

UNCONVENTIONAL WAYS TO FALL ASLEEP

MAISHA MALIHA

Do you feel lethargic yet you find yourself unable to avail the services of the sandman? Want to drive yourself into dreamland as soon as you hit the sack? Read on for these full-proof scientifically tested (by me) methods to get some shut-eye for a change:

1. A horrible book

Chemistry and I have the kind of relationship where the couple can't stand each other but won't be able to go on without the other – I detest the very existence of Chemistry but I need it in my life because these grades ain't loyal. I keep the book beside my pillow just in case I can't sleep. Reading 2 pages from it knocks me right out.

2. Take a cold shower before bed

Yes, you read that right. Take a cold spine-freezing shower until you're shivering so severely that your muscles feel worn out. A lot of people advise taking a hot bath to relax, but since the body needs to lower its temperature in order to fall asleep, a hot bath right before bed will actually keep you up.

3. Sleep paradox

Suppose you were unable to sleep on a particular Tuesday, don't try to sleep anymore on that day. Stay awake and watch giraffe videos online till it's time to go about your day and finish your chores. When your eyelids start giving out, it's time to call it a day. One could say that it'd be more productive to study during that time, but let's not kid ourselves. Note the time you go to bed. Your body will automatically reset its biological clock to put you to sleep at the right time on the next day. Unless you stay up late again to watch giraffe videos, then you're eternally screwed.



4. Alarming madness

In another instance, you may have fallen asleep at dawn. Naturally you'll wake up late and miss half of the day. Set 10-15 alarms to wake you up insanely early. I set my alarms at 9 am, 9:02am, 9:04am, 9:06am....you get the gist. I force myself to wake up, usually because the alarms annoy me and eventually get me going.

5. Tiger balm

I swear I am mentally healthy. When I can't sleep, I scoop out a dollop of the ointment and slather it over my forehead. When I do open my eyes, I discover that it's noon and I've overslept. #noragrets

6. Hide your phone

You toss and turn in your bed, grabbing your phone from underneath your pillow, watching the minutes tick closer to morning. Unable to sleep, you try to make your eyes droop by watching random videos online or listening to "sleep music" playlists. No, it doesn't work. Take it from someone who has under eye bags the size of two family size suitcases. Turn off your phone and keep it far away from your reach, for example on your study table. Being part of the millennial culture, I know too well that we aren't ready to make the effort to get up from our beds to our study tables to fetch our

phones.

The mind is the arch nemesis of sleep. No matter how many cups of herbal tea you drink, how many songs you listen to, or how many push-ups you do before bed to wear yourself out, a stuffed mind will definitely keep you awake. The aforementioned methods might just help you let go of some of the anxieties and just have a refreshing sleep. Good night.

Maisha Maliha speaks what crosses her mind in the most positive way but is often misinterpreted and thought to be a lunatic. Unfollow her at www.facebook.com/MyshoeMaliha

DEALING WITH TOXIC FRIENDS

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There are a lot of conversations around how to deal with toxic relationships. But what rarely tends to be brought up is toxicity in friendships, which occurs at a similar rate. There is of course no by the book way of dealing with these forms of toxicity, just to study the situation and then go by it. However, it's always good to have a few outlines of what could be done laid out:

Identifying the signs of toxicity: The first thing to do is to determine what the signs of a toxic friendship are. Signs such as the impression that you can no longer trust this friend or that they constantly act selfishly even if it means hurting you. Friendly banter and teasing are part of creating a sense of camaraderie, but when this banter or teasing becomes mean-spirited to the point of affecting your mental health, that is when you have to consider whether it is becoming toxicity. Not just mean-spiritedness, of course – always agreeing to everything you say can also be a sign of a toxic friend. A person who supports and even encourages you to do things that are hurtful for you is not a friend but an enabler. There are, obviously, multiple other signs that cannot be boxed into this broad category, but the one important sign to look

When I see pictures of me and my old friends.



out for is whether this person is negatively affecting your mental health.

Creating boundaries and space for yourself: Once you know a friend is toxic, it's difficult to figure out the next course of action. Especially if this friend is a part of a friend group you are in. This is when it is important to

find where you stand and create boundaries. Creating boundaries means to figure things out, through talking to the other person. You state what it is that you are comfortable with and what would put you more at ease. However, you can also create space for yourself by doing things on your own, sitting out on some outings even if it means feeling some of that FOMO (fear of missing out). The space from the constant outings will actually do you some good with respect to creating a better sense of self and self-reflection.

Branch out with your friendship: Ultimately, you might realise that there is no other way but to distance yourself. To do that, though, it is best not to isolate yourself, but rather to branch out with your friendships. The older you get the harder it is to make friends, so it feels easier to stick to those who are already there, but getting out of your comfort zone can actually get you interested in a new hobby or place through travel and joining classes. And, most importantly, this gives you the chance to hopefully meet people you're truly comfortable with.

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