

9 NATURAL BIOHACKS FOR BETTER SLEEP



PRO
VEN

HEALING
BREAKTHROUGHS
BACKED
BY SCIENCE

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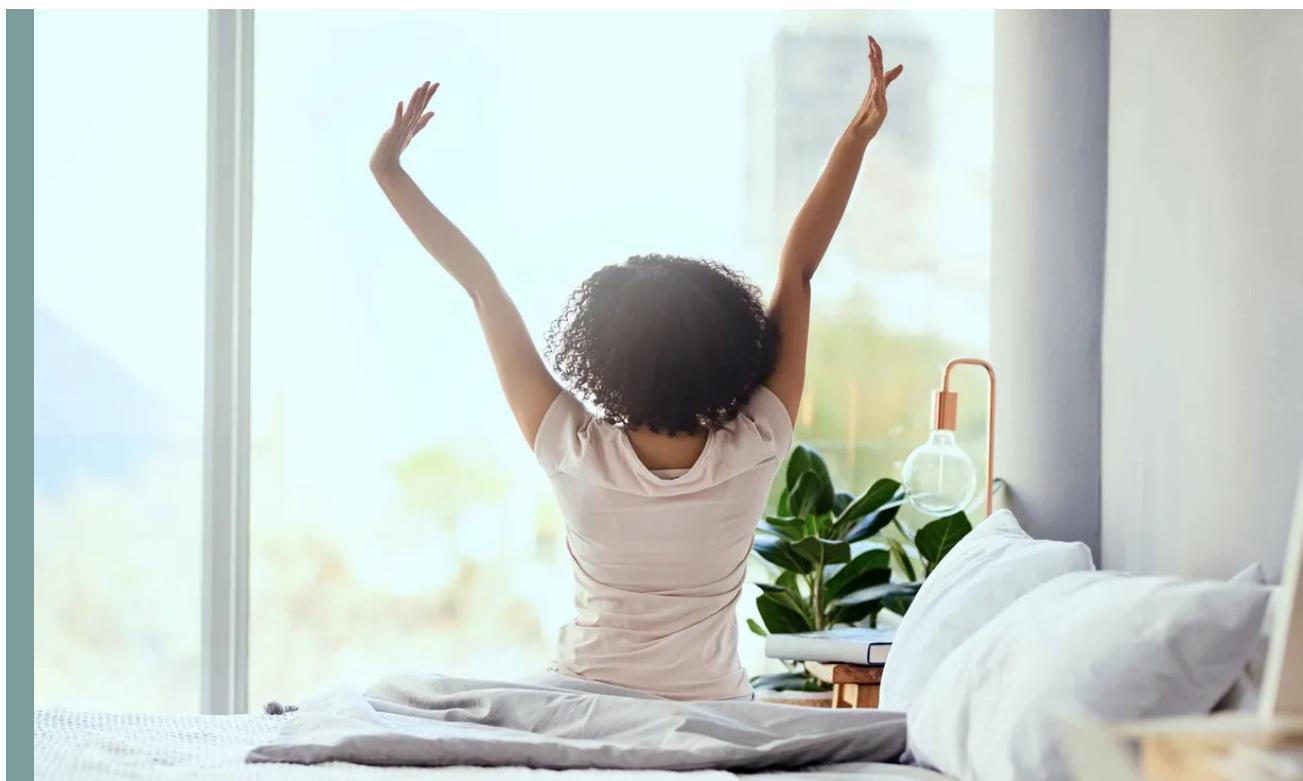
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INTRODUCTION:

The Importance of Sleep



Long before the rise of glowing screens and jam-packed calendars, our ancestors lived in harmony with the Earth's rhythms. Sunrise stirred them awake, and twilight signaled to the body that it was time to rest. They rose and slept with the sun—not with alarms, deadlines, or social media notifications. Today, many of us have lost this sacred connection to our natural cycles, and the cost is steep...

Sleep is not just a health metric—it is a spiritual and biological necessity. It is when the body repairs, the mind integrates, and the soul breathes. Modern science now echoes what ancient wisdom has always known: sleep is the foundation of healing, mental clarity, and longevity.

Yet we live in a world that glorifies productivity and dismisses rest. Sadly, it's not all that surprising that today, **one in three adults is chronically sleep-deprived, and sleep disorders are rising across all age groups**. In pushing beyond our natural limits, we've forgotten the deep intelligence of our bodies—and the quiet, cyclical rhythm that sleep invites us back into.

This book is an invitation to return.



What Are Biohacks?

In today's wellness world, the term "biohacking" is often used for high-tech solutions—wearables, nootropics, and performance optimization tools. But at its essence, biohacking is about tuning into the intelligence of your biology.

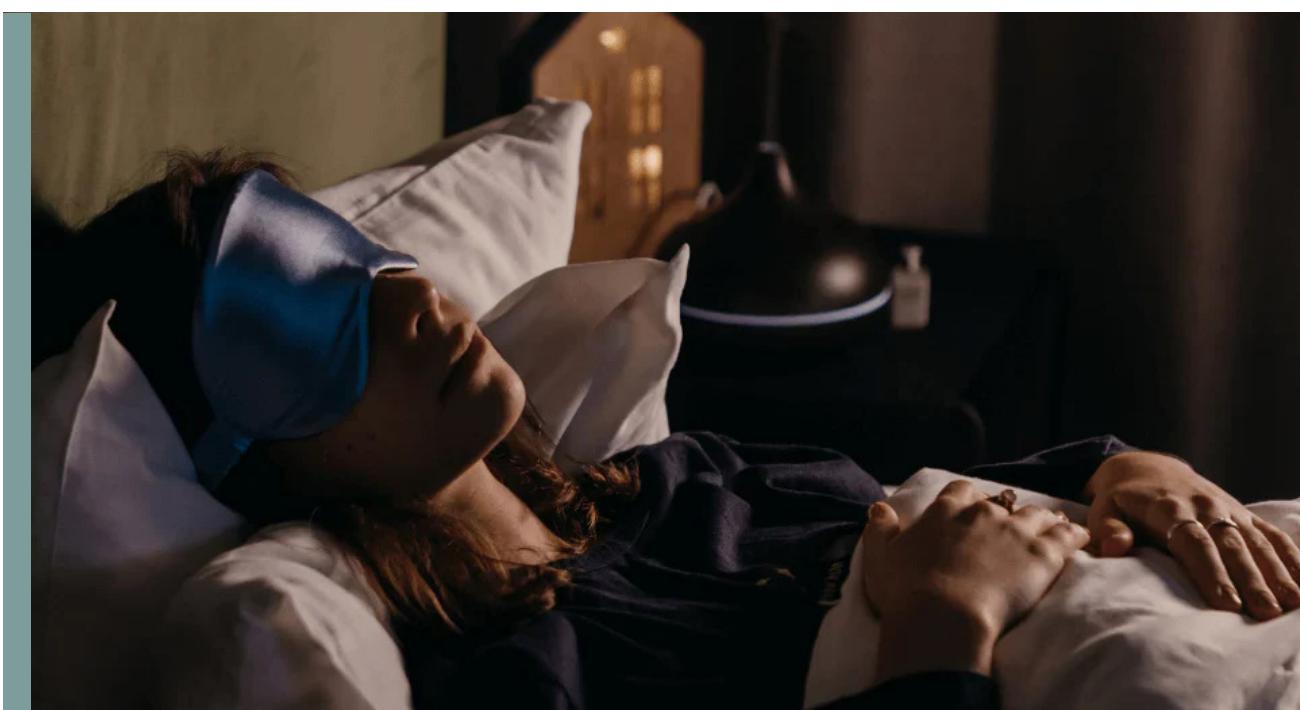
In the context of this guide, **natural biohacks** are *simple, intentional changes that help you restore alignment with your body's natural rhythms—without pills or invasive methods*. These are not new inventions. Many are ancient practices reframed for modern life. Think of it as ancestral wisdom, remembered and revived. These biohacks are a bridge between science and spirit, technology and tradition.



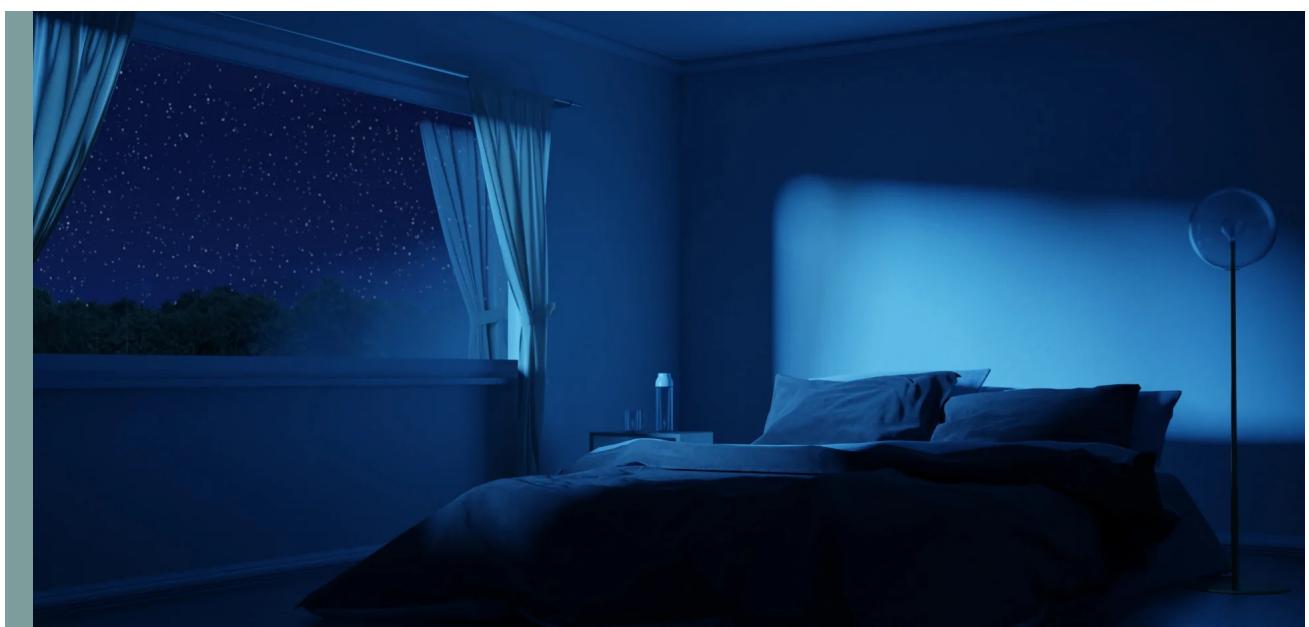
Why Use Natural Biohacks for Sleep?

Pharmaceutical sleep aids offer temporary relief, but they don't address the root of imbalance. Over time, they may even dull the body's natural ability to regulate sleep. On the other hand, natural biohacks empower you to work *with* your body, not against it. They remind us that healing and harmony are already built into our biology—we just need to remove the interference.

Most importantly, these practices help rekindle something deeply human: a *reverence for rest*. By embracing stillness, ritual, and rhythm, we begin to restore more than just our sleep—we restore our connection to our bodies and ourselves.



OPTIMIZING Your Sleep Environment



Where You Sleep Matters More Than You Think

In ancient times, sleep did not require biohacking—it simply followed the rhythm of the natural world. As the sun dipped below the horizon, our ancestors began to slow their pace. Firelight flickered in darkened dwellings, stories were told, and bodies prepared to rest. There were no clocks, no buzzing devices, no artificial light to separate night from its quiet stillness.

Sleep was sacred. It wasn't something to fix or hack—it was a ceremony of return. A natural falling-in with the rhythms of the Earth. And what's more, in many ancient cultures, sleep was seen as a sacred time when the soul wandered, the body regenerated, and divine messages were received through dreams.

Today, we live removed from this natural cadence. Our homes remain brightly lit long after dusk, clutter invades our bedrooms, and screens follow us into our most vulnerable hours. But the truth remains: your sleep environment has a profound impact on your ability to fall—and stay—asleep. The space in which you rest either invites your body to exhale, or keeps it alert and on the defensive.

According to sleep researchers, even small environmental disturbances—like temperature shifts, ambient light, or electronic noise—can significantly reduce the quality of our rest, especially in the deeper stages of non-REM sleep where restoration occurs.¹ But even beyond that, the quality of your sleep space communicates something to your subconscious: Am I safe?

