

- Discard the myth of the 8 hour sleep.
- The average sleep time in adults in the Western world is about 7.5 hours.
- But there is variation either side of that mean.
- Naturally short sleepers are at risk of developing insomnia when they try to strive for the 8 hour ideal and fail.
- Explain that the right amount of sleep for them at the moment is the amount that makes them feel alert most of the day most days.
  
- Don't tell them to go to bed at the same time every night. This often makes insomnia worse.
- Tell them to get up at the same time every morning, seven days a week, whether they have slept well or slept badly, whatever time they went to bed.
- This way they start accumulating tiredness at the same time each day and will gradually come to feel sleepy around the same time each day.
  
- Discourage napping.
- If fatigue is the fuel that drives sleep, then every nap is like stealing some of that sleep fuel from the night.
- It is better to push through the sleepy periods during the day and save that fatigue for the night.
- Once their sleep improves it will be easier to avoid napping.
  
- Tell them never to go to bed until they are sleepy.
- If they go to bed when they are not sleepy they will just lie in bed waiting to get sleepy. This will reinforce their belief that their sleep is "broken".
- If they go to bed when sleepy they have a better chance of falling asleep quickly and staying asleep.
  
- Tell them to spend less time in bed, not more.
- They should set an earliest bedtime and should not go to bed until they have reached that bedtime and they are sleepy.
- Each week the earliest bedtime is moved 20 minutes later.
- When they are falling asleep within 20 minutes and sleeping fairly solidly through the night they can reverse the process and start moving their earliest bedtime 20 minutes earlier each week.

### **Things Not Allowed in the Bedroom**

- TV/Radio
- Computer
- Talking on phone
- Texting
- Exercise
- Ironing
- Studying
- Paying bills
- Reading!!
- Meditating
- Arguing
- Etc, etc, etc

- they go to bed, or wake up in the middle of the night, and they are not asleep within about 20 minutes, they should get up, get out of the bedroom, and do something relaxing and enjoyable e.g. watch TV, read, listen to a podcast.
- When they are sleepy they can go back to bed.
- If they aren't asleep within another 20 minutes, repeat above.

- Explain that these techniques work, but they work slowly.
- They will not sleep better straight away and, in fact, may sleep worse initially.
- But the payoff for the reduced sleep in the short term is better sleep in the long term.
- Teach them the mantra: I am not doing this tonight to sleep better tonight. I may actually sleep worse tonight. I am doing this to sleep better in a month.