

Alternative Sleep Aids

From *Questhouse: A Gentle Spiritual Retreat for Recovery from Alcoholism* by Russell A. Hopper and the *Recovery Book* by Al J. Mooney, Arlene Eisenberg, and Howard Eisenberg

Important Stuff to Remember

Drugs of any kind are not an effective long-term treatment for my sleeping problems. Nobody has ever died from a lack of sleep, but people like me die every day from resorting to pills or alcohol to put themselves to sleep. My sleep will vary from others. My sleep pattern from using alcohol and any other drugs has been disrupted for so long that I will have no idea as to what normal means. In early recovery, I am not likely to find out. My body is still rebounding wildly from the effects of my drug use. If I am withdrawing from Benzodiazepine's or other sedatives, I may not be able to sleep at all. If I had been using stimulant drugs, I may feel like sleeping around the clock. It will take time for my brain to rehabilitate itself after being at war with drugs. My sleep pattern will usually clear up in five or six days. Worrying about not sleeping will compound the problem. Lying in bed and thinking "I won't be able to fall asleep" will convert my anxiety into reality. No matter how disruptive my temporary sleeplessness is, it can't compare to the problems that my alcohol or other drug use caused in my life.

What Are Some Things I Can Do?

- Go To Bed at Regular Time
- Listen To Soothing Music
- Meditate
- Practice Telling My Life Story
- Get Up at The Same Time
- Count Backwards From 100
- Listen To Recovery Tapes
- Read Recovery Literature
- Try A Different Bed
- Stop Resisting and Relax
- Get Up If I'm Able to Sleep
- Make A Mental Gratitude List
- Take A Warm Bath
- Get It Back Rub
- Pray
- Avoid Daytime Naps
- Avoid Loud Music
- Drink Warm Milk
- Keep The Bedroom Dark
- Focus On Other Things
- Remake My Bed
- Take Time to Relax
- Hurt!
- Take The TV Out of The Bedroom
- Cuddle With Someone I Care About
- Avoid Heavy Meals Before Bedtime
- Go To Bed to Sleep-Not Worry
- Spend Time with Recovery Friends
- Don't Exercise Before Bedtime
- Keep The Bedroom Temperature Comfortable
- Buy A New Mattress
- Avoid Caffeine After Early Afternoon
- Don't Obsess About Not Sleeping
- Do Some Moderate Exercise Each Day?

Use the Following Slogans

1. Recovery is a process that takes time; some things cannot be rushed.
2. I am either practicing my illness or I'm or I am practicing my recovery.
3. this is the last time I ever have to go through withdrawal.
4. I deserve a chance at recovery, and I refuse to let my illness win!
5. I will address my sleeping one day at a time
6. I will say to myself this too shall pass.
7. I will turn it over by letting go and letting God.
8. I will tell myself easy does it.
9. I will say to myself that think, think, think it is not a good idea for me.

My Personal Plan to Help Me Sleep
