

# WAYS TO WIND DOWN



There are some lucky people in this world who seem to be able to sleep anywhere, anytime, that is looked upon

with envious eyes by those who struggle to get to sleep. Struggling to get to sleep is something many people deal with, especially now in the days of easy-to-access distractions, busy schedules, and heavy workloads.

For many it can be very difficult to switch off at night, their minds working overtime, or just feeling restless and 'not tired'. Unfortunately, if you do struggle to wind down at night it is not something that is going to magically change, you need to make a conscious effort to make some changes to give yourself the best chance of winding down and getting to sleep easily. Below are some things to consider.

## Good ways to wind down and relax before bed

### Reading

Reading can be a very relaxing activity. Reading for an hour before you go to sleep can help your mind to relax and clear of all the days' worries which allows you to rest better when you finally get around to going to sleep. Try to find yourself a nice book that you can read and wind down with and give it a go to see how you get on.

### Lights

Try to dim or reduce the amount of lighting in your home prior to bedtime. It will help

you adjust to the darkness and better prepare your body for bed time. Going from a bright environment to a dark and trying to sleep can often be a main cause for people struggling to get to sleep.

### No screens before bed

We all know this, but putting it into action is often easier said than done. If you find that you do struggle to get to sleep then try not using your phone or watching a screen for an hour before bed. Wind down with a book as previously mentioned instead. Screens are very powerful as they need to be bright enough for us to see in sunlight so speaking of dimming the lights before bed, phones/screens are the opposite which will keep you awake.

### Try writing down your thoughts

It can often be the case that your head is spinning and its filled with things you still need to do or your thoughts and/or ideas. Have a notepad next to your bed and write anything down that you need to do or thoughts you want to hold on to. This will

allow your brain to rest better knowing that your note pad will be there to remind you of these thoughts in the morning.

### **Your bedroom, your relaxing place**

Set new boundaries for relaxation in your bedroom. If you're able to, apply the above tips as soon as you enter your room, no phones, read, dim lights etc. This way you will get into the routine of knowing when you're in your bedroom it is time to wind down.

### **Apps**

There are so many apps that are designed specifically to help you rest and wind down in the evening either before bed or as you're trying to get to sleep. They can range from soothing relaxing music, to meditation to just white noise. As well as the above tips, try experimenting with some of these apps and see which ones work for you. This may conflict with the no screens rule but you can make an exception for this. Have a look online for winding down/sleeping apps and see which ones you like the look of and give them a go.

### **More information**

If you feel you may need some support, you can contact Care first. Care first is a leading provider of confidential, professional counselling, information and advice services. All employees are eligible to use Care first, our services include; telephone counselling, information services and online support.

Call Care first on the Freephone number provided by your organisation where you can speak to a professional in confidence.