When your body doesn't feel safe, or rather, remains alert due to too much light, clutter, or noise, it resists surrender. It stays on guard.

In order to sleep like our ancestors, we must first make space for rest—not just in our schedules, but in the very room in which we lay our heads. So let us reimagine the bedroom not as a utility room, but as a sanctuary. A quiet cave. A temple of restoration. Afterall, creating a nurturing sleep environment is scientifically proven to support more restful sleep. And guess what... It's one of the simplest—and most profound—biohacks. The goal? Energetic simplicity and sensory softness.

Creating the Ideal Space for Sleeping



Temperature

Our ancestors likely slept in cool huts, tents, or caves, surrounded by darkness and the rhythmic lull of the natural world. Sleeping in a cool room mirrors the way our ancestors slept under the stars. Let your space encompass this simplicity. Open a window before bed and let the evening breeze signal to your body that the day is done.

Plus, the body naturally cools as it prepares for sleep, in sync with the setting sun. This drop in core temperature signals to the body that it's time to rest. Science supports this. Research suggests that the optimal temperature for deep sleep lies between 60 and 67 degrees Fahrenheit (15–20°C).² So you'll want to have your bedroom temperature fall within that window over night.

Suggested Nightly Ritual: Open a window in the evening at least 15 minutes before bed, allowing fresh air to circulate and signal to your body that the day is done.



Darkness: The Language of the Pineal Gland

Darkness is one of the most ancient cues for melatonin production. Biologically, we are diurnal creatures. Our internal clocks, or circadian rhythms, are designed to sync with the rise and fall of natural light. When the sun goes down, the pineal gland begins to secrete melatonin—a hormone that lowers body temperature and signals to the body that it's time to rest.

But when we surround ourselves with artificial light—lamps, LED screens, overhead fluorescents—we confuse this ancient system. The body, unsure whether night has truly fallen, delays melatonin release. The result? Shallow, fragmented sleep. Even soft artificial light exposure in the evening can delay this natural cascade. Similarly, even small amounts of light, like a blinking phone or a street lamp outside your window, can suppress melatonin.

Translation? Light pollution is a problem for the nervous system. So, what can you do to protect your body's natural rhythm? Cut down on your screen time in the evenings and ideally, do not have any screen time within an hour before going to bed. Use candlelight after sundown, blue blocker glasses, red light bulbs or low amber lighting in the evening to guide your body into stillness.

As for in your bedroom, many people like blackout curtains, but these can affect your circadian rhythm for rising, as no morning light can get through, signaling to your body a natural time to wake up. Consider using an eye mask instead to create a darker environment for yourself. It will filter the artificial light out, but still allow for those morning rays to peek through. You can go a step further and cover or remove any glowing electronics from your bedroom. And lastly, avoid nightlights unless absolutely necessary (red bulbs are best if needed).



Declutter for Deep Rest

It may seem aesthetic, but the physical state of your bedroom directly affects your mental state. The modern bedroom often doubles as a home office, entertainment center, or storage room. But your subconscious processes everything in your space—even while you sleep. Visual clutter creates mental noise.

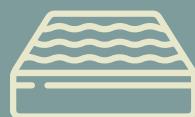
In fact, studies show that visual clutter increases cognitive load and stimulates the stress response.³ When the space around you is chaotic, your internal world often follows. On the contrary, an uncluttered space fosters an uncluttered mind. When your sleep environment is clean, calm, and free from visual noise, your nervous system can relax.

Imagine walking into your bedroom and seeing only what supports your rest: soft bedding, a gentle light, maybe a book or a simple plant. No cords strewn across the floor. No piles of unfolded clothes whispering of undone tasks. This isn't about minimalism for its own sake. It's about clarity, spaciousness, and creating an external environment that signals: You can exhale here.

You might begin this process of simplifying with a question: **What in this room promotes rest—and what doesn't?** Remove just one thing that disrupts your sanctuary. That alone can begin the shift.



Keep it simple. This doesn't have to be an expensive makeover. It's about **intentional simplicity**—returning your bedroom to a space of rest and reflection.



Finding The Proper Mattress, Pillow & Sheets

Many of us have different preferences for the softness or firmness of our mattress and pillows, but finding the perfect match for your body is important. For instance, if you are a side sleeper, you will need a different pillow than a stomach or back sleeper. And let's face it, you won't find a chiropractor out there who recommends sleeping on your stomach.

This can cause neck, back and shoulder pain and even affect your spinal alignment. If you are a stomach sleeper, consider modifying your sleep position. If you absolutely must sleep on your stomach, consider a thin pillow and a firm mattress. As for side and back sleepers, when it comes to pillows, you can find curved pillows to support the natural curve of your neck. In general, a firmer pillow provides good support for side sleepers, while a softer pillow allows back sleepers to maintain the natural curve of their spine.

When it comes to bedding, use breathable natural fibers like cotton or linen, and avoid memory foam mattresses that trap heat. This will help you to maintain that optimal temperature for sleeping and prevent you from waking from overheating—or worse, sleeping through it and waking the next day with a congested head and headache.



Silence is Golden

Again, your nervous system needs a quiet, calming environment that signals that it no longer has to be alert, but instead, should focus on deep, restorative rest. Noise pollution—sirens, traffic, devices—creates a background stressor for the nervous system, even if you're asleep. If total silence isn't possible, opt for:



White noise machines
(rain, wind, fan sounds)

Nature soundscapes
(waves, crickets, forest ambiance)



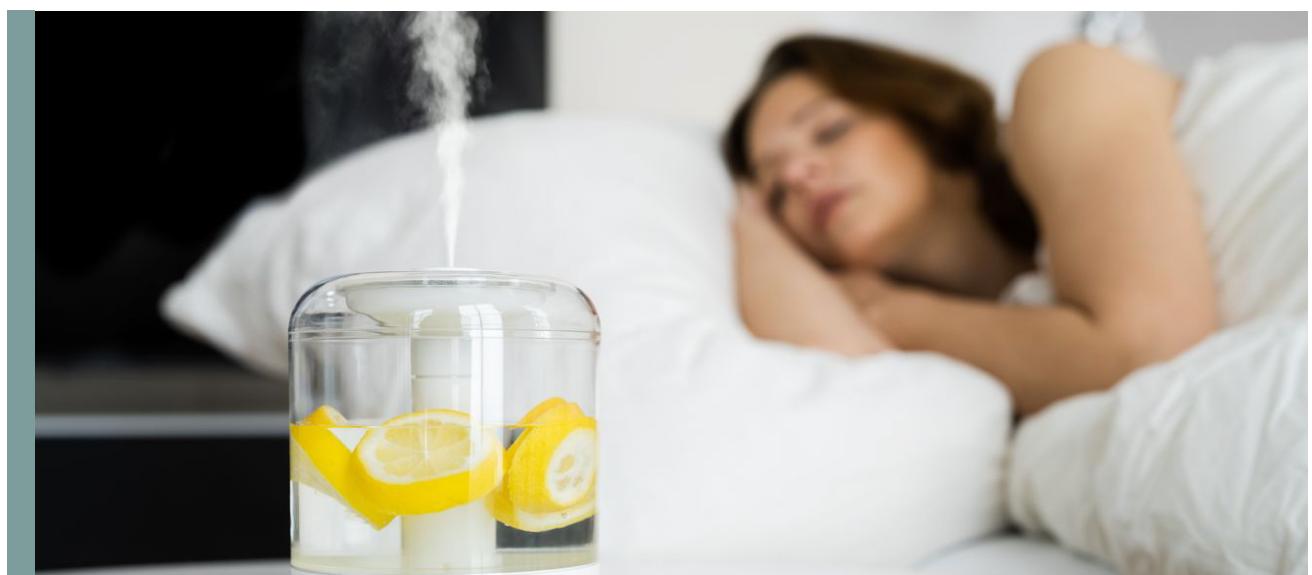
These consistent sounds create a buffer, reducing the startle response and lulling the brain into deeper sleep.



Setting The Mood: Aromatherapy for the Nervous System

Did you know that your sense of smell connects directly to the brain's limbic system? AKA the seat of memory, mood, and instinct. This is why a familiar smell can make you cry, and why aromatherapy has been used in sacred traditions for millennia.

Our ancestors used herbs and resins not just for healing, but to shift consciousness—lavender for peace, sandalwood for grounding, chamomile for calm, etc. The right aromas can gently soothe the nervous system and signal to the body that sleep is near. Below, we've listed some of the most supportive essential oils for sleep.



Essential Oils for Sleep:

Lavender: Lavender is perhaps the most studied of the calming oils. It's been shown to reduce heart rate and blood pressure, lower cortisol, and improve sleep quality in both healthy individuals and those with sleep disorders.⁴ It's also been shown to reduce anxiety.

Chamomile: It's no wonder this soothing herb has ancestral ties to dream work and feminine rituals. Traditionally used to soothe the nervous systems and bring about a sense of calm, chamomile can be used internally and topically as both a tea and an oil.

Sandalwood: Warm, grounding and centering, sandalwood is very supportive to sleep, particularly for anxiety-prone sleepers. In fact, it's known for its ability to soothe the nervous system.

Bergamot: Bergamot is a citrus oil that's often used to promote sleep due to its calming and stress-reducing properties. It can also help to lower heart rate and blood pressure, making it a useful choice for preparing the body for sleep.

Vetiver: Commonly used for massages, vetiver is earthy and stabilizing. It engages the senses and signals to the body that it's safe to relax.

How to Use Them:

Add a few drops to a diffuser 30 minutes before bed.

Use pillow spray or linen mist.

Take a pre-bed ritual bath by adding the essential oils or the plant material itself. They also make herbal bath salts that often include these relaxing herbs.

Rub the diluted oil onto pulse points or on the bottoms of your feet.

Evening Ritual Suggestion: Dim the lights, and rub 1-2 drops of lavender oil onto your palms. Cup your hands over your nose. Inhale slowly, exhale longer. Do this three times while whispering, "I am safe. I am home."

In summary, you can biohack your sleep by making the following adjustments to your sleeping environment:

- » Set your thermostat between 60–67°F at night.
- » Open a window before bed.
- » Remove at least 3 visual distractions or electronic lights from your bedroom.
- » Consider using an eye mask.
- » Invest in the right mattress, pillow and sheets.
- » Diffuse calming essential oils as part of your evening routine.
- » Replace screen time with a candlelit wind-down for at least 15 minutes before bed.

In conclusion, you don't need more things—you need less interruption. Your nervous system knows how to sleep. It simply needs the right conditions to remember. Think of your bedroom as a sacred cave—quiet, dark, cool, safe. This is not about perfection. It is about remembering the forgotten art of preparing the space that holds your dreams. It's about creating your own sacred invitation to rest.

More than hacks or adjustments, what we are cultivating here is a relationship with our environment—one that honors the body's cyclical wisdom and the spirit's deep longing for stillness. You might begin to view your bedroom not just as a room, but as a threshold. A place where waking and dreaming meet. A place where you set down the world each night and rise, reborn each morning.

There is no need for perfection here. Only intention and the gentle practice of returning.

Pause & Reflect:

What does your sleep space currently communicate to your body?

What would a space feel or look like if it were built solely for your rest?

RESETTING Our Clocks and Lights

For millennia, our ancestors rose not to alarms, but to golden beams creeping across the sky, stirring birds into song. The sun was not merely light—it was a guide, a timekeeper, and for many, a god. It told the body when to eat, when to work, and when to rest. It was central to ritual, to farming, and to the breath of every living system.

In modern life, we have severed this ancient tether. We live indoors, behind windows that filter the sun's potency, under synthetic lights that blur the line between night and day. We rise groggy, unsure why we feel off, even after eight hours of sleep. We say we are tired, but what we really are... is misaligned.

To sleep well, we must first wake well—and that begins with the sun.

Your Inner Clock: The Science of Light & Circadian Rhythms

Every cell in your body is guided by a powerful internal clock, known as the circadian rhythm. This roughly 24-hour cycle regulates sleep, digestion, hormone release, cellular repair, brain detoxification and even emotional patterns.⁵ At the center of this system is the suprachiasmatic nucleus (SCN), a tiny region in the brain that responds to light—especially natural sunlight. Essentially, the initiation of all of these processes is dependent upon your exposure to natural light.

