

Movement For Better Sleep

Written Instructions

Use these written instructions along with the Vlog (page on my website) videos. I have provided these movement practices in visual (video and written) and audio (video) to be used however is best for you to learn and integrate them into your nighttime routine. There are sitting and standing versions for those that may have challenges with balance. This is intended to be simple, easy, and accessible to all so that everyone can benefit from the full effect of relaxing their mind and body.

These movement practices are not exercise. Exercise that increases heart rate should be done no less than 30-minutes (strongly suggest more like 90-minutes) before your nighttime ritual. Your body needs enough time to regulate before bed: blood pressure and breathing and other vitals to return to normal levels.

Within the 30-minutes before bed, you can set a timer for 5-minutes or take it at your own pace when doing these movement practices. I would suggest trying each one for at least 1-2 weeks in order to notice a difference as well as see which one helps relax you the most.

Please modify any movements to better suit your body's needs. If you have an injury or physical pain, you can adjust the movement to be done in a smaller or different way. If you need guidance with modifying any of these movement practices, contact me at Rayni@E-MOTIVEcounseling.com.

If your range of motion is restricted, do not underestimate that watching the videos, witnessing the movement, and imagining that you are doing the movement can have similar impacts on the body. (This is called kinesthetic empathy. Learn more about it [here](#) and [here](#).)

Tracking your tension level and sleep quality will be the best way to notice progress. I have provided a *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form for your use (see the "Downloads" section on the Vlog page of my website). For the tension scale of 0-5 (no tension to severe tension), rate your **overall** body tension before the movement practice (line 1). Take an internal inventory of where you have tightness, pain, stress in the body and select the number that reflects that level of tension in your body as a whole. Then note which movement practice you did (line 2) and your tension level after (line 3). In the morning, write down your tension level (line 4) and your sleep quality (poor, fair, good on line 5). The far right column is for "Notes." Write down anything that you think is significant to remember about your experience. Please try to track each movement practice using this form for at least two weeks for each.

Your feedback would be greatly appreciated. You can visit <https://s.surveypplanet.com/z8aeg0lv> to give your feedback. This is also the opportunity to be a part of a case study to support that movement before bed can improve sleep outcomes. If you would like to participate, please visit <https://s.surveypplanet.com/z8aeg0lv>.

Feel free to email me with any questions at Rayni@E-MOTIVEcounseling.com.

Thank you for taking this step towards moving your body to better sleep. Sleep well.

Gentle Stretching (Sitting Version)

1. Using the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form, note your tension level (0-5) **before** this movement practice.
2. Find a solid chair to sit on. Sit at the edge of it to allow more free movement of the legs.
3. Start by rolling one ankle inward (towards the midline of the body) 8 times then outward 8 times. Take deep breaths as you do this.
4. Repeat with the other ankle.
5. Stretch one leg out in front of you, pulling the toes up and back to lengthen the calves. Hold for 8 counts along with deep breaths.
6. Repeat with the other leg.
7. Twisting the upper body to one side, press hand of same side of body at back of hip while opposite hand presses on the outside of leg on the same side to deepen twist. Head looking towards the back. Think of the spine as a corkscrew up from the hips. Hold with a deep breath for 8 counts.
8. Twist and repeat on the other side.
9. Roll your belly over your legs and let your head hang down over your knees. OR you can sit up and let your head roll down, chin to chest. Hold for a count of 8 with a deep breath then slowly roll up the spine to sit up again for an 8 count with a deep breath.
10. Roll shoulders together backwards for 8 times with a deep breath.
11. Roll shoulders together forward 8 times with a deep breath.
12. Circle hands at wrist joint in towards the body 8 times with a deep breath.
13. Circles hands again out away from the body 8 times with a deep breath.
14. Lengthen one arm out in front of your body, use the other hand to pull fingers back towards the body, which makes the fingers pointed down to the ground. Holding for 8 counts with a deep breath.
15. Gently roll the head down (chin to chest) then side to side (ear to shoulder) 8 times with a deep breath.
16. Hold head to the side (ear to shoulder) with arm bent at elbow to the side, hand tucked behind back. Hold for 8 counts with a deep breath.
17. Repeat with the head to the other side.
18. Take 3 deep breaths in with extended exhales. Focus on pushing feet down into the floor, pressing sitz bones (bottom of hips that you sit on) into the seat, lengthening the head upwards, and shoulders pressed down.
19. Using the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form, note your tension level (0-5) **after** this movement practice.
20. Enjoy the relaxation and sleep well.

