

Sleep Struggles

“Still tired? The Real Reasons you struggle with Sleep (and what to do about it)”

Summary: This toolkit is your companion if you lie awake at night watching your thoughts race, or if you wake up already tired. Built with warmth, research, and clarity, this guide will help you understand what is really going on with your sleep, teach you how to spot the red flags, and offer tools you can use today at home. It is designed for anyone who is tired of being tired.

What are Sleep Struggles?

Sleep struggles go beyond just “not getting enough sleep.” They include:

- Insomnia: Trouble falling or staying asleep.
- Sleep apnea: Interrupted breathing during sleep.
- Restless leg syndrome (RLS): Uncomfortable leg sensations at night.
- Circadian rhythm issues: Sleeping at odd hours, or not syncing with the day-night cycle.
- Nightmares & night terrors: Emotionally intense dreams that disrupt rest.
- Sleep anxiety: Worrying too much about sleeping (yes, that is also a thing).



Quick Self-Check Quiz

Answer YES or NO:

- I wake up feeling just as tired as I did going to bed.
- I lie awake in bed more than 3 nights a week.
- I need a screen (TV/phone) to fall asleep.
- My thoughts get louder at night.
- I feel sleepy during the day, even after a full night's sleep.
- My partner complains I snore or stop breathing in my sleep.
- I dread bedtime.
- I need caffeine to feel "normal."

If you answered YES to 3 or more, this toolkit is especially for you.

What is really going on? (Psychoeducation Simplified)

- **Brain Hyperarousal:**
When your brain stays "on" even in bed all thanks to stress, phones, or internal worry.
- **Dysregulated Circadian Rhythms:**
Your body clock is confused maybe from screen time, erratic routines, or late-night work.
- **Cortisol Imbalance:**
Stress hormone spikes make you wired at night.
- **Blue Light Overdose:**
Devices block melatonin which is your sleep hormone.
- **Negative Sleep Loops:**
You fear sleep and therefore cannot sleep which makes you fear it more.



Everyday impact: How poor Sleep shows up in daily Life

- **Thoughts:** Foggy memory, poor focus, negative outlook.
- **Behaviour:** Snapping at people, skipping workouts, zero motivation.
- **Relationships:** Irritability, lack of patience, emotional withdrawal.
- **Physical Health:** Headaches, poor immunity, weight changes, blood sugar spikes.

It is not “just sleep.” It is your mind and body’s fuel.

What you can do: Quick Relief Tools

1. **The 4-7-8 Breathing Technique:** Inhale for 4, hold for 7, exhale for 8 seconds.
2. **Body Scan:** Mentally relax each part of your body from head to toe.
3. **Legs Up the Wall Pose:** A 5-minute yoga move that calms the nervous system.
4. **Journaling:** Write out your worries before bed (called “brain dumping”).
5. **Bedtime Ritual:** Warm tea, soft light and stretch will all signal to your brain it is time.

Long-Term strategies that rewire Sleep

- Set a fixed wake-up time, even on weekends.
- Avoid caffeine after 2 PM.
- Eat your last meal at least 3 hours before bedtime.
- No screens 60 minutes before bed.
- Create a “wind-down” routine: reading, dim lights, soft sounds.
- Use melatonin supplements only under guidance.
- Try CBT-I (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia), shown to be more effective than pills.

Visit a Psychiatrist, if sleep issues increase.



Sleep Myths Busted

Myth

- I can catch up on sleep over the weekend.
- 5 hours is enough for me.
- Alcohol helps me sleep.
- If I can't sleep, I should lie in bed longer.
- Only older adults have sleep problems

Truth

- Sleep debt doesn't fully reset. You need regular patterns.
- Most adults need 7–9 hours. Chronic undersleeping causes harm.
- It may knock you out, but it disrupts deep sleep later.
- No, get up and do a calming task in dim light.
- Teens and young adults are increasingly sleep-deprived too.

Basic coping Tools for Sleep Struggles

- Practice **mindfulness meditation**: Headspace, Insight Timer, or guided audio.
- Try a **weighted blanket** if you feel restless.
- Use **white noise** or nature sounds.
- Replace doomscrolling with **slow music or audiobooks**.

When to seek Help Please reach out if

- Sleep issues last more than 3 weeks.
- You are relying on substances or pills to fall asleep.
- Your work, mood, or relationships are suffering.
- You have tried all self-care and still feel unwell.

Parasomnias, such as sleep walking and talking, abnormal behavior during sleep sleep apnea- seizure related disorder.



Who to reach out to

- Sleep specialists
- Therapists trained in CBT-I
- Neurologists (for sleep disorders like apnea or narcolepsy)
- Veda's clinical team (if underlying mental health concerns are contributing)

Track and Celebrate Sleep Progress



Sleep Diary

Record bedtime, wake time, quality (1–10), triggers.



Celebrate wins

A week of steady sleep mean you should reward yourself (no, not with screens).



Let's Get Happi app

(by Veda) can help track mood vs sleep.



Use Sleep Cycle or Pillow app for guided support.

Therapist's Note:

Sleep is not a luxury. It is your nervous system's daily reboot. And if it is not coming easy, it is not your fault. There are scientific, emotional, and behavioral reasons why your sleep' may be broken. The good news is that Sleep can be re-learned, rebuilt, and restored. Let's take it one night at a time.

