



Sarah Woodward  
hypnotherapy

## 7 Steps to More Restful Sleep

### It's no fun when your sleep goes out the window is it?

Even just one night of disturbed sleep can result in groggy feelings and difficulty concentrating the following day. When your sleep is disturbed for longer periods of time it's not uncommon to find yourself feeling irritable and snapping at those around you, even though you don't want to.

When your sleep is interrupted, your ability to cope with the day to day challenges of life diminishes and that's because sleep plays a vital role in emptying what is know as your Stress Bucket.



### The Stress Bucket

Each of us has a stress bucket and as we go about our lives various stresses of the day gather in there, from running out of milk in the morning, the plonker that pulled out in front of you when they should have given way to worrying about an upcoming work meeting with your manager.

All of these small and larger stresses through the day get stored as an emotional memory in your stress bucket and it's only at night, during your REM ( rapid eye movement) sleep that your brain gets to sorting through your bucket and clearing it out ready for the next day. Some things it will clear straight away and the next day it's all forgotten about, a distant memory...some things take a bit more work and these may remain in your bucket longer, gradually reducing over time.

So we want to be starting each day with the least amount possible remaining in the stress bucket, giving us maximum capacity for whatever the day has in store for us and we can see that getting those quality Zzz's really is **hugely** important in achieving that!

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Tel: 07960 149455 Web: [www.sarahwoodwardhypnotherapy.co.uk](http://www.sarahwoodwardhypnotherapy.co.uk)  
email: [info@sarahwoodwardhypnotherapy.co.uk](mailto:info@sarahwoodwardhypnotherapy.co.uk)



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To help you start to get your sleep back on track, here are my 7 Steps to Sleep

1. Jot down three things that you can do each evening as part of a “relax and unwind” ready for bed routine. Examples could be taking a shower or bath, putting on your PJs, turning off the TV and reading for an hour.
2. Reduce your exposure to blue light from electronic devices in the lead up to bed, ideally at least 1.5hrs before. Consider what you can do to reduce the temptation of picking your device up again until the following day.
3. Decide on a bedtime and wake time and stick with it. Aim for at least 8 hours a night. Think about what time you currently go to bed and wake each day. Are you getting the recommended 8 hours each night? If you’ve been getting less than 8 hours for an extended period of time this could actually be what’s keeping you awake at night! The less sleep you get, the less your stress bucket is emptied, leading you to feel more stressed which disturbs your sleep! Vicious cycle.
4. Check your caffeine consumption. How many caffeinated drinks are you having each day? Just 2 can negatively impact on your sleep! Are there any caffeine free alternatives you enjoy that you could switch to for the afternoon and evening?
5. Keep a pad and pen next to your bed, before you switch off the light write down as many good things as you can from your day, try and get at least 10 things for each day, it doesn’t matter how big or how small a positive it is, as long as its a positive it counts.
6. Listen to my guided hypnotherapy relaxation track as you settle down to fall asleep or choose one of your favourites from the [Relax & Calm](#) Facebook group to listen to. It’s important to stick with the same one for at least two weeks so don’t be tempted to try a different one each night!
7. Have a plan for if you wake. Decide on some happy memories you can recall. If you find after 20-30 minutes you’re still unable to sleep don’t lie awake in your bed, get up and go to another room and do something incredibly boring that you really don’t enjoy. When the sleepy feeling returns, go to bed. If you wake again and can’t drift off, do the same. Your brain will soon see there is no reward in waking you.

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### What else can help?

If after two weeks you're still having difficulties with your sleep, get in touch and arrange a FREE, no obligation online Initial Consultation. It may be that a few hypnotherapy sessions are what you need. Solution focused hypnotherapy is science and evidence based therapy, backed up by a dedicated research programme of over 10 years. It's 100% natural and safe and you remain in full control at all times.

Visit my website here: <https://www.sarahwoodwardhypnotherapy.co.uk>

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