



Mental Health Matters: Sleep well to be well?

We surely all know from experience how important is a good



night's sleep. Deprive any of us for just a couple of nights and we feel dreadful, a few more and we teeter on the brink of altered mental states. We may fear sleeplessness, which is not unreasonable as lack of sleep makes just about everything else worse and most of us are aware that sleep deprivation has been used as a form of torture.

We also know that sleeping well is a major support for being well, whatever else is happening, so it may be helpful to have some ideas or strategies to consider if we're having difficulties.

It's important to remember sleep is an entirely natural process. If it's not working for us it can be useful to reflect on what's preventing it and address that. Sometimes it's obvious, but difficult to change and other times obscure and confusing. But as with so many aspects of our mental health, remedy starts with taking an interest in how we are doing, turning to face it, accepting that things are as they are just now and bring a kindly curiosity to working it out.



www.health.harvard.edu/blog/strategies-to-promote-better-sleep-in-these-uncertain-times-2020032719333

Here's a helpful little guide from Harvard Medical School ... lessons learned from sleep science. They divide their advice into daytime and night-time tips to help with sleep. And there are few surprises ... it's not really about clever new ideas, although there may be some, so much as taking to heart the need to

take care of how our days and nights prepared us for sleep ...

or not, and may be helpful to have a checklist to work through and hold in mind to as a reminder and support for resolve.

They also ask, as many of us will also surely do, *'What if I am doing all these things and I still can't sleep?'* and acknowledge that although it's common to sleep poorly and sleeping poorly is commonly due to things we can influence, some, perhaps many, of us will still struggle to make progress with our sleep

**WAKE UP FROM
FEELING TIRED**

problems and may find it useful to seek help. A common route of inquiry is to see your GP and our family doctors have a great deal of experience in this area and some specific tools to offer too. Our local NHS mental health Trust has made helping with sleep problems an area of

TALKWORKS
IMPROVING YOUR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL WELLBEING

www.talkworks.dpt.nhs.uk/what-are-sleep-difficulties

focus. Their TALKWORKS service offers tips and guidance and a free and friendly self-referral service through which to access skilled help. You can get in touch online or via 0300 555 3344.

And lastly ... Our title carries a perhaps unexpected question mark, 'Sleep well to be well?' ... surely, it's unquestionable that you need to sleep well to be well? Well, it will certainly help ... but what if it's simply not



www.youtube.com/watch?v=m35sbEntHdA&feature=youtu.be

possible ... is that it? Fortunately not ... for as with pretty much any other recurrent, longer term, and difficult experience it may still be possible to change our relationship with things we cannot change ... which then changes how we experience that that experience and can

help. And some may like to look up this little video from Glenn with his suggestions for 'befriending insomnia'.

Take care, and with all good wishes

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