



Joselyne John RN

Certified Adult Sleep Coach

Winding-down is a chance for your body to de-stress and calm down to allow sleeping to occur. People who don't wind down have trouble falling asleep and end up sleeping poorly, becoming less productive during the day. It can help to set an alarm for when you wind down. Otherwise, it is easy to keep going, there is always one more task to complete. Create a boundary for when you let go of your day and focus on getting your body ready for effective and restful sleep. Not preparing your body to sleep is like ignoring yourself in the dark. You won't sleep well when your body is in the "working mode". Here is your wind-down process in 3 easy steps. 60 minutes is ideal, adjust per your needs and situation.

Step #1: (20 min): Reflection on your day.

Journal/talk out your lingering, frustrating thoughts

- Deem the lights and Turn off electronics or turn on your blue light filter on your phone, or download f.lux on your computer (just type in f.lux in google and it will pop up) blocks out blue light and minimizes effects on melatonin production.
- Write down 3 things you are grateful for today. It does not have to be big things. Even eating great lunch or simply having a comfortable bed or just being healthy and alive
- Pick your outfit for the next day or simply arrange your clothes
- Make a to-do list for the next day
- Put things away
- Pack lunch
- Talk to your family, roommate, etc. (but avoid heated conversations or confrontations)
- If you are really hungry and feeling like you are not going to make it through the night, this is the time to snack. No heavy or spicy meals as they can prevent you from sleeping. Go for the sleep-inducing food and in small amounts. I usually have an avocado mixed with some carbohydrate, like sweet potato or quinoa. Avocado is full of great oils and potassium, it is not high sugar, perfect to make my tummy happy and ready to sleep. More on nutrition and sleep in the
- Practice mindfulness. Focus on one thing, pick a book and notice it's designed, look at something carefully: Maybe you just got a new item, open it. Focus on it and note, the texture, smell, colors, weight, and overall external beauty and how it makes you feel.

Step #2: (20 min): Your bedtime self-care routine

- Take a bath. After a warm bath, body temperature drops and facilitates relaxation and sleep.
- Facial massage, and other facial self-care routines
- Dim bathroom light or use a kindle to minimize light stimulation
- Listen to a guided meditation, relaxing music, or simply ensure quiet depending on what you need today.
- In warm weather, keep your head cool. If needed place a cold towel in the fridge and put it on your pillow. This is more important in the summer when it is really hot
- Cut your Nails, apply body cream, shave your legs, find self-care tasks you have been delaying
- This is the right time to apply or turn on your sleep-inducing essential oils if you are into essential oil like me.
- Bedtime medications and supplements that have been described to you by your doctor.
- Other Self-care routines



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Step #3: (20 min): Clear your mind, calm down and fully relax for bed. *Below are effective options:*

- Breathing exercise: reduces heart rate and blood pressure, release endorphins and relaxes your body. Inhale on the count to 5, hold for 3 seconds, exhale to count to 5. Start with 8 repetitions and gradually increase to 15.
- Meditate or sing or pray. Self-direct or guided meditation.
- Guided meditation. Use the meditation that you relate to. Many different apps and videos online. Try out my meditation here: <https://youtu.be/fyNabJjNGmw>
- Focus on positive thoughts, like a vacation you went to, or fun plans coming up.
- Remember that sleep is a form self-respect, a chance to reinvest back into yourself. Cars need an oil change, phones need charging, your body needs to repair and restore itself from using it during the day. Sleep is an opportunity to become a better person.

Each section has many suggestions so you can pick what applies to you and lifestyle. It is the best formula for those stressful days or if you have trouble falling asleep. You can adjust and customize it to your liking.

What if you go out?

- Going out counts for step 1. At your outing, you can reflect on your day and already start to relax. When you return home, then you can do your bedtime routine and go from there. It is all about how relaxed you feel. Does your body feel relaxed to sleep? Your body is relaxed to sleep when you don't see lingering thoughts in your head when your muscles are fully relaxed, you want to achieve the same state of mind you get when you are on vacation.

How about other distractions? Dealing when the unexpected.

Remembering things that can ruin your wind-down process

- Heated arguments: Avoid, "Let's talk about it tomorrow, I am just preparing for bed"
- Watching TV and browsing through social media checking your work emails. All these things stimulate your brain while interfering with your sleep-inducing hormone. Instead of blowing your mind and body to relax. Have the courage to let it go.
- Eating heavy or spicy meals. Plan ahead and eat dinner by 7:30pm
- Drinking coffee or caffeine within 6 hours of bedtime (caffeine can last up to 10 hours in your body) I recommend no caffeine after 12 pm
- This is not the time to do stimulating activities like cleaning your house or bathroom. When I do that, I find it is too stimulating, especially you have to be too alert for that.
- Temperature. Keep temperature neutral, not too hot or too cold. Pay attention to and address things that raise your internal body temperature e.g. Spicy foods, hormonal imbalance, brain injury to the part that controls temperature, etc.
- Other: Think of and avoid anything that will interfere with your sacred bedtime routine. Sleep is precious don't let anything come in the way.

If these suggestions do not help, it might be a sign that something else is going on. Speak to your doctor or Nurse Practitioner. I offer free consultations to help you strategize on the next steps to take to improve your sleep. To schedule your free consultation, email

sleep@joselynejohn.com



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Good night,

Joselyne John BA, BScN, RN, Certified Sleep Science Coach

I help people who are chronically sleep deprived to have peaceful sleep in 4 weeks or less.

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