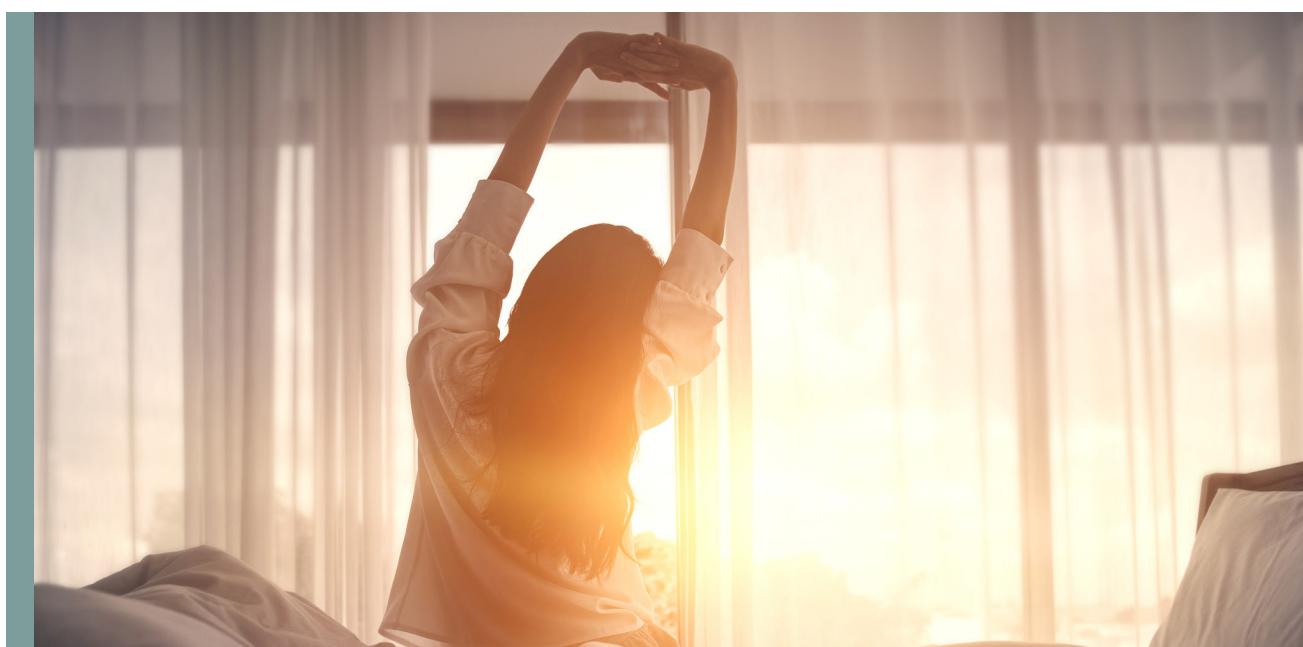
When morning light enters the eyes—particularly the blue spectrum of early sunlight—it triggers a cascade of signals to go off in your body. Your cortisol rises naturally to wake you, your body temperature begins to increase, and melatonin, (the sleep hormone), is suppressed. This is your body's way of saying: The day has begun; let's get going!

The body is always responding to light. Later, as the sun sets and light diminishes, melatonin production resumes, the body cools, and the mind slows. Your body is preparing you for rest. Without this cyclical dance of light, your body's internal rhythm falls out of sync. You may feel tired during the day and wired at night. You may struggle to fall asleep, or wake up feeling unrested. You might crave sugar or caffeine to stay alert, only to feel anxious or jittery. All of these are signs that your circadian rhythm has lost its anchor and your body is in need of greater exposure to natural sunlight throughout the day.

But don't despair, the fix is easy. Science tells us that just 10 to 30 minutes of direct morning sunlight—especially within the first hour of waking—can dramatically improve your sleep quality at night.⁶ It helps reset your internal clock, aligning your body with the natural rhythms of the Earth. And you don't need a mountaintop or perfect weather. Just a patch of morning light.

So what do you say? Can you try stepping outside within 30 minutes of waking? Let the full spectrum of light reach your eyes and skin. The key here is direct exposure—no hats, or sunglasses—you get the idea. (Note: Sunglasses will render this ritual ineffective. The point is to stimulate your retinas so they can signal to the brain that the day has begun.) Even on a cloudy day, the sky emits more powerful circadian cues than any indoor light. So enjoy a few minutes at the start of your day simply sitting, walking, or sipping on some tea beneath the sun's rays. Let this be a daily ritual of recalibration.

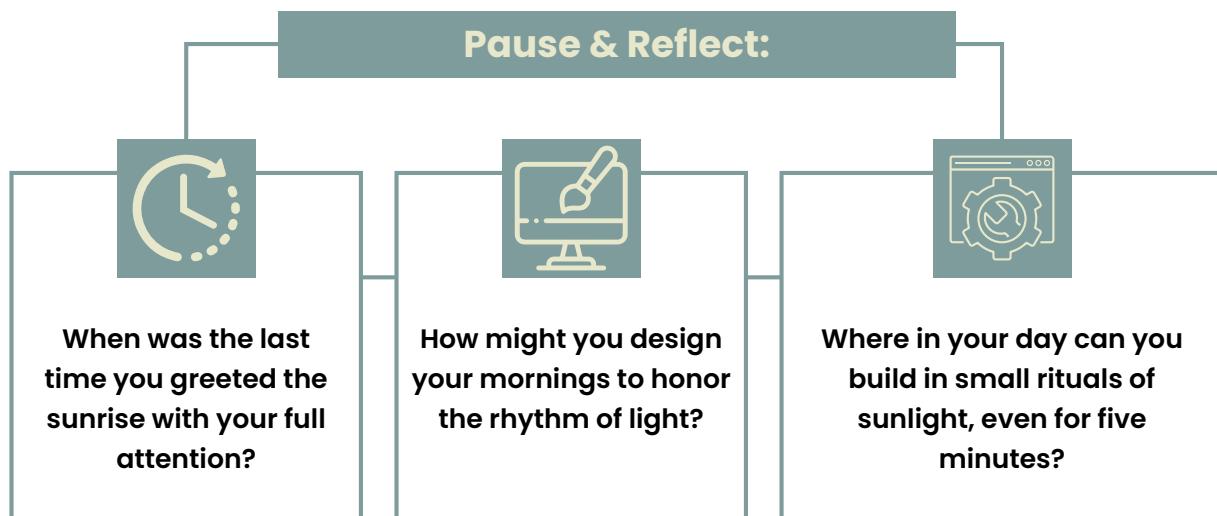
If you work very early or live in a place with harsh winters, you should consider investing in a full-spectrum light box and using it each morning while you journal, stretch, or breathe. These tools, when used with reverence and intention, can help mimic what nature intended. But whenever possible, let the real sun find you. Let it whisper: You are part of this cycle. You belong to the turning of the Earth.



Rewilding the Rhythm of Your Day

Modern schedules often pull us away from our natural design. We sit in cubicles or scroll in dimly lit rooms, detached from the arc of the sun. Our ancestors moved through light and shadow as the day unfolded. They labored under the sun, rested in the heat, and slowed as darkness came.

You don't need to return to a primitive lifestyle to reclaim these rhythms. Just notice them. Pay attention to how the light changes throughout the day. Step outside on your lunch break. Watch the sunset without a screen between you and the sky. These small acts can reawaken the inner compass that guides not just sleep, but your overall well being. Let your day be a conversation with the sun.



MINIMIZING Blue Light Exposure in the Evening

Nightfall once meant surrender. In traditional societies, nightfall initiated true darkness. Aside from the moon and stars, and the occasional fire or candlelight—soft, amber glows that whispered to the body: rest is near—there was little else that brought light. But today, night is no longer a boundary. It's been blurred by the persistent glow of modern life. LED screens shine like false suns in our hands. Overhead lights hum long past twilight. We've traded the wisdom of stars and firelight for pixels and perpetual brightness. And in doing so, we've disrupted one of the most fundamental rhythms our bodies rely on: the natural dimming of light that signals to the body that it's time to sleep.

These days our biology is confused, overstimulated, and restless—and so are we. We've lost our reverence for resting, and the intrigue and mystery of the dark—that liminal space between worlds, which created the space for our intuitive, dreaming states. So how can we reclaim it?

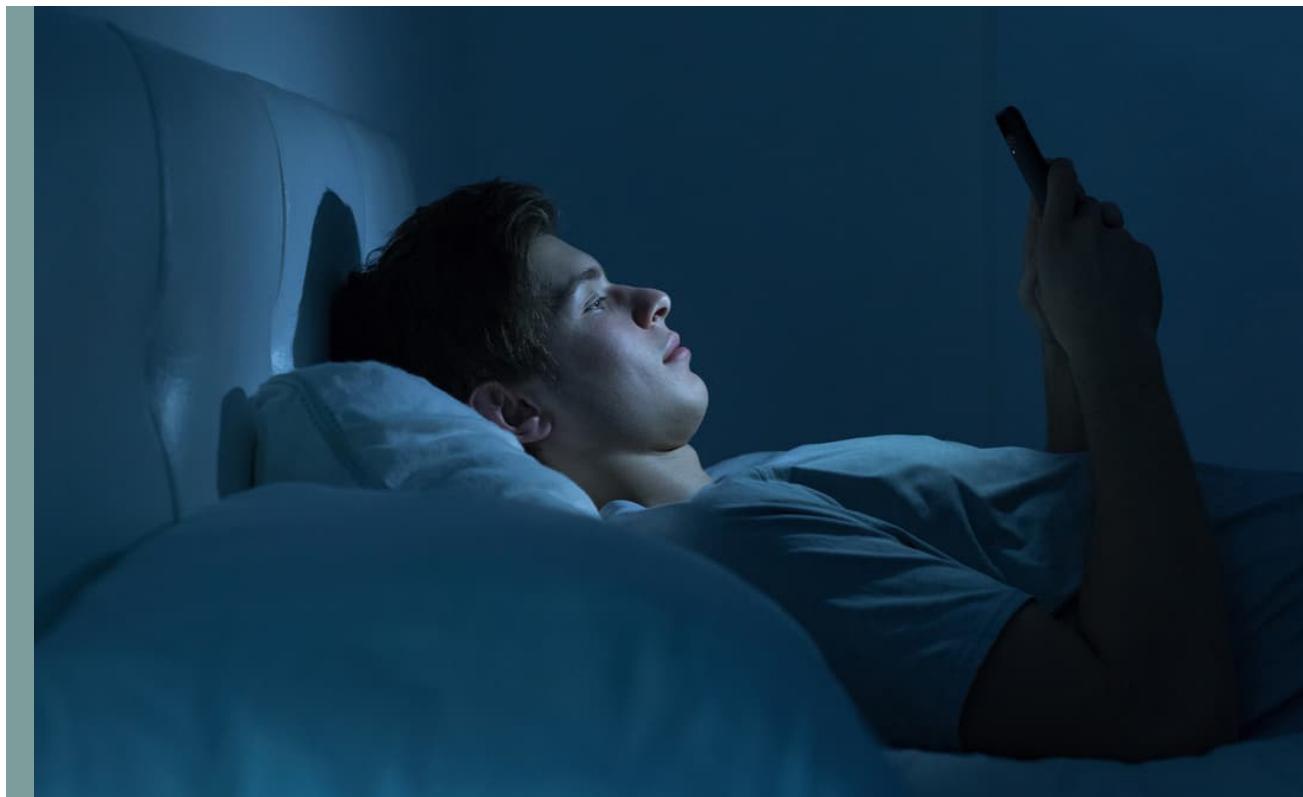
The Blue Light Dilemma

Blue light is part of the visible spectrum emitted naturally by the sun and artificially by digital screens, LEDs, and fluorescent lights. During the day, exposure to blue light is beneficial—it boosts alertness, reaction time, and mood. But as the sun sets, our sensitivity to blue wavelengths increases, and that same light becomes disruptive to our natural cycles with this prolonged exposure.

This is because the body is designed to associate blue light with daytime. When we expose ourselves to it at night—through phones, tablets, TVs, or even bright household lighting—it tells the brain: Stay awake. It's not time to rest yet. In fact, blue light—especially from screens and bright LEDs—has the strongest effect on melatonin suppression. Studies show that even short exposures to blue light in the evening can delay melatonin release by hours, shifting your sleep cycle, reducing deep sleep, delaying sleep onset, and fragmenting rest.⁷

We often try to force ourselves to sleep by sheer will—counting hours instead of syncing rhythms. But sleep is not commanded. It is invited. And exposure to blue light in the evening simply won't allow the nervous system to settle.

