

Sleep & Night Meditation



At the ambrosial hour of the early dawn,
be ye in communion with the Divine Word,
and meditate on His glory.
(Guru Nanak)



How is it that those people are most beautiful
who pray at night?
Because they are alone with the All-Merciful
who covers them with Light from His Light.
(Hasan Ibn 'Ali)



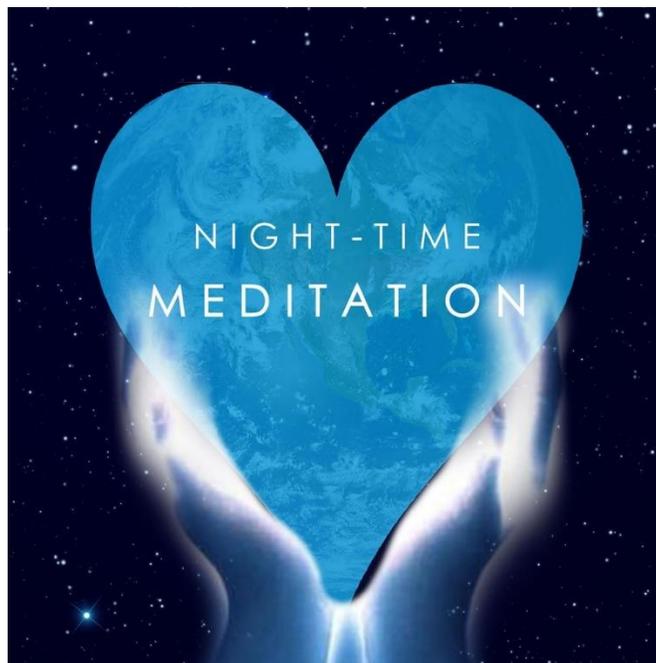
Up, sluggard, and waste not life;
in the grave will be sleeping enough.
(Benjamin Franklin)



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Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj

Masters never sleep. Our Hazur [Baba Sawan Singh] would retire to his bedroom at about midnight or 1 A.M., and at 3 A.M. would rise again. So this can become a habit. When the soul gets a connection with the Greater Consciousness, it gains strength and refreshment. If one removes the attention from the body and goes up, the body gets perfect rest. The law is that if one gets true sleep for just a few minutes, it is enough. For those who travel on this Path, reduction in sleep is a very frequent occurrence. But for those who have not progressed very far, it is something like a miracle to see a person awake all the time. So when night comes along, be in His remembrance. Go into the Lord's lap and rest. If the night is used unwisely, the whole life is ruined, and those who use the nights to their advantage secure their whole future.

(ruhanisatsangusa.org/pdf/ss72/ss197201.pdf)



Our Hazur used to say that the Satguru hovers around during the night, trying to distribute this Precious Treasure; but the world's eyes are filled with sleep, completely unaware that it is available. Man sleeps the profitable night hours away. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/disciple.htm)

Excerpts from *The Night is a Jungle*

You can make your home a lonely forest. Is not the night a lonely forest? Just consider for a moment. Those who have made the best use of their nights, by knowing oneself and the Over-self, have themselves been made. Those who have wasted their nights in frivolous pursuits have wasted themselves. Even a student of worldly knowledge becomes intellectually strong if he makes full use of the night as well as the day.

Those men who exercise the physical body through the cold nights become giants in muscle and strength; it is obvious how strong they are. And the disciples who spend their nights in sweet remembrance of the Lord become God themselves. If man can control the dim hours from sunset to sunrise he becomes a true human being. But instead we eat, drink, enjoy the worldly pleasures until midnight, and then snore the rest of the night away.

One Master has said that in the night, the Lord's fragrance is given out - he who remains awake receives this precious gift. Do the worldly duties in the daytime, and at night consider that you are all alone, deep in the country.

