



SLEEP WORKBOOK 04

Waking During the Night

A practical workbook for understanding nighttime awakenings, noticing what makes returning to sleep harder and creating a calmer plan for the middle of the night.

NOTICE • TRY • REFLECT

Waking briefly can be a normal part of sleep. This workbook focuses on what happens when you wake and struggle to settle again - without turning the awakening into another source of pressure.

This workbook belongs to:

What Are My Night Time Awakenings Like?

Start by noticing the pattern: how you wake, what you do next and what tends to make the awakening feel longer.

Brief awakenings can happen naturally between sleep cycles. The difficulty often comes when we become fully alert, worried, uncomfortable or focused on getting back to sleep immediately.

Which sound familiar?

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ I wake at roughly the same time | ☐ I wake several times |
| ☐ I immediately check the clock | ☐ I reach for my phone |
| ☐ I need the toilet | ☐ I wake feeling too hot or cold |
| ☐ I notice pain or discomfort | ☐ My thoughts start immediately |
| ☐ I worry that I will not get back to sleep | ☐ I become fully alert very quickly |

REFLECT

My usual night time pattern

When I wake, the first thing I usually notice or do is...

How difficult is it usually to settle again?

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- Usually easy Very difficult

NOTICE

What Might Be Waking Me?

You may not always know why you woke. Look for patterns rather than assuming every awakening has one clear cause.

BODY

- ☐ Toilet / bladder
- ☐ Pain or discomfort
- ☐ Hunger / thirst
- ☐ Hot, cold or sweating

MIND

- ☐ Dream or nightmare
- ☐ Worry / stress
- ☐ Remembering something
- ☐ Suddenly feeling alert

ENVIRONMENT

- ☐ Noise
- ☐ Light
- ☐ Partner / pet movement
- ☐ Bedding / room temperature

TIMING & HABITS

- ☐ Alcohol
- ☐ Late caffeine
- ☐ Late meal
- ☐ Irregular sleep timing

NOTICE

A pattern I have noticed

For example: a particular time, certain evenings, temperature, stress, food/drink or physical discomfort.

NOTICE

What Happens After I Wake?

Sometimes the awakening itself is brief, but what happens afterwards makes us increasingly alert. Map your own middle-of-the-night cycle.

I wake up

I notice I'm awake

I do / think...

I begin to feel...

I become more awake

REFLECT

Where could I make the awakening gentler?

Choose one point above. What could help you stay less alert, less frustrated or more comfortable?

TRY

Helping Yourself Settle Again

The aim is not to force yourself back to sleep. It is to keep the awakening as calm, dark and low-stimulation as you reasonably can.



Try not to repeatedly check the time or calculate how much sleep remains. If you become increasingly awake or frustrated, a quiet low-stimulation activity away from bed can help until sleepiness returns.

What could help me?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Keep the room dim | ☐ Avoid checking the time |
| ☐ Slow my breathing | ☐ Adjust temperature / bedding |
| ☐ Use the toilet without bright lights | ☐ Write down a persistent thought |
| ☐ Listen to calm audio | ☐ Sit somewhere quiet if needed |
| ☐ Return to bed when sleepy | ☐ Use a reassuring phrase |

TRY

My best settling options

Choose two or three things that feel realistic at night.

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

If you need to get up, keep the activity quiet and uninteresting rather than starting work, chores or anything that makes you feel fully awake.



My Middle-of-the-Night Plan

Create a simple plan now so you have something familiar to follow when you are tired and do not want to make lots of decisions.

1. WHEN I WAKE

I will first remind myself...

2. I CHECK MY COMFORT

Is there a simple physical or environmental need?

3. I KEEP THINGS LOW-STIMULATION

I will avoid / reduce...

4. IF I BECOME WIDE AWAKE

My quiet alternative is...

5. WHEN SLEEPINESS RETURNS

I will return to bed and...

KEEP IT SIMPLE

My one-sentence nighttime reminder

Something brief and reassuring you can return to instead of arguing with yourself about sleep.



My 7-Night Awakening Experiment

Track patterns lightly. The goal is not to monitor every minute of sleep, but to notice whether your response to waking becomes calmer.

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
Woke during the night	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Used my nighttime plan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Settling again felt easier	☐ 1-5	☐ 1-5	☐ 1-5	☐ 1-5	☐ 1-5	☐ 1-5	☐ 1-5

Tick the first two rows. For settling again, write 1-5 inside the circle (1 = very difficult, 5 = much easier).

What did I discover?

A PATTERN I NOTICED

WHAT HELPED ME SETTLE

SOMETHING I WILL CHANGE

SOMETHING I WILL KEEP

Waking during the night does not mean the whole night is ruined. A calmer response can help keep a brief awakening from becoming a long period of alertness and frustration.