



In this exercise,
I'm going to share a useful technique
To sleep longer, with more ease,
And less anxiety, or worry.

For many people in the US,
It can be very difficult falling asleep.

Repeating thoughts won't seem to stop.
Memories of what happened that day keep coming up.
Plans, fantasies and worries about tomorrow continue resurfacing.
Energy in the body keeps you tossing and turning.

All the while, frustrations around not sleeping
Fuel the worry and restless energy in the mind,
Ironically preventing you from feeling relaxed, calm, and peaceful.

This is more common than you may think.
We live in a society filled with expectations, pressures, and stresses.
It's no wonder that our minds are filled with media images,
News stories, financial stressors, worries about our loved ones...
The list goes on and on.

Hearing me talk about these things
Probably creates a physical reaction in you
Of tightness, tension or heat.
Can you feel that?

Well, it's very understandable,
And very very common
That our minds would be filled with one or more of these stressors
On a consistent basis
Preventing us from getting as much rest as we would like.

I get it.

Fortunately, there are many ways to address this,
Some of which we cover in the other exercises of this path,
Such as getting to know the bodily sensations



Of worry, anxiety and trauma
Wherever it feels most predominant,
Without feeding the energy with thoughts.

But there are other methods
Particularly useful
When it's time for sleep and rest,
The rest that is so important
For your body and mind
To function at it's best.

First, try to adjust the temperature in your bedroom
To be around 68 degrees, the ideal temperature for sleeping.
You can do this with fans, windows, heaters, whatever works for you.
If that feels too cold, please put an extra blanket over you,
Which will not interfere too much with the benefits of having the air around 68 degrees.

Next, in the hours before going to sleep or taking a nap,
try to avoid upsetting music,
worrying news reports,
Or anything that tends to trigger your mind
Into worry, stress, or discomfort.

Also, it's important to sleep in a room that is as dark as possible,
Without any tv, tablet or mobile screens around,
Indicating to your eyes and brain that it's time for rest.

Then when you lay down,
Try to lay flat on your back,
If that's comfortable to you,
And keep your legs un-crossed.

See if you can feel the sheets or bed underneath you.
Feel the weight of your body
Pressing against the fabric of the cloth of the bed.

What does that feel like?

Notice the felt sensations of the body lying down,



Take some deep breaths,
And relax the body
As you notice what it feels like
Simply to be lying down,
Allowing yourself to simply be there,
Enjoying the relaxation and rest
That you're offering your tired, weary mind and body.

Then, it's important to enjoy noticing the sensations of the body,
Consciously releasing any tightness or tension
From each body part
To the next.
Noticing, and releasing.
Noticing, and releasing.

All with a sense of calm, curious kindness,
Gifting yourself the spaciousness
And embodiment
That you so deserve.

You continue doing this throughout the body,
Wrapping it up with an exercise of wishing yourself and others
A genuine sense of care,
And a lightly-held wish for peaceful sleep,
Sweet dreams,
And a refreshed body.

It's really quite simple.

Let's try it together now.

You can position yourself lying down now,
Or if that's not possible,
You can sit and do the majority of this exercise in a chair.

(GUIDED MEDITATION USING THE TECHNIQUES ABOVE)

Aaaahhhh....



How do you feel?

More relaxed?

At ease?

More peaceful than before?

I recommend using this technique each night

So that you will get better and better

At learning how to prepare the body

For a full night's rest.

It may not work 100% of the time,

But with practice,

You'll notice that if you bring a genuine sense of care

And some effort to soften the sensations in the body,

You will gradually taste the fruits of

Reducing worry, anxiety and stress,

And increasing calm, relaxation, and a sense of embodied ease.

So to recap,

Remember:

It's perfectly normal and understandable to feel frustrated

By a mind that is filled with stress.

It's common, and it makes sense,

Given everything on our plate sometimes.

Try to sleep in a dark room that is around 68 degrees

Without screens around.

When you lie down,

Feel the bed, feel your weight, feel areas of tightness or tension in the body,

And continually soften and loosen different areas of the body

As you breath naturally and calmly.

I hope that these tips and this exercise will be useful for you.

Thank you for your mindfulness.