

Sleep Support Guide — Restore · Renew · Refresh

A guide to resetting your sleep ritual—with tools for deeper rest, rhythm, and restoration every night. Consistency turns ritual into restoration.

Why Sleep Feels Broken

Modern life sabotages sleep with overstimulation, erratic dopamine spikes, and a culture that glorifies productivity over rest. Many clients report:

- Racing thoughts at bedtime
- Inconsistent sleep schedules - frequent waking
- Reliance on screens or substances to wind down
- Emotional loops that resurface at night
- Feeling tired but wired—unable to drop into rest

Sleep Saboteurs Checklist

Use this to identify what's hijacking your rest:

Saboteur	Description	Reset Strategy
Blue light exposure	Screens trick your brain into staying alert	Dim lights, use amber filters, shut off screens 1 hour before bed
Dopamine spikes	Social media, sugar, or drama before bed	Replace with grounding rituals and tactile activities
Emotional loops	Ruminating on conflict or unfinished tasks	Journal + mantra: “That’s not mine to carry tonight.”
Caffeine timing	Even “early” coffee can disrupt sleep cycles	Cut off caffeine by 12pm or switch to herbal alternatives
Over-scheduling	No buffer between work and sleep	Build a wind-down window with no obligations

Sleep Reset Ritual Framework

This isn't about perfection—it's about repatterning. These steps gently cue the body: “You’re safe. You can rest now.”

1. Signal the Shift

Create a clear boundary between “day mode” and “night mode.”

Examples:

- Dim lights an hour or two before your scheduled bedtime
- Change into soft clothing
- Light a candle or use a scent cue (lavender, vetiver, chamomile)
- Set your bedroom thermostat to 64° -68°F
- Turn down your covers to signal readiness

2. Dopamine Downshift

Interrupt the dopamine rollercoaster with grounding activities:

- Handwriting in a sleep journal
- Herbal foot soak or magnesium spray
- Gentle stretching or somatic unwinding (mindful intention to relax the body)
- Tactile rituals: brushing hair, oiling skin, folding soft fabrics

3. Emotional Unhooking

Release loops that hijack your bandwidth:

- Write down what's bothering you, then close the notebook
- Use a mantra: *"That's not mine to carry tonight."*
- Try a guided visualization or breathwork track
- Place a symbolic object on your nightstand (a stone, feather, doll) to hold the emotional weight for you. I use a small gong my husband gave me 20 years ago.

Herbal Allies

Choose herbs that support your unique sleep pattern. These are starting points—not prescriptions.

Sleep Challenge	Herbal Allies
Racing thoughts	Skullcap, passionflower, lemon balm
Body tension	California poppy, kava, hops
Emotional overwhelm	Motherwort, blue vervain, rose
Light sleep / waking often	Chamomile, oat straw, ashwagandha
Trouble falling asleep	Valerian, magnolia bark, nutmeg (tiny dose)

Note: Choose herbs that align with your needs and body signals. Consider tinctures, teas, baths, or infused oils. If you're using herbs or supplements, please consult with a qualified healthcare provider to ensure there are no interactions with medications or underlying conditions.

Sleep Journal Prompts

Use these to track patterns, release loops, and build your own sleep archive:

- What interrupted my sleep last night?
- What helped me feel safe or relaxed?
- What am I ready to release before bed tonight?
- What does my body need more of tomorrow?
- What ritual felt most soothing this week?
- What grounding ritual helped me shift away from stimulation tonight?

Dopamine Audit

Dopamine is a neurotransmitter—your brain's chemical messenger for motivation, reward, and pleasure. It's what makes you feel good when you:

- Scroll through social media
- Eat something delicious
- Get a compliment
- Finish a task
- Anticipate something exciting

Track what spikes your dopamine after 6pm. Replace with grounding cues:

- Tactile rituals like foot soaks, balm on pulse points, weighted blankets, grounding objects
- Herbal infusions
- Emotional check-ins
- Creative but low-stimulation activities (collage, journaling, beadwork, knitting)

Dopamine is part of your brain's reward system, designed to reinforce behaviors that feel good—even if they're not always restorative.

Signs of a Dopamine Spike (Especially After 6pm)

These are the cues you're tracking in your sleep prep:

- Sudden urge to scroll, snack, or multitask
- Restlessness or racing thoughts, inability to concentrate
- Seeking stimulation—TV, sugar, online shopping, texting
- Difficulty winding down or resisting “just one more”
- Feeling wired but tired

What to Do When Dopamine Spikes After 6pm

If you notice restlessness, scrolling, snacking, or chasing stimulation—pause. These swaps help redirect your nervous system toward calm without forcing sleep:

- Switch stimulation for texture

Try warm foot soaks, oiling your skin, folding laundry with intention, or holding something weighted or soft. Texture grounds the nervous system.

- Sip a sleepy herbal infusion

Brew lemon balm, skullcap, chamomile, or your favorite blend. Use a dedicated mug to signal wind-down.

- Name the pattern

Ask: What's pulling my attention now? Notice it. Then decide - redirect or tend to it.

