Bedtime Routine - Self-care and Mindfulness



[Image Source](https://www.pexels.com/photo/woman-meditating-in-bedroom-3772612/)

Establishing a great bedtime routine is one of the keys to unlocking more beautiful mornings. Getting enough rest and sleep are not only indispensable to our physical health but more so to our mental health. While there are several known reasons for sleep deprivation, a huge number of people struggle to get quality sleep due to extreme weather conditions or, for some women, the hormonal changes when they are in their menstrual period.

In this article, we’ll discuss new and not-so-new tips to make sure that your bedtime routine is filled with self-care and mindfulness.

# Building A Better Bedtime Routine

Let’s start with some tips that you probably have heard or read at least once.

1. Choosing the right pillows and mattress

This may seem like a giveaway, but for a lot of us, there is a tendency to neglect this very important aspect. It is crucial that we are not only lying in bed, we must in fact be comfortably lying. This presupposes that your body, most especially your spine, gets the proper support it needs. In addition to the pillows and mattresses, you should consider the cases and sheets you are using to cover them. A lot of people swear by the benefits of weighted blankets and how they [alleviate winter blues](https://higherdose.com/blogs/news/light-up-zone-out-cure-seasonal-depression), but if you don’t have one, just make sure your cases and sheets help in maintaining the right temperature as you sleep. Quality pillows and mattresses could spell the difference between waking up like Snow White or her two dwarves, Grumpy and Sleepy.

1. Give yourself time to unwind

Yes, we all have been there, those midnight cravings that seem so powerful that you feel you can’t sleep without opening the fridge one last time. As cliche as it may sound, our bodies really won’t be ready just yet to go to sleep if it’s working doubly hard to digest the cheeseburger you just finished. Keep caffeine intake and midnight snacks to a minimum, save it when you’re [sleeping on your period](https://www.rubylove.com/post/sleeping-on-your-period-best-positions-to-lay-in-for-cramps) or there’s a gathering you simply can’t afford not to attend.

1. Skip the naps and your mobile phone

As tempting as it may sound, taking naps when it’s almost your bedtime is a probable cause of your sleep disruption. The most ideal time to take a nap, according to most experts, is after lunch or early in the afternoon. When you take naps way too long (longer than 20 minutes) and close to your bedtime, you end up wide awake and the next thing you know, you’re on your mobile phone scrolling the news feeds of your friends. Ditching the naps, and in turn not having the need to use your phone, could prove beneficial to your bedtime routine in the long run.

Aren’t these tips already common sense? Maybe they are, and the reason you need to read them again is to be reminded that they are cliche for a reason - they work. So what else can you do to level up your bedtime routine?

## Self-care And Mindfulness in Yoga and Meditation

One of the not-so-known tips to having better sleep is incorporating yoga and meditation in your bedtime routine. We all have good days and bad days, but when the bad days seem to outnumber the good days, mindfulness meditation and even controlled breathing could help you release all the physical and mental negativity that is robbing you of a good night’s sleep. Here are some pointers to get you started with your self-care and mindfulness in your bedtime routine.

1. Yoga as an alternative to sleep medication

Sleep medication should be taken with caution as they cannot be used in the long term. Yoga, on the other hand, has been proven, time and again, to have long-lasting benefits the more you do it and incorporate it into your bedtime routine. Yoga promotes relaxation that our bodies need in order to lower our stress hormones and level of alertness, exactly what we need when we are about to sleep and want a fresh start in the morning. The yoga poses that are meant for a good night’s rest are gentle and perfect even for beginners. Restorative yoga poses (like legs-up-the-wall or butterfly position) can do wonders as it relaxes your muscles in time for bed.

1. Guided meditation

Winter makes it a challenge for all of us to move an inch. While we now know that yoga helps, we might think it’s impossible to even raise our legs when the weather is this cold. Meditation is another great way of overcoming holiday anxiety and getting that [quality sleep](https://www.thephysedexpress.com/sleep-better-feel-better-challenge.html) we all want. One example of guided meditation is called Yoga Nidra. You can easily download these guided meditations online. All you have to do is lie down and listen as the recording gives you cues. You can do this while you are enjoying your weighted blanket, no movements necessary. In a nutshell, the verbal cues provide you with help in maintaining relaxing and calming breathing techniques that will surely get rid of your stress and promote a good night’s sleep.

1. Warm Bath and Warm Scent

Self-care in your bedtime routine includes indulging in a warm bath or shower, coupled with the right scents, you might be surprised how calming and relaxing this can be. For most of us, a skincare routine is a must. So why not notch it up a bit for a better bedtime routine? Before you lather your face with moisturizer or after you brush your teeth, light some candles, play that acoustic music in the background, and pamper yourself with a warm bath. [Self-care](https://www.provenskincare.com/blog/scientific-benefits-of-self-care) must include what we consciously do in order to get enough rest, quality rest at that. In fact, there are those who believe that a bedtime routine is the most important part of self-care.

Final Words Before You Sleep

No one was spared from the additional stress that this pandemic has brought us. If getting quality sleep was a challenge before the pandemic, it became a bigger challenge this year. These evening routine changes that we have provided are not drastic and have been proven effective by different studies and researches. So why not try one of these tips, and who knows, you might not only get a better good night’s sleep, you might just save yourself a trip to the doctor. Sleep well!