

THE WOMAN WITHIN

# Calm by Design

A ROOT-CAUSE SLEEP 6-PART PLAN  
YOU CAN COUNT ON



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A calm, no-drama routine that improves your “soil” — lifestyle and environment — so your body is better set up for reliable sleep.

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## HOW THIS GUIDE WORKS

### Small and Steady

Follow 6 simple parts. Spend about a week on each, or longer if helpful. Use the printable checklist at the end to track what feels steady. Focus on causes in your daily inputs — not band-aid fixes.

### Root-Cause Lens

Our lifestyle and environment are like the soil for health. We improve the soil to support better outcomes and avoid the lifelong cycle of symptom management.

*Singh S, Kshtriya S, Valk R. Health, Hope, and Harmony (2023).*

### Kind Reminder

This is lifestyle education, not medical care. If you have significant sleep or mood concerns, or are changing medications, consult your clinician.

# Part 1

# Clarify Your Why, How, When, What

**FOCUS** Know what truly contributes to tough nights so you can make small, targeted changes without drama.

**WHY IT’S ROOT-CAUSE ALIGNED**

Investigate “why, how, when, what” rather than chase symptoms. This reflective guide prevents wasted effort and supports calm, confident action.

**WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK**

**10-minute reflection map:**

- Why steady sleep matters to me right now (energy for mornings, patience with family, clearer thinking)?
- When do nights go off the rails? Mark common times or triggers (late screen time, heavy evening meal, stressful conversations, late caffeine).
- What helps even a little (dim lamp, herbal tea, reading, earlier dinner, light stretch)?

**Choose just 1–2 “soil” factors to address first. Circle them. Examples:**

- Screens and bright light after 9pm.
- Afternoon caffeine or evening alcohol.
- Irregular wind-down timing.

**Set your “good-enough” aim for this week:**

- I’ll start wind-down at:
- I’ll park my phone by:
- I’ll keep a gentle note of what preceded good and tough nights.

# Part 1

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## COMMUNITY CUE

Share one pattern you noticed with a trusted friend or group. The goal is not advice — just “*I noticed X often comes before a tough night.*” Feeling seen reduces pressure.

## WHAT TO NOTICE

- A few repeating contributors you can influence.
- Less self-blame; more clarity about simple next steps.

### Gentle self-talk

“Tonight is practice,  
not a test. Small clarity  
now prevents big  
confusion later.”

# Part 2

# Make Evenings Low-Stimulation and Predictable

**FOCUS** Create a reliable wind-down window that says “night” to your body and mind.

**WHY IT’S ROOT-CAUSE ALIGNED**

Environment is the soil. Predictable evening cues reduce arousal at the source—no band-aid needed.

**WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK**

**Set a 45–60 minute wind-down window. Choose a start time you can keep 4–5 nights.**

**Dim and quiet:**

- Switch to warm, lower lights.
- Park devices away from the bed; if needed, set a “done for today” alarm.

**Choose your 2-step cue routine (keep it the same nightly):**

- Example A: Lamp + decaf tea + 10 pages of a calm book.
- Example B: Lamp + 5 gentle stretches + journaling three lines: “*What I did,*” “*What can wait,*” “*What I’m grateful for.*”

**Gentle closure ritual (2 minutes):**

- Say out loud: “*The day is finished. Anything important returns tomorrow.*” This gives the brain a tidy, steady ending.

# Part 2

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## COMMUNITY CUE

Invite a family member into the dim-lights routine.  
A shared cue (e.g., everyone switches a lamp on) creates a supportive, low-drama team rhythm.

## WHAT TO NOTICE

- Falling asleep feels less “on edge.”
- Fewer last-minute tasks at bedtime.

### Gentle self-talk

“I make night  
predictable, so my  
body doesn’t have  
to guess.”

Part 3

# Tidy Up Stimulants and Night Disruptors

**FOCUS** Reduce dietary inputs caffeine, alcohol, and late sugar that commonly fragment sleep.

**WHY IT’S ROOT-CAUSE ALIGNED**

Adjusting inputs targets the cause of wakefulness rather than layering quick fixes. It also saves money on unnecessary supplements.

**WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK**

**Caffeine boundary:**

- Pick a personal cut-off you can keep 5–6 days (e.g., none after 1–2 pm).
- If sensitive, reduce total cups by one this week.

**Alcohol boundary:**

- Try alcohol-free on most nights (e.g., 5 of 7). If you drink, keep it earlier and lighter.

**Late sugar swap:**

- Replace dessert with something steadier (yoghurt + berries, small nut butter toast, herbal tea with milk).

**Dinner timing:**

- Aim for finishing dinner 2–3 hours before bed most nights. If late, keep it lighter.



