

- (1) Simplify your life. An overabundance of information can be stressful. Cutting out some of the clutter in your life will help you focus on what really matters.
- (2) Pick your battles. Develop the wisdom to know what's worth stressing over. The flexibility and resiliency of strategies to use in those battles is summarized in an old Quaker saying: 'In the face of strong winds, let me be a blade of grass. In the face of strong walls, let me be a gale of wind.'
- (3) Avoid alcohol four hours before bed. Booze makes you sleepy, but it also causes fragmented sleep while your body spends the night metabolizing the alcohol.
- (4) Don't drink caffeinated beverages after noon. Caffeine can stay in your system as long as nine hours after you consume it.
- (5) Take a walk. You are more vulnerable to stress when you're in bed. So when you can't sleep because your mind is racing with worry, go for a walk around the block. Give the adrenaline a place to go. A little exercise will release beta-endorphins into your bloodstream, which will counteract the stress hormones.
- (6) Keep your bedroom cool, between 60 and 68 degrees.
- (7) Set your alarm clock and hide it in a drawer. Being able to see the time only reminds you how late it is and makes you more anxious about how you're not asleep yet.
- (8) Go to sleep and get up at the same times every day to set your body's internal clock.
- (9) Exercise. Even 15 minutes a day will enhance the quality of your sleep. Do not exercise 2 hours before going to bed. Allow time for your body to relax.
- (10) Drink a glass of milk before bed. It contains tryptophan, an amino acid that's one of the first ingredients in serotonin, a soothing brain chemical. Also eat a bowl of instant oatmeal topped with a sliced banana. These are two of the few foods that contain the sleep-promoting hormone melatonin.

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