And don't get us wrong, this isn't about technology being the enemy—it's about putting some boundaries around our use of it with mindful timing and intention. Of course, modern life doesn't often allow us to live like it's the 1800s. Sometimes you need to work late or unwind with a show. That's okay. The path isn't purity—it's awareness. Along the way, here are some helpful modern tools that can reestablish these ancient rhythms within.



Biohacks to Reduce Blue Light Exposure

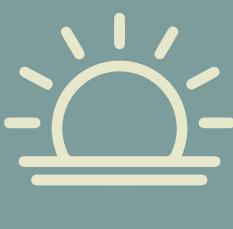


1. Blue Light Blocking Glasses

If screens are a part of your evening routine, consider using blue light-blocking glasses after sundown. These lenses filter out disruptive wavelengths and can help preserve melatonin cycles.⁸ Wear them 1 to 3 hours before bed for optimal use. Choose amber or red lenses that block 90–100% of blue light. And buyer beware: there are lots of fakes out there that claim to have products with this technology, but they don't actually block blue light. So be sure to do your research before choosing a pair.

2. Use Blue Light Filters and Apps

Many phones and laptops now offer "Night Shift" or "Night Mode" settings. You can activate them to reduce blue light output. Specifically, tools like f.lux, Night Shift (iPhone), or Night Mode (Android) shift your screen's color temperature toward warm tones as evening sets in. And when possible, lower your screen brightness manually.



3. Dim the Lights After Sunset

Even in a modern home, you can reclaim the wisdom of darkness. Begin by dimming overhead lights after sunset. Use salt lamps, candles, or warm-toned bulbs (under 2700K) to mirror firelight. Avoid overhead lights when possible. Let your home transition with the sky. Let the light in your home become intentional, not a default.

4. Create a Tech Curfew

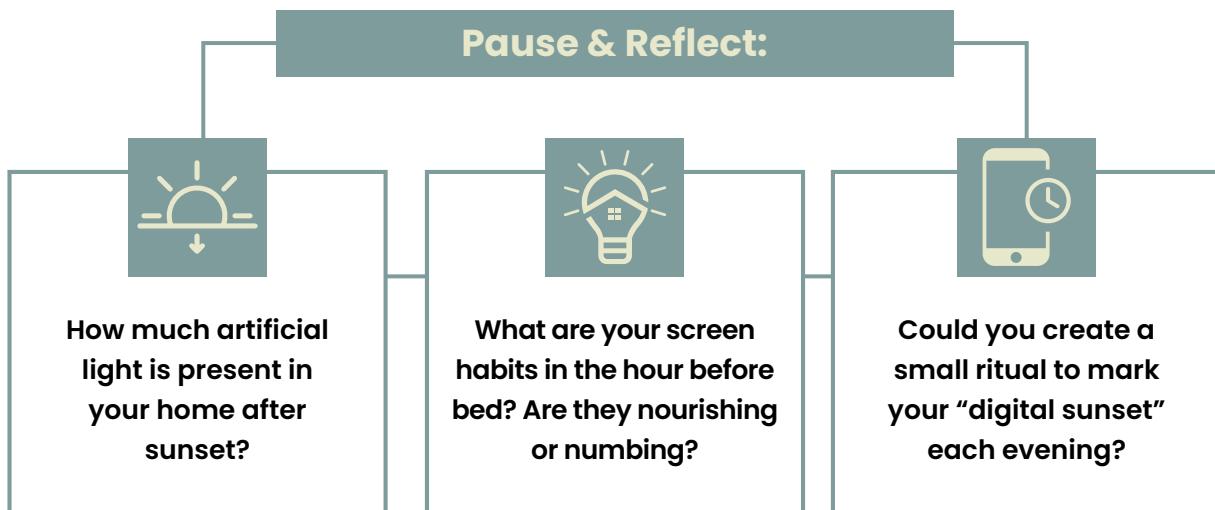
Screens are seductive. They keep us tethered to stimulation—news, social media, endless shows. But the nervous system needs time to slow before it can settle. One of the most powerful shifts you can make is to refrain from using screens for at least 1 hour before bed. Instead, choose rituals that soothe and signal your nervous system to unwind, like journaling, reading, quiet reflection, sitting with tea and listening to soft music, or simply breathing in silence.



More important than any gadget is your intention. Ask yourself, are you choosing light that serves your sleep, or are you defaulting to stimulation out of habit or fatigue?

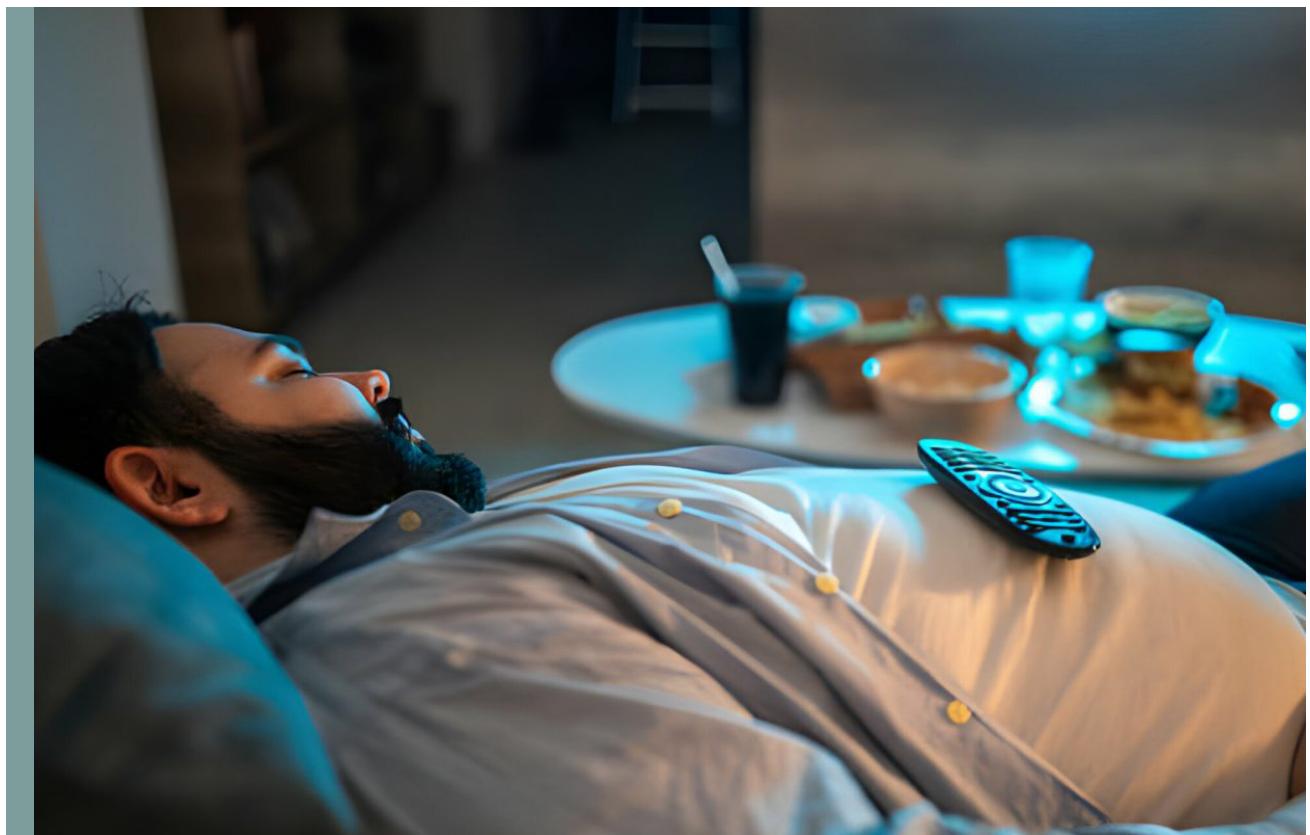
Let There Be (Less) Light

In the creation myths of many cultures, light comes first. But always, inevitably, darkness follows—not as a punishment, but as a balancing force. One cannot exist without the other. Your evening habits are more than just practical—they are symbolic. They reflect whether you are willing to descend, to let go, to enter the fertile stillness of the night. In reducing light, you are not depriving yourself—you are returning to something wiser, and making space for your nervous system to reset, and your dreams to come through.



NUTRITION & SLEEP:

The Dialogue Between The Gut and The Moon



Eating with reverence is one of the oldest forms of biohacking. Long before we tracked macronutrients or counted calories, food was medicine. It was seasonal, intentional, and deeply woven into the rhythms of the Earth. The time of day we ate, what we ate, and how we ate were all part of nature's wisdom.

This is because our ancestors understood that what we eat determines not only our strength, but our quality of sleep. They may not have had clinical trials, but they knew from wisdom passed orally: certain foods calmed the nerves, softened the mind, and prepared the body to surrender. Warm milk, bitter roots, fragrant herbs, and broths simmered at dusk—there was a reverence to how evening meals were chosen and shared.

Today, the way we nourish ourselves often reflects our disconnection from the food we're eating. We often eat fast and/or late, and may consume processed food—asking our bodies to rest with full bellies and frayed nerves. The solution is simple. Restoring the relationship between sleep and nutrition requires presence, rhythm, and a return to simplicity.

The Gut-Brain-Sleep Axis

Modern science has now confirmed what ancient cultures intuited: the gut and the brain are intimately linked. In fact, the enteric nervous system, often called “the second brain,” houses over 500 million neurons and produces 90% of the body’s serotonin—a neurotransmitter that influences both mood and sleep.⁹

The gut also plays a crucial role in melatonin production. That’s right; melatonin is made in the brain’s pineal gland, but it’s also produced in the digestive tract, influenced by what we eat and when we eat it. That means that our microbiome, or the trillions of bacteria that live in our guts, can either support or hinder our sleep based on the foods we provide them.

The takeaway? *Sleep begins in the belly.*

Let your meals honor the rhythm of the day. Let your body feel safe and supported as the night approaches. Because in the quiet moments before sleep, the body begins its repair—hormones recalibrate, cells renew, the brain prunes and cleanses itself. But in order for these nighttime miracles to unfold, the body must first be nourished—not just fed, but deeply supported. This means that there is an element of mindfulness, presence, and consciousness that we can bring to our mealtimes.

After all, sleep is not a switch. It’s a conversation—and food is one of the first languages the body listens to. As our ancestors have long known, there are certain nutrients that have been shown to encourage deeper, more restful sleep by supporting neurotransmitter balance, calming the nervous system, or aiding in melatonin synthesis. The best part? They don’t override your biology; they harmonize with it. Below, we’ve put together a list of some of the best sleep-lulling foods for the body.



Magnesium-Rich Foods

Known as the “relaxation mineral,” magnesium helps to regulate cortisol (the stress hormone), supports muscle relaxation, supports the production of melatonin, and promotes GABA activity, (a calming neurotransmitter), which quiets the nervous system.¹⁰

- Dark leafy greens like spinach, kale and Swiss chard
- Pumpkin seeds, chia seeds, flax seeds, almonds, Brazil nuts, and cashews
- Fruits like avocados, bananas and dried apricots
- Legumes like black beans, lentils and chickpeas
- Whole grains like quinoa, brown rice and oats

Tryptophan-Rich Foods

Tryptophan is an essential amino acid used to produce serotonin and melatonin. The following foods contain high levels of tryptophan, contribute to tryptophan intake, and/or help to elevate tryptophan levels in the body:

- Bananas, oats, quinoa
- Pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, chia seeds, walnuts, cashews, sesame seeds and butternut squash seeds
- Sea vegetables like kelp, seaweed, and spirulina
- Soy products like tofu, edamame, soy milk
- Leafy greens like spinach
- Potatoes, cauliflower, cucumbers and mushrooms

To make the most of these nutrients, try combining some of the above foods with healthy carbohydrates, which help tryptophan cross the blood-brain barrier.

Complex Carbohydrates

Whole grains and starchy vegetables support tryptophan uptake into the brain and help stabilize blood sugar overnight. Slow-burning carbs (like sweet potatoes, brown rice, and legumes) can support sleep by helping tryptophan do its work and promoting a sense of satiety.

