



Stimulus control instructions

For use if you wake at night or can't get to sleep

Step 1: Become aware of your state of mind. If you notice that you are tossing and turning and sleep is not happening, pause to recognize your state of mind. This might happen at the beginning of the night or if you happen to wake up in the middle of the night. Prolonged periods of being awake in bed usually lead to tossing and turning, becoming frustrated, or worrying about not sleeping. These reactions make it more difficult to fall asleep. Also when you lie in bed awake trying to sleep, wanting and hoping to go back to sleep, you are training (conditioning) yourself to be awake in bed.

Step 2: Get out of sleep mode. Once you are aware that sleep is not likely to come soon, you need to acknowledge this state of wakefulness, get out of bed, and go to another room. Getting out of bed when you are unable to sleep is often not easy. Your bed is comfortable, you might want to at least get some rest, and you might be hopeful that your continued efforts to sleep will make it happen. However, keep in mind that sleep naturally emerges when the body and the mind are calm and content. Therefore, the activities that you choose to do when you are out of bed should promote that state of mind. Things that are soothing and pleasant usually work well. If you find that getting out of bed is too difficult or if there are physical limitations for getting out of bed at night, **you can also choose to sit up in bed.** This means getting yourself into an upright position so that your intention is to engage in a soothing activity rather than trying to sleep. If you are using a light to read, a dim light will have less of an alerting effect.

Step 3: Return to bed or a sleeping position only when sleepy. Whatever activity you choose, it is best to return to a sleeping position when you become aware that you are sleepy. When you become aware of a sensation that the mind and body are feeling relaxed and sleepy, you are more likely to fall asleep faster. Be aware of trying to make sleep to happen as this is likely to just lead to being alert and awake.