

Sleep Difficulties

Tools for Sleeping
Better

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Who Is This Booklet For?

This booklet is for you if you are experiencing sleep problems and want to better understand what is happening in your body and mind. Changes in sleep are common, and they affect your mood, energy, and daily routine.




Trouble Sleeping? Still Tired After You Sleep?

Insomnia is when we sleep poorly, often due to worries or racing thoughts, and that affects the following day.

Hypersomnia, on the other hand, happens when a person is able to sleep at night but still feels very sleepy during the day — which may be a sign of something more serious.

Beyond tiredness, these conditions can affect daytime functioning and increase the risk of developing or worsening mental health disorders.



In other words...



Insomnia is like a phone that never fully charges. You spend the whole night “plugged in,” but your body’s battery never reaches 100%.

Hypersomnia is like having a phone that charges to 100%, but the battery drains immediately afterward.



Behavioral Cycle



Do you know what a behavioral cycle is?

It happens when we repeat a behavior because it brings a consequence that makes us want to do it again.

Both insomnia and hypersomnia can be understood through this cycle.

The good news is that there are ways to take care of this.

In this booklet, you will find evidence-based techniques that you can start practicing even without immediate professional support.

In Practice,

The insomnia cycle usually starts with some type of stress, which activates the body and naturally makes sleep more difficult.

Then, the person adopts strategies to try to control the situation, such as forcing sleep, staying in bed, and checking the clock — all ways to avoid the discomfort of not being able to sleep. But these behaviors end up feeding the worry even more.

Over time, this behavior stops depending solely on willpower and begins to happen almost automatically, reinforcing the change in sleep patterns.

Have You Ever Experienced Something Like This?

This may help you...

Behavioral treatment for insomnia helps regulate sleep through simple changes in routine and environment. The idea is to teach your body and brain to associate the bed with sleep and to build habits that promote rest.

Here are a few things you can start putting into practice:

Use your bed only for sleep: Avoid watching TV, using your phone, studying, or eating in bed. These activities confuse your brain and make falling asleep harder. Do not stay in bed making plans or worrying. If your thoughts are racing, get up and move for a moment.

Prepare your sleep environment: Lower the lights, reduce noise, set a comfortable temperature, and remove distractions.

Wake up at the same time every day: Even if you slept poorly, keeping a consistent wake-up time will help your body develop a well-defined routine, which is essential for sleep regulation.

But How Can You Put These Changes into Practice?

Consistency means repeating small actions regularly, even when we do not see immediate results.

Consistency helps change behaviors because repetition and routine strengthen the associations between situations, responses, and outcomes.

Over time, the behavior stops depending only on willpower and begins to happen almost automatically, consolidating the change.

1. Start small

Choose 1 or 2 habits at a time (e.g., getting up at the same time and avoiding naps).

2. Expect ups and downs

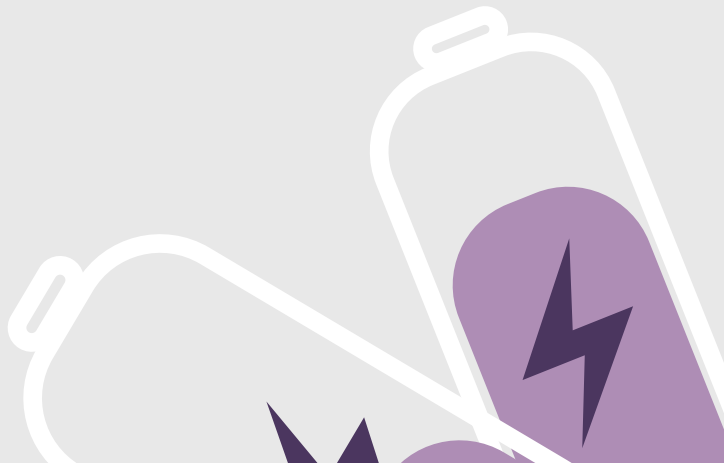
Bad nights happen; do not change your routine because of them.