Warm, Grounding Meals

Hearty soups, root vegetables, and slow-cooked stews provide more than nutrition—they signal to the body that it's time to wind down. These warm foods mirror the descending energy of the evening.

Snacking Tip

A small, grounding snack 1–2 hours before bed, like a banana with almond butter or warm oats with honey, can help to soothe the system, especially for those who wake in the night due to low blood sugar.

Foods to Avoid When the Sun Goes Down

Not all food is friendly to sleep—especially when consumed late. Below is a list of foods that should be avoided before bed.

Caffeine

This is an obvious one, but worth repeating. Even if you don't feel wired after your afternoon latte, caffeine has a half-life of about 6 hours. That means it's still in your system well into the evening, potentially blocking adenosine (the sleep pressure chemical) and delaying deep sleep. Consider cutting off caffeine by 2 p.m., or even noon if you're particularly sensitive.

Alcohol

Though a glass of wine might help you fall asleep faster, it actually disrupts the architecture of your sleep cycle, particularly affecting REM sleep. It can also cause blood sugar crashes and nighttime wakings.¹⁰ Sleep after drinking is not true rest—it's sedation.

High-Sugar or Ultra-Processed Foods

These spike blood sugar, which then crashes, potentially waking you up in the night. They also cause inflammation and can disrupt gut bacteria, further hindering your quality of sleep.

Heavy or Spicy Meals Close to Bedtime

A large, greasy dinner late in the evening forces your digestive system to keep working while your body is trying to rest. This can lead to heartburn, discomfort, and fragmented sleep, creating nighttime restlessness or vivid dreams.

The Timing of Nourishment

When we eat matters almost as much as what we eat. Our digestive fire is strongest during the day—another reflection of our alignment with the sun. In the Ayurvedic tradition, lunch is the main meal because it coincides with peak digestive energy. Modern research supports this: late-night eating has been linked to poor sleep, disrupted glucose metabolism, and altered circadian rhythms.¹²

If you are a late night diner, try shifting dinner earlier, ideally allowing 2–3 hours to pass after eating before bedtime. Let eating become part of your evening wind-down—not a final stimulation before the descent into sleep.

The Ritual of Your Evening Meal

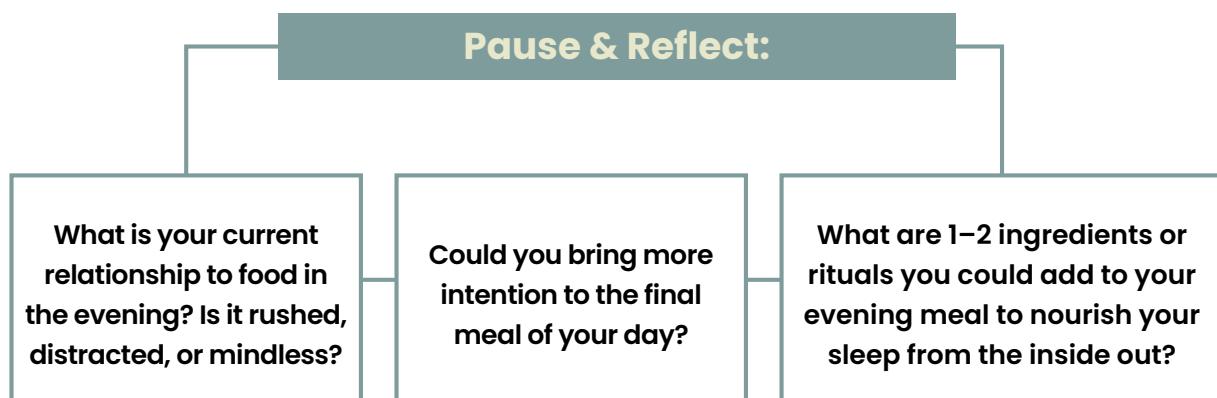
In many traditional societies, dinner was a ceremony. It brought people together. It was slow, intentional, full of gratitude. There was reverence in the way food was prepared and received.

You can bring that same reverence into your home and meals. Below are some suggestions to incorporate into your evening meal time:

- Light a candle or dim the lights before taking your seat at the dinner table
- Eat without screens
- Chew slowly, honoring each bite

Give thanks—not only for the food, but for the chance to slow down. You can also thank the food itself—noting each individual ingredient and the magnificent Earth's bounty, as well as whomever prepared and/or grew the food.

This isn't about perfection. It's about presence. Let your evening meals become a transition—not just from day to night, but from doing to being.



HERBAL ALLIES: Teas, Tinctures, & Adaptogens for Deep Rest



Plants have been humanity's quiet allies for millennia. Our ancestors turned to them not just for healing, but for spiritual connection. Herbs were brewed in moonlit teas, burned in evening rituals, and whispered to in sacred ceremony. The ancient practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine, Ayurveda, and Indigenous tribes have long known what modern studies are only now confirming: herbs can lower cortisol, increase GABA activity in the brain, and improve sleep quality without creating dependence or grogginess.¹³ They work subtly, nudging the nervous system toward stillness.



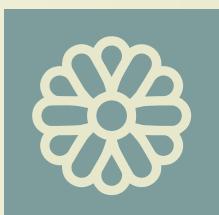
In today's world, herbal sleep support is a gentle way to come back into harmony—an act of trust in the wisdom of nature. Herbal teas are plant medicine in its gentlest form. Unlike pharmaceutical sleep aids that override natural processes, these infusions support the body's innate ability to rest. They invite sleep, rather than impose it. Below, we've curated a list of some of our favorite herbs for sleep.

Herbs That Cradle You to Sleep

Here are some of the most time-honored herbal allies for sleep—each a quiet caretaker, gently guiding you toward rest.

Chamomile

Perhaps the most famous bedtime tea, chamomile contains apigenin, a compound that binds to GABA receptors in the brain, promoting relaxation and reducing anxiety.¹⁴ Its daisy-like blossoms have been used for thousands of years in Egyptian, Greek, and Roman traditions.



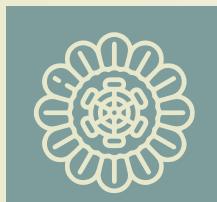
Valerian Root

Known as “nature’s Valium,” valerian root is one of the strongest natural sedatives. It enhances GABA signaling and helps you fall asleep faster.¹⁵ Its earthy, musky taste can be mellowed by blending it with lighter herbs like lemon balm or mint.



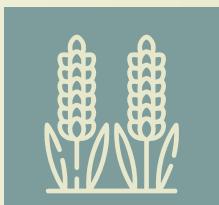
Lemon Balm

A member of the mint family, lemon balm is a gentle calming herb that improves mood, eases restlessness, and has mild sedative properties. It’s especially helpful for those whose minds race at bedtime.



Passionflower

This vine produces intricate, almost otherworldly blooms—and its leaves and flowers calm the mind and ease anxiety. It’s particularly helpful for those who wake in the middle of the night due to mental tension.¹⁶



Lavender

While often used as an essential oil, lavender also makes a fragrant, soothing tea. It can reduce heart rate and blood pressure, preparing both body and mind for rest. Lavender is highly aromatic, so a little bit goes a long way when making a tea with it. We’re talking just a few flower buds in a quart of water. If you make it too strong, you can always dilute it with more water.

You can also find many sleep-promoting herbal blends that combine these herbs with other gentle allies like skullcap, passion vine, California poppy, hibiscus, lemongrass, blue cornflower, peppermint and more. Sip them 30 to 60 minutes before bed as part of an intentional winding-down ritual.

Creating a Tea Ritual

There was a time when the preparation of tea was an act of reverence. Something ceremonial, sacred, and slow. In many cultures, it still is. And there's a reason for that. Connecting with plants in a slow, mindful, present, and dedicated way carries potent medicine.

But you don't have to study under the tea masters of Japan to create your own ritual. The plants are here to connect with us all. A simple mug of lemon balm steeped with care can be a form of prayer. Let your tea become a threshold, a gentle signal to your body that the waking day is over. And remember, you are not just drinking herbs. You are communing with the wisdom of plants—some of which have supported humans to rest for over 3,000 years!

So, when you're preparing and enjoying your tea, keep the following in mind:

- Brew your tea mindfully: Set your phone aside, boil the water slowly, watch the steam rise.
- (Do not boil the herbs, instead, pour the boiling water over the herbs and let them steep, removed from the stove.)
- Let the tea infuse for at least 20 minutes.
- Sip slowly, without a screen. Hold the cup with both hands. Sip in silence or prayer. See if you can connect to the herb you're drinking. Thank it for its medicine.
- Feel the warmth move through your chest and belly.
- Use this moment to breathe, journal, or simply be.

Adaptogens: Earth's Tonic for Modern Stress

While herbal teas tend to offer immediate calm, adaptogenic herbs work over time to restore balance—especially for those whose insomnia stems from burnout, overstimulation, or chronically high cortisol.

Adaptogens are a class of plants that help the body “adapt” to physical, emotional, and environmental stressors. They don't sedate you—they strengthen your resilience. And when taken daily, they can regulate your energy during the day and support more restorative sleep at night. Unlike coffee, which stimulates you all at once and later results in afternoon sluggishness, adaptogens give you sustained, consistent energy.

A Few Beloved Adaptogens for Sleep & Stress Include:

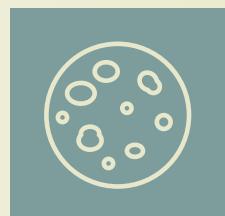


Ashwagandha

A revered Ayurvedic herb, ashwagandha supports the adrenal glands, reduces cortisol, and promotes relaxation without drowsiness.¹⁷ It's especially helpful for those who feel wired but tired.

Rhodiola Rosea

Best taken in the morning, rhodiola sharpens mental clarity and supports physical stamina. When energy is stable during the day, the body naturally rests better at night. Rhodiola can bring a real kick in the pants, so if you're sensitive, start slow. It also has a strong flavor and can be drying, so water it down if you need to or take it in combination with a mucilaginous herb like marshmallow root.



Reishi Mushroom

Known as the "mushroom of immortality" in traditional Chinese medicine, reishi is a calming adaptogen that supports the nervous system, the immune system, and deep rest. It's best taken as a tea or tincture in the evening. A word to the wise: If you're buying any mushroom tincture, you'll want to make sure that it includes mushroom extract and was double extracted in water and in alcohol. There are so many mushroom derived supplements on the market and not all of them are created so that they'll actually work. When it comes to mushrooms, proper extraction is key!

Holy Basil (Tulsi)

Both a sacred and medicinal plant in the ancient Indian Ayurvedic tradition, tulsi, or holy basil calms the mind, balances blood sugar, and has a light uplifting effect—perfect for those with anxiety-based insomnia. It's incredibly tasty too!



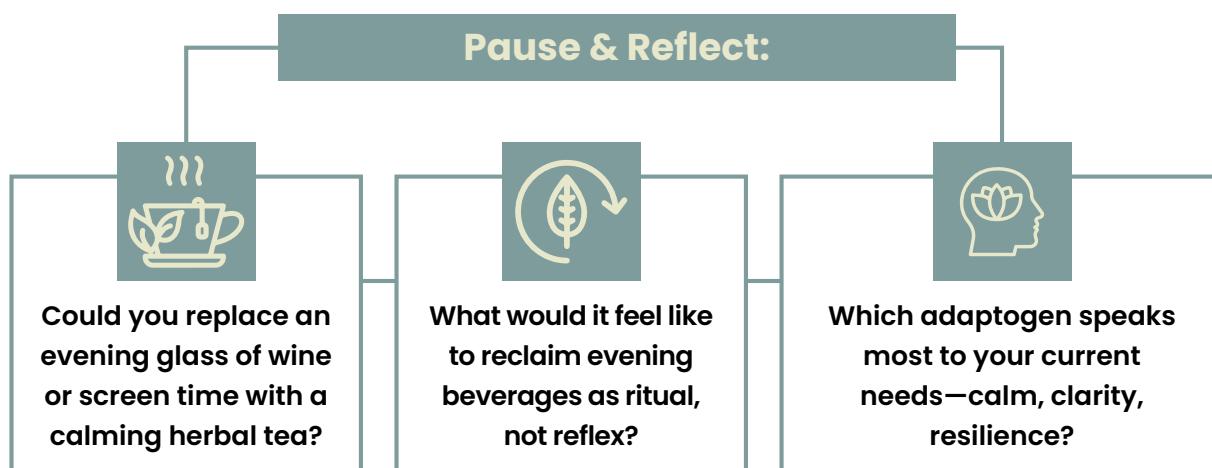
How and When to Work with These Herbal Allies

Herbal Teas: Make a ritual out of steeping your tea. Take a deep breath and call upon the spirit of the herb you'll be working with. Introduce yourself and ask to meet the plant spirit. Ask for its help and extend your gratitude. If you work with any smudging herbs, you can incorporate those, too (palo santo, sweet grass, sage, etc.) You can also infuse your tea overnight to prepare for the next day. Welcome its warming, grounding energy into your body. Use loose leaf teas if possible for stronger medicinal properties. Avoid adding sugar if you can—honey, if needed, should be minimal. These teas can be enjoyed any time, but if you are creating a blend to specifically support you with getting restful sleep, you'll want to make an evening ritual out of brewing and consuming your tea either an hour or 30 minutes before bedtime.