*Make sure to note on the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form **in the morning**. Document your tension level (0-5) and your sleep quality.

Gentle Stretching (Standing Version)

1. Using the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form, note your tension level (0-5) **before** this movement practice.
2. Find an open space to stand. OR, if needed, you can stand close to a countertop or solid hip height surface to hold to help with balance.
3. Start by rolling one ankle inward (towards the midline of the body) 8 times then outward 8 times. Take deep breaths as you do this.
4. Repeat with the other ankle.
5. To lengthen the calves, push one foot back on the floor while the standing leg slightly bends with knee lining over the ankle in a small lunge. Hold for 8 counts along with deep breaths.
6. Repeat with the other leg.
7. Roll the head down to the floor, folding the body in half, and let the head hang down. OR you can remain standing and let your head roll down, chin to chest. Hold for a count of 8 with a deep breath then slowly roll up the spine with slightly bent knees up to standing again for an 8 count with a deep breath.
8. Twisting the upper body to one side, press the hand on the same side of the body at the back of the hip while the opposite hand lengthens out in front of the body. Head looking towards the back. Think of the spine as a corkscrew up from the hips. Hold with a deep breath for 8 counts.
9. Twist and repeat on the other side.
10. Roll shoulders together backwards for 8 times with a deep breath.
11. Roll shoulders together forward 8 times with a deep breath.
12. Circle hands at wrist joint in towards the body 8 times with a deep breath.
13. Circles hands again out away from the body 8 times with a deep breath.
14. Lengthen one arm out in front of your body, use the other hand to pull fingers back towards the body, which makes the fingers pointed down to the ground. Holding for 8 counts with a deep breath.
15. Gently roll the head down (chin to chest) then side to side (ear to shoulder) 8 times with a deep breath.
16. Hold head to the side (ear to shoulder) with arm bent at elbow to the side, hand tucked behind back. Hold for 8 counts with a deep breath.
17. Repeat with the head to the other side.
18. Take 3 deep breaths in with extended exhales. Focus on pushing feet down into the floor, lengthening the head upwards with shoulders pressed down.
19. Using the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form, note your tension level (0-5) **after** this movement practice.
20. Enjoy the relaxation and sleep well.

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Movement Flow (Sitting Version)

1. Using the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form, note your tension level (0-5) **before** this movement practice.
2. Find a solid chair to sit on. Sit at the edge of it with feet firmly placed on the floor, knees in alignment over ankles/feet so that legs are at a 90 degree angle.**
3. You can have your eyes closed or have a soft gaze (eyes slightly closed). The point here is to focus on your physical sensations.
4. Begin with taking some deep breaths.
5. Start to visualize a body of water. It can be small, medium, or large in size. Shallow or deep in its depth.
6. Using mostly your upper body (arms, torso, neck and head), slowly move as if you were playing with and/or in the water. Keep your feet planted on the floor.
7. Keep moving slow and take your time. Just notice thoughts come and go without judgment as you continue to focus on moving your body as water: flowing continuously from one point to the next.
8. Explore this moving as water experience for at least 5 minutes.
9. Bringing your body to stillness, check in with how your body and mind feel and take at least 3 deep breaths.
10. Using the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form, note your tension level (0-5) **after** this movement practice.
11. Enjoy the relaxation and sleep well.

*Make sure to note on the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form **in the morning**. Document your tension level (0-5) and your sleep quality.

**You can use a 5-minute timer on your phone or watch to help keep track of time since your eyes will be close or soft gaze (eyes slightly closed). You can also have water sounds or video of water playing to help immerse yourself in the experience. Another option is to follow my movements on the video.