3. Track your progress

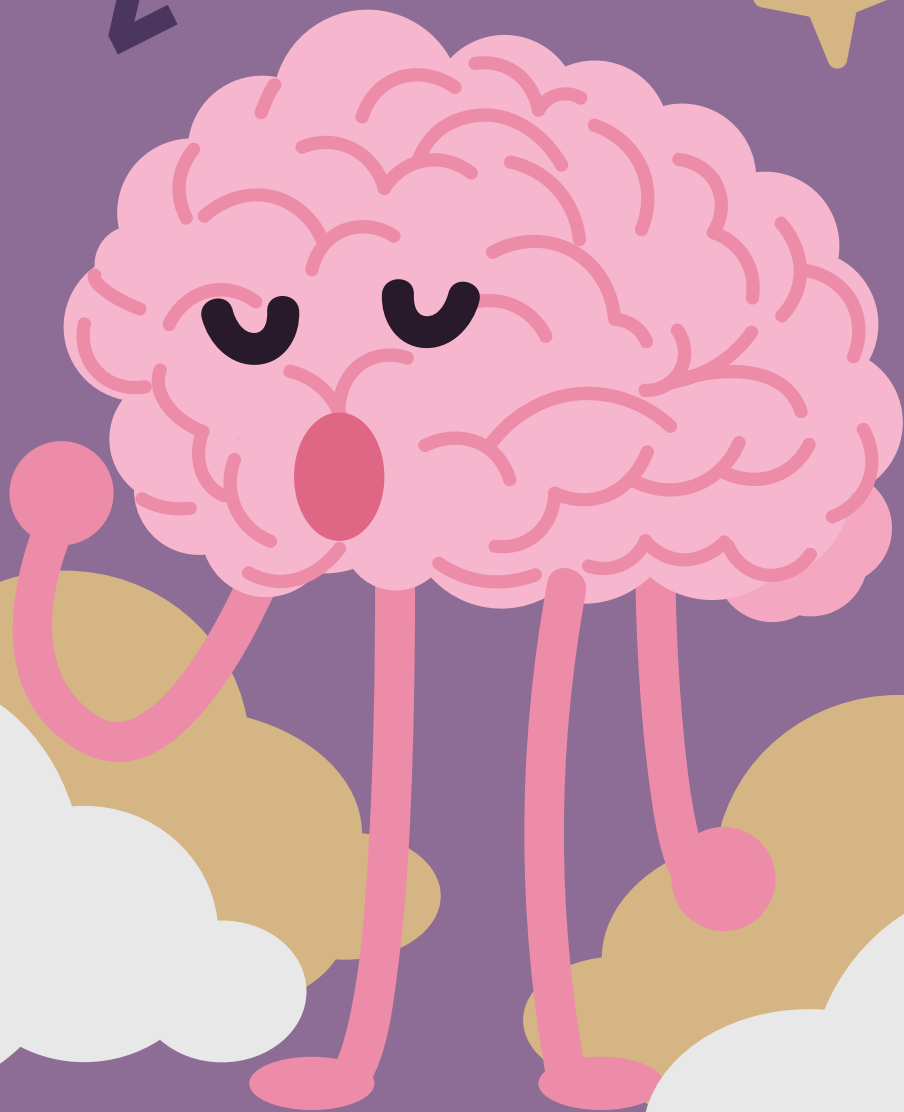
Seeing improvement over time boosts motivation.

4. Reward yourself

Recognizing your effort increases the chances that the helpful behavior will happen again.



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The Hypersomnia Cycle

Now that you understand how insomnia works, let's take a look at how the hypersomnia cycle happens.



When someone feels excessive tiredness during the day, they often take long naps or spend more time in bed to “recover energy.”

These behaviors bring immediate relief from sleepiness, but they end up disrupting the biological rhythm and harming the quality of nighttime sleep.

As a consequence, sleep becomes more fragmented and less restorative, leading to even more tiredness the next day. The more a person sleeps at irregular times or spends excessive time in bed, the more the body loses clear signals of sleep and wakefulness, which keeps hypersomnia going.



Behavioral Activation

It consists of gradually resuming meaningful and enjoyable daily activities, helping improve mood and reduce the constant feeling of tiredness.

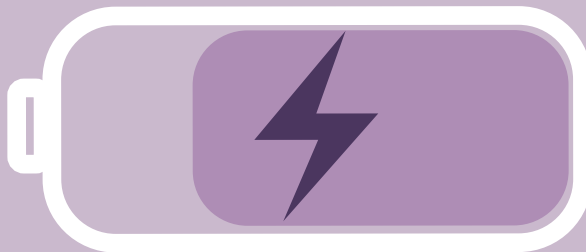


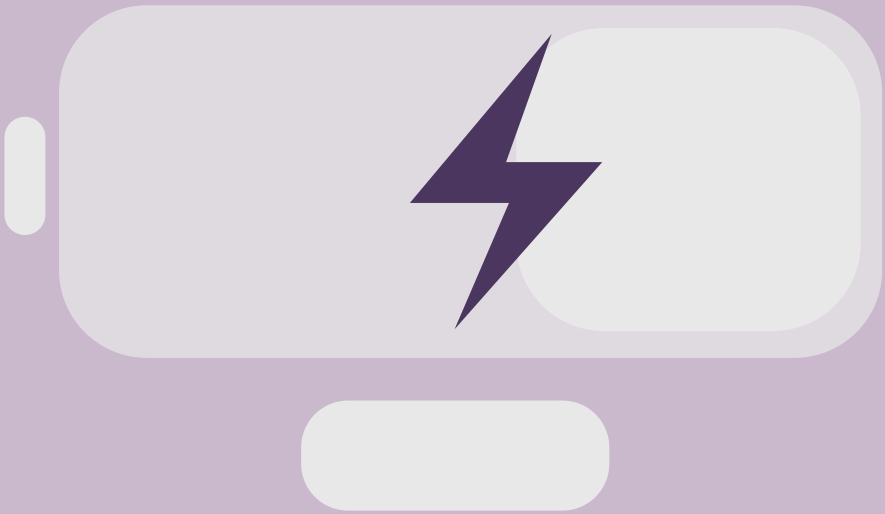
Exposure to natural light: When you wake up, expose yourself to sunlight for at least 15 minutes. This strengthens wakefulness signals and helps suppress melatonin during the day.

Stimulating activities: Schedule light physical activity or stimulating tasks right after waking up. This helps the body move out of the sleepy state and reinforces wakefulness.

Nap control: Plan short naps — up to 20 minutes — always at the same time of day, preferably before 3 p.m. This prevents the sluggishness that follows long naps.

Introducing activities that provide pleasant stimulation (such as movement, social interaction, and exposure to natural light) helps break the sleepiness cycle because it strengthens the body's alertness signals, increases energy, and improves mood — leading to better regulation of the biological rhythm.





Taking Care of Your Sleep Is a Way of Taking Care of Yourself

Changes in sleep are a sign that your body and mind need attention.

Recognizing these symptoms is the first step in taking care of your mental health.

Remember: you do not have to face this alone. If symptoms persist, seeking professional help is essential.

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