Adaptogens: Adaptogens are most effective if taken consistently over several weeks. Many come in powder, capsule, or tincture form. They are not quick fixes, but long-term allies. You can take them like a supplement or add the tincture or powders to daily smoothies. You can take them in the morning or in the afternoon as they adapt to your body's needs.

As for quantities for maximum effectiveness, this will vary depending on the herb or adaptogen and your body's unique needs. It's best to inquire with a naturopath, herbalist or other practitioner who can tailor the herbs and doses to your needs. In general, herbs like chamomile, holy basil, reishi, lemon balm, passion vine and passionflower tend to be softer, gentler herbs handled well by most adults. Aromatic herbs like holy basil, lemon balm and lavender are going to require less herb material since their flavor is strong. Herbs like valerian root can be very strong and should be used mindfully. California Poppy is generally gentle, but some may react strongly to it, so start with a small dose and build from there.

Above all, it's important to listen to your body. These herbs are gentle, but powerful—and not every plant is right for every person. Start with one, use it consistently, and pay attention to how you feel. If it doesn't make you feel good, discontinue use immediately. Another suggestion is not to choose an herb based on its description or what you think it might do for you. Rather, see if you can let your intuition lead and let the plant come to you. Which herb is calling to you?



MOVEMENT AND STILLNESS: How the Body Prepares for Sleep



Before sleep was a struggle, it was a cycle. Long before we tracked our steps with smartwatches or enrolled in gym memberships, life was full of movement. Our ancestors walked miles each day—gathering, planting, carrying children, tending fire. Movement was natural, woven into the very rhythm of survival. They engaged in steady, meaningful activity throughout the day. By the time darkness fell, their bodies had already begun the sacred descent into rest.

Today, many of us are disconnected from that rhythm. Rather, we live in a paradox: our minds are overstimulated, while our bodies are under-moved. We sit for too long. When we do make time for our workouts, we move in intense bursts and then crash. The body, unsure if it's preparing for a sprint or a still night, holds on to tension—tension in our shoulders earned from long hours at a desk. And yet, we feel too exhausted to stretch or walk. This disconnection from embodied living impacts every part of our well-being—especially our sleep. True rest requires more than a tired mind—it requires a body that has been fully lived in, and then gently unwound.

But here's the good news: we don't need to replicate a hunter-gatherer lifestyle to reclaim our circadian rhythm. Gentle, intentional movement—especially when practiced consistently—can be a powerful natural biohack for deep, restorative sleep.

Why Movement Matters for Sleep

Movement, particularly in the form of daily exercise, plays a vital role in regulating sleep-wake cycles. Exercise does more than tire the muscles—it regulates hormones, reduces anxiety, and strengthens the architecture of your sleep. It also:

- **Increases the time spent in deep, restorative sleep**, also known as slow-wave sleep, (the most restorative phase of the sleep cycle¹⁹), especially if it's consistent and performed earlier in the day.
- **Lowers evening cortisol levels thus reducing stress**, while boosting endorphins and serotonin, which in turn promote healthy melatonin production later in the evening.
- Helps **regulate body temperature**, and the post-exercise drop in core temperature can signal to the body to sleep more deeply.
- **Balances circadian rhythms**, or the internal clock that tells us when to feel awake and when to feel sleepy.

It's no surprise then that studies have shown that people who engage in regular physical activity fall asleep faster, sleep more deeply, and wake up feeling more refreshed.²⁰ Even light movement, like walking or stretching, can help. Studies also show that moderate-intensity exercise can reduce symptoms of insomnia. But timing matters.

When You Move Matters

Our bodies are cyclical—just like the Earth. When we honor these patterns, we sleep better. Here's how to work with your natural rhythm:

- **Morning and midday movement**, (especially outdoors): Ideal for energizing and resetting your biological clock—(especially if combined with sunlight) AKA regulating your circadian rhythm. Sunlight exposure combined with activity helps your body produce serotonin, which later converts to melatonin at night. This combo stabilizes mood and primes the body for sleep later.

- **Afternoon workouts:** Great for strength training or more vigorous movement. Body temperature and muscle strength naturally peak in the late afternoon, making it an optimal time for performance.

- **Evening exercise:** Choose gentle, restorative practices only. Intense workouts close to bedtime can elevate adrenaline, body temperature and cortisol, making it harder to wind down. Below, we've included some suggestions for gentle movement and evening practices that encourage restful sleep.

Gentle Movement Practices Before Bed

In the hour before sleep, the nervous system begins shifting into its parasympathetic state—the mode responsible for rest, digestion, and repair. We can support this shift with slow, intentional movement that invites the body to let go.

Restorative Yoga or Yin Yoga

These practices use passive, long-held poses with deep breathing. They release muscular tension, decompress the spine, slow the heart rate, lengthen the breath and quiet the mind. Even just 10 to 15 minutes of restorative yoga can significantly impact the quality of your sleep. Below are some specific poses that you can try.

Child's Pose: Rest your forehead on the Earth. Let your back widen, your big toes touch, and

- your knees spread as wide as is comfortable. Breathe into any points of tension and continue to deepen the pose as you are able.

Seated Forward Fold: This pose calms the nervous system and stretches the spine. Breathe

- into any points of tension and deepen the pose as you are able.

Supine Twist: This pose detoxifies and releases the low back. Twist as deeply as feels

- comfortable. You want to feel the stretch but not be in discomfort. Breathe into the twist. Hold for as long as feels good and then switch sides.

Legs Up the Wall: This is a great pose to practice before bed as it reduces blood pressure,

- soothes the heart, and drains tension from tired legs.

Gentle Stretching

Target the hips, hamstrings, shoulders, and neck—areas where most people carry the stress of the day. As the body softens, so does the mind.

QiGong or Tai Chi

These ancient Chinese practices are rooted in energy flow, and offer meditative motion that aligns the body's rhythms with those of the Earth. Blending slow, flowing movements with focused breath, these practices are deeply calming and often described as moving meditations. Studies show that regular practice of QiGong or Tai Chi improves both mental clarity and sleep efficiency.²¹

Walking Meditation

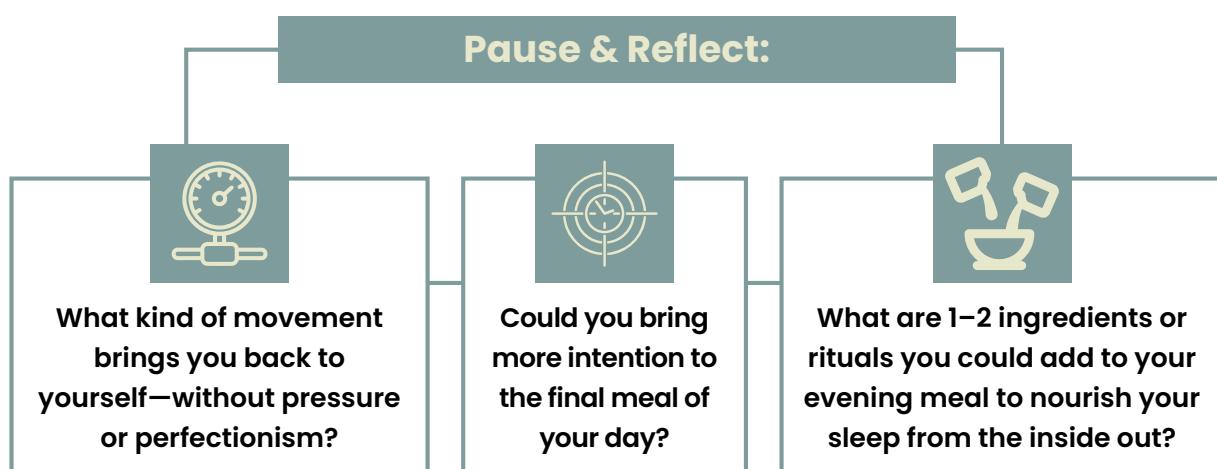
If the mind feels too busy to sit, walk slowly in a quiet space or through nature—barefoot if possible. Feel the ground. Breathe. Let your thoughts drift like clouds. Let walking become your lullaby.

It's easy to forget that we are not separate from the Earth's rhythms. The sun rises and so do we. The sun sets and we, too, are meant to slow down. Movement connects us back to this natural ebb and flow of energy. It draws us out of our heads and into our bodies, realigning us with our heart's compass.

Our ancestors knew this intuitively. They walked in rhythm with the moon and the wind. They stretched by the fire. They didn't need fitness trackers—they moved in response to life, and they slept when the work was done. In modern life, we must recreate these rituals for ourselves. Not as chores, but as sacred returns to the body.

Suggested Evening Movement Rituals (10–15 Minutes):

- Choose one of the slow movement practices or stretches recommended above.
- When your stretching or movement feels complete, close your practice with 5 deep belly breaths, inhaling for 4 counts, exhaling for 6. Whisper a word of gratitude.



THE INNER LANDSCAPE:

Stress, Stillness & Emotional Wellness



In the modern world, stress is constant and often invisible. We carry it in our breath, our muscles, and our thoughts. We are constantly surrounded by noise, both external and internal. Our minds are always stimulated, but rarely soothed. Our nervous systems are stretched thin by deadlines, devices, unresolved emotions, and the relentless pace of modern life. We go to bed with to-do lists echoing in our minds and wake with tension already sitting in our shoulders.

But for our ancestors, the end of the day was different. It was a quiet time of reflection, gratitude, storytelling, and prayer. There was space to exhale and time to integrate. This sacred pause between activity and sleep is now missing—and it may be the very reason many of us cannot truly rest.



The Stress-Sleep Connection

Stress isn't just mental; it's biochemical. The stress we carry activates the sympathetic nervous system—our fight-or-flight mode. In this state, the body increases heart rate and alertness, and releases the hormones cortisol and adrenaline.²² These hormones are vital in times of danger—but when they're elevated chronically, they interfere with melatonin production, disrupt your sleep cycle, and keep you in a state of internal vigilance. It's like trying to sleep while your inner guard is still on duty.

Chronic, unchecked stress also increases sleep fragmentation (waking often), and leads to racing thoughts, hypervigilance, emotional restlessness, trouble falling asleep, shallow, unrefreshing sleep and early morning waking with anxiety. And over time, poor sleep increases stress levels further, creating a feedback loop that must be lovingly interrupted.

Sleep asks us to surrender, to let go, to trust that the world can carry on without us for a few hours while we slip into the mystery of dreams. To do that, we must first make space—for stillness, for breath, for feeling. If we do not create space to discharge and soothe the nervous system before bed, we bring the day's unfinished energy into the night.

In this chapter, we'll not only touch on best practices for falling asleep, but also how to honor what the day brought, what it took, and what you need to restore before beginning again. Let's explore some incredible biohacking techniques for releasing stress and preparing the body to catch some restful ZZZs.

The Power of Breath

Breath is the most accessible and ancient tool for calming the body. Your breath is always with you. And it may be the single most powerful tool you have to calm your nervous system. When you breathe slowly and deeply, especially into the belly, you activate the parasympathetic nervous system, or the “rest and digest” state. It tells your body: You are safe. You can let go now.

Below are three timeless breath techniques that help the body to relax into safety.

The 4-7-8 Breathing Technique

Developed by Dr. Andrew Weil and rooted in yogic pranayama, this pattern slows the heart rate and quiets the mind. To do it, inhale through the nose for 4 seconds, hold your breath for 7 seconds, and then exhale slowly through the mouth for 8 seconds. Repeat for 4–8 cycles.