Movement Flow (Standing Version)

1. Using the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form, note your tension level (0-5) **before** this movement practice.
2. Find an open space to stand. OR, if needed, you can stand close to a countertop or solid hip height surface to hold for balance. Firmly plant your feet into the floor and stand with soft knees - not holding tension in the legs.**
3. You can have your eyes closed or have a soft gaze (eyes slightly closed). The point here is to focus on your physical sensations.
4. Begin with taking some deep breaths.
5. Start to visualize a body of water. It can be small, medium, or large in size. Shallow or deep in its depth.
6. Using mostly your upper body (arms, torso, neck and head), slowly move as if you were playing with and/or in the water. Keep your feet planted on the floor.
7. Keep moving slow and take your time. Just notice thoughts come and go without judgment as you continue to focus on moving your body as water: flowing continuously from one point to the next.
8. Explore this moving like water experience for at least 5 minutes.
9. Bringing your body to stillness, check in with how your body and mind feel and take at least 3 deep breaths.
10. Using the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form, note your tension level (0-5) **after** this movement practice.
11. Enjoy the relaxation and sleep well.

*Make sure to note on the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form **in the morning**. Document your tension level (0-5) and your sleep quality.

**You can use a 5-minute timer on your phone or watch to help keep track of time since your eyes will be close or soft gaze (eyes slightly closed). You can also have water sounds or video of water playing to help immerse yourself in the experience. Another option is to follow my movements on the video.

Shake Out Tension (Sitting Version)

1. Using the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form, note your tension level (0-5) **before** this movement practice.
2. Find a solid chair to sit on. Sit at the edge of it to allow more free movement of the legs.
3. Shake each foot down towards the floor 10 times.
4. Then, for a count of 10, shake the knees in and out, side to side, in unison.
5. Shake hips side to side for a count of 10.
6. Then shake shoulders forward to back, like a shimmy, for 10 times.
7. Each arm shakes down towards the floor 10 times.
8. And both arms together 10 times.
9. Following that, the head is gently shaken from side to side for a count of 10.
10. And then the entire body for a count of 10.
11. Gradually slow down the full body shake trying not to just stop abruptly.
12. You can repeat steps 3-11 OR continue with pushing sitz bones (bottom of hip bones that you sit on) down into seat while lengthening then head up with shoulders pressing downward and feet into the floor.
13. Checking in with how your body and mind feel, take at least 3 deep breaths.
14. Using the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form, note your tension level (0-5) **after** this movement practice.
15. Enjoy the relaxation and sleep well.

*Make sure to note on the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form **in the morning**. Document your tension level (0-5) and your sleep quality.

**Laughter is welcome since it also provides vibration of the body.

Shake Out Tension (Standing Version)

1. Using the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form, note your tension level (0-5) **before** this movement practice.
2. Find an open space to stand. OR, if needed, you can stand close to a countertop or solid hip height surface to hold for balance.
3. Shake each foot down towards the floor 10 times.
4. Then with slightly bent knees for a count of 10, shake the knees in and out, side to side, in unison.
5. Shake hips side to side for a count of 10.
6. Then shake shoulders forward to back, like a shimmy, for 10 times.
7. Each arm shakes down towards the floor 10 times.
8. And both arms together 10 times.
9. Following that, the head is gently shaken from side to side for a count of 10.
10. And then the entire body for a count of 10.
11. Gradually slow down the full body shake trying not to just stop abruptly.
12. You can repeat steps 3-11 OR continue with pushing feet down into the floor while lengthening then head up with shoulders pressing downward.
13. Checking in with how your body and mind feel, take some deep breaths.
14. Using the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form, note your tension level (0-5) **after** this movement practice.
15. Enjoy the relaxation and sleep well.

*Make sure to note on the *Movement / Tension / Sleep Tracker* form **in the morning**. Document your tension level (0-5) and your sleep quality.

**Laughter is welcome since it also provides vibration of the body.