- Choose rhythm over input

Try collage, journaling, gentle sketching, or organizing something small—no screens, no goals. Just quiet movement and gentle flow.

- Prep your Sleep Basket for later

Set out your chosen bedtime tools now so the transition feels easy when it's time.

Sleep Basket - Nightly bedtime rituals

Create a physical basket filled with meaningful nighttime tools:

- Herbal tincture or tea
- Magnesium spray
- Journal + pen
- Symbolic object (stone, feather, doll)
- Sleep mask or earplugs
- Scent cue (essential oil, sachet. Pillow mist, nasal inhaler)
- Prayer beads - rosary, mala
- Rescue Sleep spray

zz Sleep Support FAQ

Real Interruptions. Real Questions. Real Solutions.

A client-tested guide for the wired, the weary, and the ones who've tried everything.



“I feel wired but exhausted. What’s that?”

- Often a sign of **nervous system dysregulation**—your body’s stuck in “on.”
- Herbs like **ashwagandha**, **milky oats**, or **lemon balm** may help.
- Try a **wind-down ritual**: warm foot soak, candle, breathwork, journal.
- A **body scan ritual** (*yoga nidra* or *mindfulness-based stress reduction*, try Jon Kabat-Zinn) can gently reset your system.



“What’s one thing I can do tonight?”

- Pick one ritual and do it slowly.
- Dim the lights.
- Put your phone in another room.
- Let your body know: *we’re done for the day*.



“Which herbs help with sleep?”

- Depends on the pattern:
 - **Can’t fall asleep?** Try calming nervines like **passionflower** or **skullcap**.
 - **Wake up at 2am?** Look at **blood sugar**, **liver support**, or **emotional processing**.
 - **Restless legs or tension?** Consider **magnesium**, **valerian**, or **cramp bark**.
- Always match the herb to the pattern—not just the symptom.



“Why does my brain go wild at night?”

- Because it finally has space.
- Try a **brain dump journal**, **guided meditation**, or **herbal support** for circular thinking (like **gotu kola** or **holy basil**).
- Ritual helps. So does naming what’s unfinished.
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“Are prescription sleep meds safe?”

- They can be helpful short-term, especially during acute stress or grief.
- Long-term use may come with trade-offs: tolerance, grogginess, and masking deeper imbalances.
- Ask yourself: *“Is this solving the root issue—or just quieting the alarm?”*
- If you’re curious about alternatives, there are gentle supports worth exploring—herbs, rituals, nervous system care—but best with qualified practitioner guidance.
- This guide isn’t medical advice. It’s a starting point for asking better questions.

“Why do I wake up at the same time every night?”

- Could be **blood sugar**, **liver processing**, **emotional cycles**, pain, poor mattress
- Track the time. Patterns matter.
- Herbs like **schisandra**, **dandelion**, or **motherwort** may help—but only if they align with your constitution or emotional state.

“Should I take melatonin?”

- It can help reset circadian rhythm—especially after travel or shift work.
- But more isn’t better. Many people are **overtaking it** and waking groggy or wired.
- I typically recommend starting with **1 mg**, not the 5–10 mg doses often sold.
- If you’re using it nightly, it’s worth asking: “*What’s blocking my natural rhythm?*”
- Herbs like **chamomile**, **California poppy**, or **blue vervain** may support melatonin production without overriding.

“Are electronic sleep trackers helpful?”

- They can offer insight—but they can also create obsession.
- If you wake up feeling rested, that matters more than your sleep score.
- Use data to spot patterns, not punish yourself.
- If the tracker causes stress, it’s not helping.

“Why are my dreams so intense lately?”


- Emotional processing ramps up when sleep deepens.
- Herbs like **lavender**, **jasmine**, or **rose** may amplify dream recall.
- If dreams feel overwhelming, try grounding rituals before bed—like journaling, warm tea, or a body scan.
- Sometimes the dream is the medicine. Sometimes it’s just noise.

“Is blue light really that bad?”

- Yes. It suppresses melatonin and confuses your circadian rhythm.
- Use **amber glasses**, **screen filters**, or better yet—**no screens after sundown**.

“What is yoga nidra and why does it help?”

- It’s a guided body scan that shifts your brain into deep rest states.
- Even if you don’t fall asleep, it helps your system **recalibrate**.
- Look for recordings labeled **yoga nidra** or **body scan meditation**

 **Disclaimer:** *This guide is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to diagnose, treat, or cure any condition, nor does it replace individualized care from a qualified practitioner.*

Sleep Ritual Journal Page

Restore • Renew • Refresh

Use this page to track what's shifting, what's helping, and what still needs care.

Date: _____

How did I sleep last night?

- ☐ Deep and restful
- ☐ Fragmented but okay
- ☐ Restless or wired
- ☐ Didn't sleep much
- ☐

Other _____

What did I try?

(herbs, rituals, boundaries, journaling, etc.)

What felt supportive?

What didn't help or felt off?

What do I want to adjust tonight?

How I feel right now in one word: _____