Box Breathing (Navy SEAL Technique)

This technique is used by elite forces and civilian meditators alike. With its structured rhythm, it's sure to soothe your anxiety. To do it, inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, exhale for 4 seconds, and then hold again for 4 seconds. Repeat for several minutes or until you feel relaxed.

Deep Belly Breathing (Diaphragmatic)

Place one hand on your belly and one on your chest. Breathe so that only the belly hand rises. This breath grounds your awareness in the body, signals the nervous system to settle, and resets any tension.

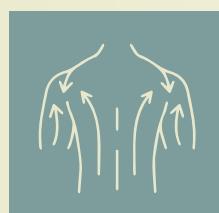
Mindfulness & Meditation: Returning to Now

Sleep belongs to the present moment. But anxiety lives in the future, and regret lives in the past. Meditation trains the mind to come home—to now so that rest becomes possible. Mindfulness and meditation are great ways to prepare the body, mind and spirit for sleep. Guided meditations can be especially helpful for those who are new to meditation. You might explore the following types of guided meditations (which can often be found for free on YouTube, or across a wide variety of apps):

- **Body scans** that move attention gently through each part of the body
- **Visualization**, such as imagining a safe forest or a warm candlelight glow

- Heart Meditation:** Place one hand on your chest and the other on your belly. Close your eyes. Inhale deeply and imagine your heart opening like a flower. Exhale slowly, releasing tension.
- Silently repeat: I am safe. I am loved. I am at peace. (This isn't a technique. It's a remembrance, a coming home to the truth that you are not just a body trying to sleep, but a soul longing to rest.)

Did you know that just five minutes of focused presence can change your brain chemistry? Plus, studies show that meditation improves both sleep quality and sleep latency (the time it takes to fall asleep).²³ Don't worry; you don't have to be a monk. You simply have to show up for yourself.



Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

This simple technique involves tensing and relaxing each major muscle group from head to toe. By doing so, you create contrast—feeling the difference between effort and ease. It's ideal for those whose bodies feel tight or jittery before bed.

Start at your toes. Tense them for 5 seconds, then release.

Move upward—calves, thighs, hips, stomach, hands, arms, shoulders, face.

After completing your whole body, notice the soft stillness that follows. How do you feel?



Quiet Reflection: What's Really Keeping You Awake?

Sometimes, poor sleep is a messenger. Beneath the surface of sleeplessness lies unspoken emotion: grief, fear, overwhelm, disappointment. If left unacknowledged, these feelings find their way into our bodies where they take up residence. Sleep is not just about physical rest—it is also a process of emotional digestion. And if we haven't chewed on the day's experiences, our minds may stay restless all night.

Consider a nightly ritual of emotional processing and release:

Journaling a few lines:
What am I holding that's heavy? What can I set down tonight?

Asking gently: What needs my attention before I close my eyes?

Honoring your heart, even if it doesn't feel "fixed." Naming is powerful.



The Restoration of Emotional Wellness

True sleep cannot be forced. It arises when your whole being feels safe enough to let go. So often, we try to sedate or override our stress. But what if instead, we met it with tenderness? What if we saw insomnia as a call inward, not just a symptom to silence? Stress is not just something to manage. It is something to understand, metabolize, and release—through the breath, through awareness and through sacred slowness.

Pause & Reflect:



What emotions are asking for your attention right now?



Could stress be your body's way of protecting you—and your breath the way to release it?



What might happen if you ended each day with a moment of connection to your heart?

EARTH'S GENTLE HELPERS:

Natural Sleep Aids & Supplements



In a world that glorifies quick fixes, we often overlook the wisdom of slow medicine. Our ancestors didn't rely on pharmaceutical interventions to rest—they turned to the Earth, to the rhythm of their own bodies, and to the quiet guidance of plants and minerals. Natural sleep aids aren't about knocking you out or overriding your system. They are gentle allies—whispers rather than shouts—helping guide you back to a more natural state of rest.

Melatonin: The Sleep Messenger

Melatonin is not a drug or a sedative. It is a signal, a natural hormone that your pineal gland produces in response to darkness.²⁴ It signals that it's time to slow down, cool off, and sleep. In a healthy rhythm, melatonin rises at night and falls with the morning light. But artificial lighting, erratic schedules, screens, and stress disrupt its flow—especially in those who travel often, work night shifts, or suffer from circadian rhythm disorders. Melatonin supplements can help reset your internal clock, especially during times of travel (jetlag), shift work, or re-establishing a rhythm after long-term insomnia.

Use it with care: Start with low doses (0.3–1 mg). Higher isn't always better. Low doses are often more effective than high doses (3+ mg), which may cause grogginess or vivid dreams.²⁵ Take it 30 to 60 minutes before bed, ideally in a dark environment to reinforce its effects. Make sure you are ready for bed once you take it, because overriding the sleepiness it will make you feel to "keep going" may render it ineffective once you're finally ready for bed.

It is best used as a short-term aid to reset the internal clock—like after traveling or during times of transition. Overuse can lead to dependency or hormone imbalance. Melatonin is best seen as a bridge—not a crutch—while you build lasting sleep habits.

Magnesium: The Mineral of Stillness

Magnesium is involved in over 300 bodily processes, and nearly all of them affect your ability to rest. It relaxes muscles, supports heart rhythm, and quiets the nervous system. It helps regulate GABA, the calming neurotransmitter that prepares the brain for sleep, and thus reduces twitching or restlessness. It also reduces cortisol, and may reduce anxiety-related sleep disturbances. Many people today are deficient in magnesium due to depleted soils, processed foods, and chronic stress. Studies show that low magnesium levels have been linked to insomnia, especially in older adults.²⁶

As mentioned earlier, natural sources of magnesium include leafy greens, seeds, legumes, and dark chocolate. When it comes to magnesium supplement options for sleep support, Magnesium glycinate, magnesium citrate or magnesium threonate are ideal. You can also find topical magnesium oils and add them to an epsom salt bath before bed. A warm bath with magnesium salts can be a deeply restorative ritual, especially when paired with candlelight and silence.



L-Theanine: An Amino Acid for Calm

L-Theanine is a naturally occurring amino acid found in green tea that promotes alpha brain waves, or those associated with calm, relaxed, meditative states. It promotes relaxation without sedation, making it a gentle yet effective aid for better sleep. It works by increasing levels of calming brain chemicals like GABA, serotonin, and dopamine, while also reducing levels of the stress hormone cortisol. This unique combination helps quiet mental chatter, reduce anxiety, and ease the transition into restful sleep—especially for those who struggle with an overactive mind at bedtime.

The best part? Unlike many sleep aids, L-Theanine won't make you groggy the next day, which makes it ideal for long-term support. For sleep, typical supplemental doses range from 100 to 400 mg, taken about 30 to 60 minutes before bed. It can be used on its own or alongside other calming herbs like magnesium or lemon balm for a synergistic effect. As always, consult with a healthcare provider to find the right dose for your needs.

CBD: A Modern Take on Ancient Plant Wisdom

Derived from the hemp plant, Cannabidiol, or CBD is a powerful yet gentle modulator of the endocannabinoid system—which regulates sleep, mood, pain, and more. While more modern in its commercial use, the hemp plant has a long ancestral lineage of medicinal use. CBD is non-psychoactive and legal in many regions.

CBD can reduce anxiety, lower cortisol and ease pain or inflammation that may interfere with sleep. It also helps to deepen sleep cycles without causing dependency. But not all CBD is equal. Choose high-quality, full-spectrum, organically grown sources. And like any plant ally, listen to how it interacts with your body over time. Start with a low dose (5–10 mg) and work your way up as needed. Many users report a sense of evening calm and reduced waking during the night. You can find topical CBD lotions and oils, or tinctures to be taken sublingually, capsules and even gummies for internal use.

Remember, these natural aids are not meant to be relied upon endlessly. They are bridge keepers. They walk with you for a season until you remember the way home. Since we already touched on herbs for sleep support, we will just highlight a few here.

Valerian Root: Nature's Tranquilizer

Valerian has long been used in Europe and Asia as a calming herbal remedy. Unlike pharmaceutical sedatives, it gently increases GABA activity in the brain, easing tension and promoting sleep.²⁷ Valerian is especially helpful for people whose minds won't shut off at night. It offers not just sedation, but mental quiet. Valerian root is best taken 30 to 60 minutes before bed. It can be consumed as a capsule, tincture, or tea. Some people find its earthy aroma unpleasant, but blending it with some chamomile or lemon balm can help.

Passionflower: The Gentle Heart Soother

With its delicate tendrils and calming properties, passionflower is used to treat mild anxiety and insomnia, especially when tied to circular thinking or emotional unrest. For this reason, it's often included in calming tea blends. Passionflower also enhances GABA availability and is ideal for pre-bed wind-down rituals. It's a wonderful choice for those who carry emotional weight or who wake frequently during the night with an anxious mind. You can work with it as a tea, tincture, glycerin, or flower essence.

Nature's Pharmacy: Sleep Blends & Synergies

Often, the most effective supplements are combinations, crafted thoughtfully to address multiple layers of sleeplessness. Examples include:

Magnesium +
Glycine + Melatonin

Valerian +
Passionflower + Lemon
Balm

Chamomile + CBD
+ L-theanine

Choose blends that align with your specific needs:

Trouble falling
asleep? Melatonin
and valerian.

Waking frequently?
Magnesium and
passionflower.

Stress-related
sleep loss? CBD
and lemon balm.

Always consult a qualified health provider, especially if you're taking medications or dealing with preexisting health conditions. Natural doesn't always mean safe for everyone.

A Note on Timing and Intention

Even with natural aids, timing matters. Taking supplements at the right hour and pairing them with a relaxation ritual—dimmed lights, silence, gratitude—can enhance their effects profoundly. These remedies work best when they are part of a rhythm, not a last-minute attempt to force sleep.

A Return to Sacred Simplicity

Our ancestors turned to tea, tincture, breath, and firelight—not as hacks, but as ceremonies. Sleep was a sacred return, not an inconvenience. Natural supplements are not a fix, but a remembrance. They remind the body how to unwind. They whisper to the nervous system, “It’s safe to rest.” Let them support you—not as crutches, but as kind companions.

Pause & Reflect:

Is there a supplement or herb calling to you right now?

Could your evening ritual become more ceremonial, more sacred?

What natural rhythm are you ready to reclaim?



THE POWER OF Consistency & A Sleep Routine

If the modern world has a single greatest sleep disruptor, it may be this: inconsistency. We sleep and wake at random hours, snack at midnight, binge on blue light, and collapse into bed expecting rest to find us. But sleep is not a switch—it's a wave, a rhythm, a sacred spiral that invites us to return to our cyclical nature.

Our ancestors did not need alarm clocks. Their circadian rhythms were trained by sunlight, firelight, seasonal changes, and habit. To sleep well, we don't need new technology—we need old wisdom, consistently honored.



The Circadian Code

Your circadian rhythm is a roughly 24-hour cycle that governs not just sleep, but hormone release, body temperature, digestion, and mood. It's regulated primarily by light and regularity. Disrupting it through inconsistent sleep/wake times can throw off your entire system—impacting immunity, mood, and metabolic health. The more consistently you honor it, the better every system in your body functions.²⁸

When your sleep and wake times vary, you confuse your circadian clock. But when you stick to a regular bedtime and wake time, even on weekends, your body begins to anticipate rest, producing melatonin and calming your system like clockwork. Some of the benefits of a regular sleep schedule include:

It's easier to fall asleep and stay asleep

Deeper, more restorative sleep cycles

More energy and mental clarity during the day

Lower levels of stress and inflammation



The Chronotypes

We each have a natural sleep-wake preference encoded in our DNA. Not everyone is wired to wake up at dawn. Your chronotype—whether you're an early bird, night owl, or somewhere in between—is partially genetic.²⁹ In addition to regulating sleep and wake times, your chronotype has an influence on your appetite, exercise tendencies, and core body temperature. It is also responsible for the fact that you feel more alert at certain periods of the day and sleepier at others.

Learning your natural sleep tendencies allows you to work with your body instead of against it. You can take a free online quiz to discover your unique chronotype. While there is a genetic component to determining your chronotype, some researchers postulate that the variation in chronotype might have been a survival technique that evolved in hunter-gatherer societies. The theory is that by taking turns sleeping, there would always be someone awake to keep watch.

