I tried these ideas for promoting good sleep:

the scent of lavender, creating the best air to breathe by the bed with a Himalayan rock salt lamp, and one or more of these plants: Jasmine, Lavender, Snake Plant, Aloe Vera, Gardenia, Spider Plant, Valerian, English Ivy, Peace Lily, Golden Pothos, Bamboo Palm, Gerbera daisies, red-edged Dracaena?

- Do I leave enough time (often considered to be at least four hours) between my evening meal and bed-time? Do I need to look at my caffeine, nicotine or alcohol intake, which are all known to interfere with good sleep?
- Have I tried drinking Chamomile or Valerian tea or a combination like Pukka Night Time Tea,

which includes oatstraw and lavender and chamomile flowers, with tulsi leaf and valerian root. Or Celestial Seasonings Sleepytime Extra which uses Chamomile, tilia flowers, valerian, peppermint, lemongrass, hawthorn and orange blossoms.

- Do I need to change what I do in the hour or so before going to bed? To get better sleep, try avoiding stimulating activities such as watching television, using a computer or being around bright lights. Instead engage in relaxing activities such as reading, writing, listening to calming music or taking a bath. Try wearing socks in bed!
- Does my body want me to exercise more? A good amount of exercise daily improves sleep.
- Can I put all these ideas together to create my ideal going-to-bed routine or ritual that makes full use of the gift of the night?

“Sleep is the best meditation” The Dalai Lama

## WHAT NEXT? - RESOURCES THAT CAN HELP YOU

### COURSES

- **THE SLEEP CLINIC** - a guided programme in six sessions to help you sleep better, whether you find it hard to go to sleep, feel you don't sleep deeply or long enough, or have trouble getting back to sleep when you wake in the night. Each session includes a short film, ideas and techniques to help, and one or more audio tracks you can download to your phone, computer or tablet. Drawing from the latest findings in Neuroscience, combined with exercises from Sophrology and Yoga Nidra, the course encourages you to accept the 'gift of the night': an opportunity for rest, healing, and spiritual insight, whether or not you are asleep. Find out more from [philipcarr-gomm.com/sleep-clinic](http://philipcarr-gomm.com/sleep-clinic)
- **SLEEP WELL** - Hypnotherapy and Yoga Nidra expert Nirlipta Tuli has developed a short online course that explores the mechanics of sleep - clear explanations of sleep hygiene and how to integrate that with the practice of yoga nidra to give yourself the best chance of sleeping well. With excellent yoga nidra audios to help you sleep. Find out more at: [yoganidranetwork.org/shop/sleep-well-total-yoga-nidra](http://yoganidranetwork.org/shop/sleep-well-total-yoga-nidra)
- **THE SLEEP SCHOOL** - An online course of over 70 videos and audio tracks designed to offer you advice, tools to practice and ongoing support. Find out more at: [thesleepschool.org](http://thesleepschool.org)

### APPS

- If you find you can't sleep because you worry when lying in bed, write the worries down in a journal or 'Worry Diary' to get them out of your head, or use the app from [worrywatch.com](http://worrywatch.com). Search for: Worry Watch - Anxiety Journal.
- If you find listening to the human voice reading stories works for you, try audio books, or use the 'Sleep Stories' section in the app from [calm.com](http://calm.com)
- Some people like the sound of rain outside - even a storm. And there's an app that will provide you with many variations on this theme. Search for: Infinite Storm.
- If you want a full programme for insomnia, try the Sleep School's app which has a daily Sleep Tracker Calendar, an Insomnia Survey, 5 audio tracks and an interactive quiz. Search for: The Sleep School.

### VIDEOS

- Want to learn about sleep cycles, brain waves, the latest research on the function and physiology of sleep? TED talks offer a great range of interesting talks about the science of sleep, just google: 'TED talks on sleep'.

### AUDIOS

- There are numerous audios available online to help you sleep. I offer 2 tracks on the album Sacred Nature to help you sleep. One designed for helping you take a timed power-nap, the other to help you to go to sleep. See [philipcarr-gomm.com](http://philipcarr-gomm.com)
- If music helps you drift off, but you want it still playing if and when you wake up, try the beautiful 8 hour composition by Max Richter entitled 'Sleep'. Hear a one hour sample on Youtube.

### BOOKS

- Night School: Wake up to the Power of Sleep by Richard Wiseman, CreateSpace 2014
  - The Sleep Revolution by Arianna Huffington, Harmony 2016
- Picture credit: Lori Stanley