

Sleep & an Anxious Mind

Remember: anxiety and sleep feed each other. A tired brain is more anxious, and an anxious brain struggles to rest. The goal isn't forcing sleep, which never works, but setting up conditions that let sleep come.

During the day

- 1 **Same wake-up time daily**, even after a bad night. This is the most powerful sleep reset.
- 2 **Get morning daylight** within an hour of waking, even 10 minutes outside.
- 3 **Cut off caffeine by early afternoon**, and go easy on alcohol, which disrupts sleep later in the night.
- 4 **Schedule "worry time"** earlier in the evening: 15 minutes to write down worries and one next step for each.

At night

- 1 **Wind down for 30–60 minutes.** Dim lights, put screens away, and read, stretch, or pray.
- 2 **Bed is for sleep.** No scrolling, working, or problem-solving in bed.
- 3 **Can't sleep after about 20 minutes?** Get up, sit somewhere dim and boring, and return when sleepy.
- 4 **Racing thoughts?** Jot them on a notepad by the bed: "I'll handle this tomorrow."

Tell yourself: *"Resting is still restoring. I don't have to be asleep to let my body relax."*

When to reach out: if poor sleep lasts more than a few weeks, you wake gasping or snoring loudly, or anxiety at night is getting worse, talk with your doctor and a counselor. CBT for insomnia (CBT-I) is highly effective.

"I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety."

PSALM 4:8