- **Lion types** tend to wake early (around 5:00 am) and function best from 8:00 am - 12:00 pm. They like to go to bed no later than 10:00 pm. Lion people make up about 15% of the population.

- **Wolf types** peak later in the day and struggle with early mornings. They are the night owls of the chronotypes. They are creative thinkers who are most productive around 10 am - 4:00 pm and like to go to bed late. They wake around 8:00 am, and go to bed around 12:00 am or later. They make up about 15% of the population.

- **Bear types** tend to follow the sun. They wake around 7:00 am and are most productive from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm. They go to bed around 10:00 pm. They do well with traditional office hours and make up 55% of the population.

- **Dolphin types** are the insomniacs of the world. They are sensitive sleepers with fragmented sleep patterns that rarely keep a regular schedule. They wake around 6:00 am, are most productive from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm and go to bed around 11:00 pm or 12:00 am. They make up 10-15% of the population.

While society may push a rigid 9 to 5 structure, honoring your natural rhythm (where possible) can drastically improve your sleep quality and emotional wellbeing. Honor your chronotype if you can, but even within your type, consistency is the most powerful biohack.



The Bedtime Ritual

The time before bed should not be rushed or chaotic. Crafting a pre-sleep ritual is about signaling to your body: "We are winding down now." It doesn't need to be long or complicated—it simply needs to be consistent and intentional. Creating a consistent,

Here are some of our favorite pre-sleep rituals already mentioned in this ebook:

- **Journal:** Reflect on your day, express gratitude, or process emotions.
- **Read:** Choose something calming—fiction, poetry, or a spiritual text.
- **Sip on an herbal tea:** Sip slowly, with full attention.
- **Stretch or practice gentle movement like yoga:** Help your body to unwind, relax and release any stored tension.
- **Set the mood:** Create a calming environment with candles, low lighting or red light bulbs and aromatherapy. Diffuse calming scents like lavender or sandalwood or use a smudging herb like sweet grass, sage or palo santo.
- **Try a candlelight meditation:** Gaze softly at a flame, let your thoughts drift.

- **Wash your feet or face with warm water**, symbolizing the cleansing of energy.

- **Clear your thoughts, practice mindfulness:** Check in with your breath and your heart. Take deep, cleansing breaths. Place your hands on your heart and your belly. Is there anything that needs your attention so it won't keep you stirring in the night?

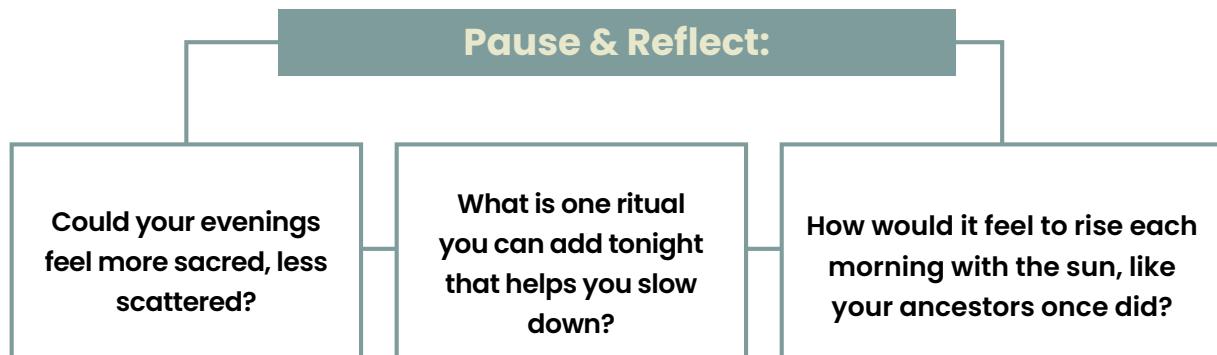
Ritual anchors you. It says, "This is the threshold. Let's cross it together." These rituals don't have to be perfect, but they do have to be consistent. Repetition tells the nervous system: "Now we rest. It is safe to soften." The truth is: your body craves rhythm. It sleeps best when it knows when to sleep. Just as the sun rises and sets on cue, your sleep should follow a steady pulse.

There's something profoundly sacred about rhythm. When we align with cycles—the sun, the moon, our breath, our sleep—we remember that we are a part of something larger. Sleep becomes less of a struggle and more of a homecoming. By keeping a rhythm, you honor this sacred act of surrender. You tell your body and spirit: "I'm listening. I trust the cycles."

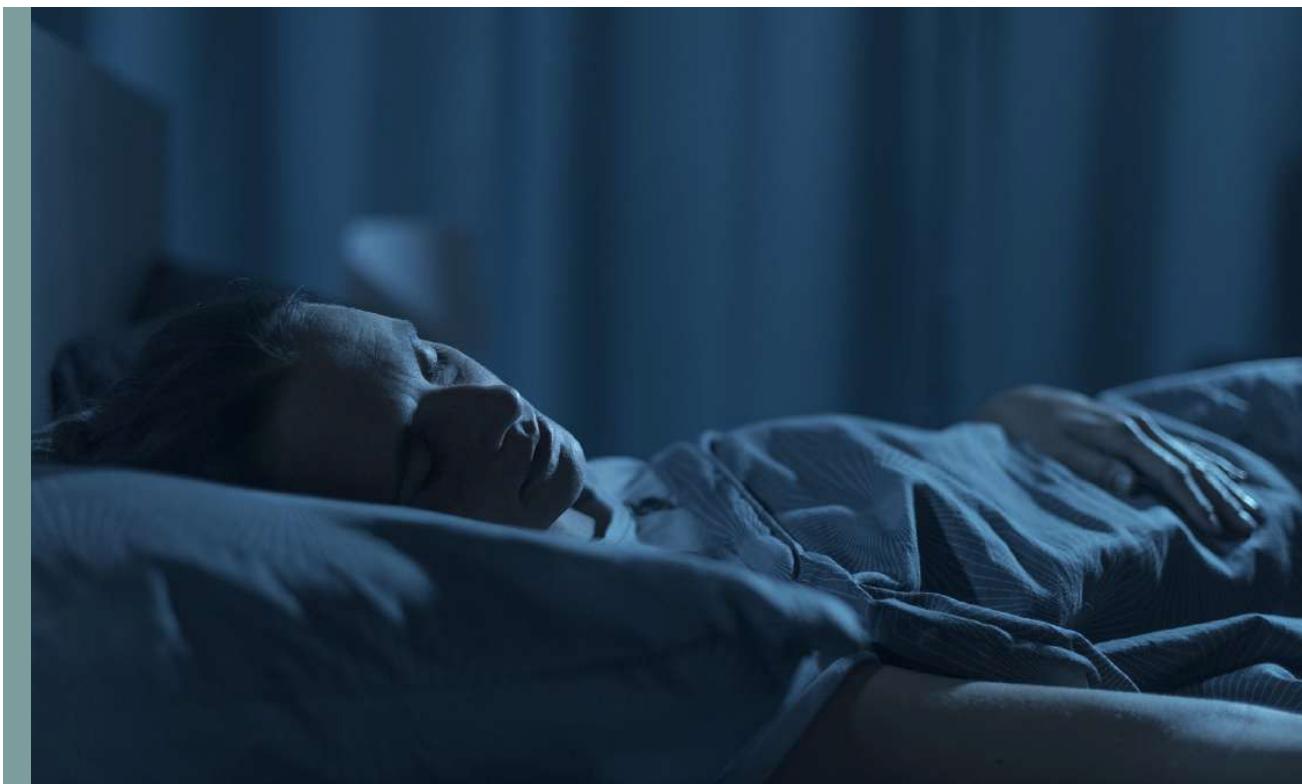
Gentle Tips for Cultivating Sleep Consistency:

- **Start small.** Begin by going to bed at the same time 3 nights a week.
- **Pair it with pleasure.** Let your ritual include something you enjoy.
- **Make your mornings consistent too.** Wake up at the same time—even on weekends, and even if you went to bed later than usual.
- **Embrace slow change.** It may take a few weeks to reset your rhythm. Be kind to yourself.
- **Trust your body's wisdom.** If you wake naturally, get up. If you're tired early, don't fight it.

Consistency isn't rigidity. It's a kind of devotional alignment—a daily choice to move with life instead of against it.



CONCLUSION: Putting It All Together



Reclaiming the Sacred Art of Sleep

In a world that worships speed, sleep is a rebellion. To close your eyes, to soften your breath, to let go of control and surrender to the quiet dark—it is one of the most radical acts of trust we can offer ourselves. This journey has not just been about sleeping better. It's been about remembering what it means to **rest deeply, live rhythmically, and honor the cycles that sustain us**.

You've now explored a number of natural biohacks—each rooted in ancestral wisdom, supported by science, and holding its own sacred invitation to come home to yourself.

As you close this book, remember: none of these practices are new. They are echoes of ancestral knowledge, elemental rhythms, and the Earth herself. You do not need to do them all at once. Begin with one. Feel it. Let it anchor you. Let your sleep become a ritual again—not a problem to solve, but a ceremony to enter. In honoring your sleep, you are honoring your rhythm. And in honoring your rhythm, you are returning to the Earth's rhythm.

For your convenience, let's revisit **The 9 Natural Biohacks for Better Sleep** below:



1. Optimizing Your Sleep Environment:

Your bedroom is not just a place—it is a sanctuary. Curate it with intention. Simplify—remove junk or messes, remove or cover lights from electronics, and consider using aromatherapy.

2. Daytime Sun Exposure:

The sun is your circadian compass. Let it guide you back into balance. Try to get at least ten minutes of unfiltered sun as soon as you start your day.



3. Reducing Blue Light in the Evening:

Darkness is a friend to sleep. Protect it fiercely. Give yourself a device curfew or invest in some blue blocking glasses. Consider using red light bulbs or candlelight in place of bright overhead artificial lighting.

4. Nutrition & Sleep:

What you eat shapes how you rest. Nourishment is not just physical—it's energetic. Try adding some sleep-supportive foods to your last meal. Don't eat too late or too close to bed time. Avoid things like caffeine late in the day, and filling, spicy meals too close to bedtime.



5. Herbal Teas & Adaptogens:

Ancient plants, modern support. Let these herbal allies soothe your system. Consider adding adaptogens into your daily routines and sipping on a sleep supportive herbal tea before bed.

6. Movement & Gentle Exercise:

Your body wants to move to rest. Let flow precede stillness. Guide your body gently into rest with slow movement or light stretching.



7. Stress Reduction & Emotional Wellness:

You cannot sleep when your worries and unprocessed emotions are racing through your mind all night. Make space in your afternoon or evening for your inner world to be acknowledged and expressed before hitting the pillow.



8. Sleep Supplements & Natural Aids:

Let your sleep allies be gentle, natural, and in harmony with your system. Use these as a short-term support to get back in sync after traveling or working a night shift. Things like magnesium can always be used.

9. Consistency & Ritual:

Rhythm is the thread that holds it all together. Make your nights sacred again. Whatever you choose, do it consistently and with intention.



Starting Where You Are

Remember, you don't have to implement everything at once. In fact, it's better if you don't. Let this process be slow, intuitive, and cyclical—just like nature.

Choose **one or two biohacks** to begin with.

Notice what shifts in your body, your mind, your energy.

Let your new rhythm **emerge organically** rather than forcing

Trust that the **body wants to heal, to balance, and to rest**—it simply needs the right environment and support.



The Long-Term Benefits of Restorative Sleep

This is not about chasing a “perfect night’s sleep.” It’s about living in a way that honors your biology and your spirit. When sleep becomes a ceremony—not a casualty of busyness — everything changes:

Your brain functions more clearly.

Your mood stabilizes.

Your digestion improves.

Your hormones harmonize.

Your creativity and intuition flourish.

Your resilience deepens.

You wake up nourished.

You have better mental clarity.

You are more present in life.

Final Reflection: The Sleep You Deserve

You were never meant to chase sleep. You were meant to be in relationship with it—like breath, like water, like the turning Earth beneath your feet.

May this book remind you:

That rest is your birthright.

That stillness is strength.

That sleep is not the end of the day, but the beginning of healing.

And most of all, may it invite you to **trust your body** again. Sleep is not a mystery to solve. It is a rhythm to remember.

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