# Part 3

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## COMMUNITY CUE

Share one swap idea with your circle (“*Evening herbal tea instead of wine*”) and ask for theirs. Friendly accountability supports steadiness.

## WHAT TO NOTICE

- Fewer 2–4 am wake-ups.
- Less groggy early morning feel.

### Gentle self-talk

“I’m not restricting—I’m choosing steadier inputs for steadier nights.”



Part 4

# Create a Supportive Daily Environment (“Soil”)

**FOCUS**    Small daytime anchors that set up calm nights.

**WHY IT’S ROOT-CAUSE ALIGNED**

Better soil, better outcomes. These aren’t sleep hacks; they’re gentle day-to-night

**WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK**

**Morning outside light:**

- A brief outdoor moment most mornings (even 5–10 minutes) to signal “day.” Stand on the step, open curtains wide, or take a short walk.

**Breakfast anchor:**

- Combine protein + fiber: eggs and wholegrain toast; yoghurt, fruit, and nuts; oats with seeds. Aim to avoid mid-morning crashes that push afternoon caffeine.

**Mini-unwind in the afternoon:**

- 5–10 minutes of quiet: legs up the couch, breathe out longer than in, write a few lines to “empty the head.” This prevents evening overload.

**Gentle movement (optional):**

- A short walk, light stretch, or a few mobility moves—choose what feels kind.

# Part 4

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## COMMUNITY CUE

Pair the morning light with a friend’s voice note or a brief text check-in: “Got my light in, how about you?”  
Belonging makes habits stick.

## WHAT TO NOTICE

- More even daytime energy.
- Evenings feel less mentally crowded.

### Gentle self-talk

“Small anchors by  
day steady the  
water at night.”



# Part 5

## A Calm Plan for Night Wake-Ups

**FOCUS** Respond steadily so wakefulness doesn’t spiral into stress.

**WHY IT’S ROOT-CAUSE ALIGNED**

We’re not patching symptoms; we’re reducing arousal and letting sleep return when it’s ready.

**WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK**

**If awake and alert after a while**

- Sit up in low light (or move to a quiet chair).
- Breathe out longer than in (e.g., in 4, out 6–8) for a few minutes.
- Read a few calm pages or listen to soft instrumental audio.
- Return to bed when drowsy.

**Gentle boundaries**

- Cover the clock; avoid “*doing the maths.*”
- Keep the room comfortable (cool, quiet, dark enough).

**If thoughts race:**

- “*Name and park*” them on paper: “*This is planning; it can wait.*” Place the note face down.

# Part 5

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## COMMUNITY CUE

If helpful, agree with a partner that night-time is a non-problem-solving zone. A shared understanding removes pressure and protects calm.

## WHAT TO NOTICE

- Shorter wake periods.
- Less frustration the morning after.

### Gentle self-talk

“Wakefulness happens. I know what to do, and that’s enough.”



# Part 6

## Keep What Works; Skip the Fads

**FOCUS** Choose maintainables and avoid the never-ending fix cycle.

**WHY IT’S ROOT-CAUSE ALIGNED**

Save time and money by treating causes instead of buying band-aids. Your personal “minimums” keep progress steady without perfectionism.

**WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK**

**Pick your 3 minimums:**

- Example: Wind-down starts 9:30pm; caffeine cut-off 1 pm; afternoon mini-unwind most days.

**Define your 2 most common triggers and your steady response:**

- Trigger: Late blue-light scroll. Response: Phone docked in kitchen at 9:15pm.
- Trigger: Stressful evening email. Response: Add to “tomorrow list” and close laptop at 9pm.

**“Pause before purchase” practice:**

- Before buying a new sleep thing, ask: Why/How/When/What contributed this week? Is there a soil tweak I can try first?

# Part 6

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## COMMUNITY CUE

Share your three minimums with your group and check in on Fridays: “Which one felt easiest? Which needs support?” Celebrate steadiness, not perfection.

## WHAT TO NOTICE

- A dependable weekly rhythm.
- Fewer urgencies, more confidence.

### Gentle self-talk

“I keep it simple and steady. That’s what lasts.”



# Resources & Notes

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Use this page to jot insights from each part and the patterns you discover.

## MY KEY PATTERNS

## MY THREE MINIMUMS

## TRIGGERS TO WATCH + MY STEADY RESPONSE

# Printable Weekly Checklist: Calm by Design

Print and keep by your bedside.

Check what feels steady.

Start any week.

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Wind-down started on time							
Lights dimmed + phone parked							
Caffeine cut-off respected							
Alcohol-free evening							
Morning outdoor light (min)							
Afternoon unwind (5–10 min)							

## NOTES

What helped? What I’ll keep next week.

*Calm colours and gentle language are intentional for a low-drama experience. Start where you are; small and steady wins.*



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