One's duties and social obligations with family and friends should be performed with pleasure, because God has joined you together, for the sake of give and take. But in the night you can feel free from all this and repose in His lap. It is not at all necessary to leave your home and family for meditation when you have the long lonely nights. When you are wholly absorbed in some object, it is a true sanyas, cutting off from all other things, and if we start from today, most definitely our lives will change. (<http://www.ruhanisatsangusa.org/jungle.htm>)

The night is a jungle — do your work (worldly duties) in the daytime and then benefit from the night. The true purpose of having the human form is to make daily progress toward the great Goal, so sit down each day and see where you are. As the renunciate leaves everything and goes to the woods, you can sit down nightly in your home, forgetting the world and freeing yourself from all entanglements. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/pdf/NIAJ.pdf)

The Time of Elixir

Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

(Philosophy of the Masters)

The Hindu Shastras have described the early morning hours as auspicious and as God's own time. The last three hours of night are known as the Time of Elixir, for this pure and serene time was utilized for meditation by the ancient true Yogis and Saints. Even in the Adi Granth Sahib the value of this part of the morning has been highly extolled. Guru Nanak, in particular, has eulogized the uniqueness and efficacy of the Time of Elixir for meditation and devotion to Naam. (Adi Granth, Japji 2-6)

It is the practice of Saints to keep awake at night. Men of the world spend this time in sensual and worldly pleasures. Men of God spend their nights in remembering Him. Both are awake, but the blessed are those who utilize it in Hari-Kirtan, that is, in the remembrance of the Lord.
(Adi Granth, Maru 5, 1018-11)

Shams-i-Tabriz says:

Night is the time when the Beloved Lord appears. Those who are asleep at this time are depriving themselves of a great boon. Day is for work, but night is for love and devotion to the Lord. Therefore, the whole night should be spent in communion with the Lord. The whole world sleeps, but the devotees spend the night in meditation at the Feet of the Lord.

All times are good for meditation, and one should utilize whatever time suits him. But the morning time just before daybreak, and evening time immediately after sunset – are particularly beneficial, because these times unite night and day (dusk and dawn), and spiritual currents are particularly strong and powerful at such a time. During the day, we are engaged in the affairs of the world. Therefore only night remains for devotion to the Lord.

A man who works during the day naturally feels tired in the evening. For him sleep is essential and it comes automatically to remove the fatigue of the day. Thus, only the latter part of the night remains during which a person can do meditation in complete alertness. The Time of Elixir begins from three in the morning. The body and mind are refreshed and calm, and fit for meditation. Therefore, the latter part of the night is considered more beneficial for this purpose.

The fruit of meditation done in the first part of the night is just like the budding of the trees, but meditation during the latter part of the night is like the tree bearing the ripe fruit. At this time, one gets the grace of God.

When the night is young, it yieldeth flower. When old, the fruit; Yea, they who keep awake in God, alone are blest. (Farid)

During sleep the soul-consciousness comes down to the throat or the navel center, and when a person is awake, the consciousness is at the eye center. Therefore, if one makes an effort to withdraw his consciousness from the body, which is a practice for separating spirit from matter, the soul will easily leave the body in the early morning, because at that time the soul has just entered the pores of the body and can be easily withdrawn from them. Besides, in the early morning hour there are usually no worries of the world to occupy our minds, and such a time is therefore better for concentration, which is not possible at other times because of worldly duties, etc. At the Time of Elixir the mind is quite fresh and the day's turmoils have not spread their

tentacles over it. With the rising of the sun and the falling of its rays, our thoughts begin to scatter. In the early morning hours a person is very near God. Concentration attained and meditation done at this time leave their impression on the day's work. And whatever such a person does, he does with a concentrated mind.

No spiritual practice should be undertaken immediately after a heavy meal or on a full stomach, because then the body energies are engaged in the digestive process. It is better to meditate on an empty stomach. In the early morning hours the stomach is empty, as the food taken the evening before is normally digested completely by that time.

Guru Ram Das says:

During the Time of Elixir one should attach oneself to devotion of the Lord, because at this time such efforts blossom and bear fruit without fail, which never diminish and lead to honor both here and beyond. Sowing the Lord's Name when the morning is young, the devotee reaps an inexhaustible harvest. Both now and hereafter, the devotees are blest with the glory of the Lord's riches. (Adi Granth)

The world sleeps while men of God are awake in His remembrance and are dyed in the hues of His love. Lord Krishna says:

While ordinary people waste the Time of Elixir in deep sleep, regarding it as night, the devotees of the Lord keep awake. But during the day when ordinary people are awake, the devotees of the Lord consider it to be night. (Gita, 2-69)

A person who does not get up and remain awake at dawn is not alive. He is virtually dead. And the head which does not bow in devotion to the Lord at such a time has no worth! (Farid, 1383-14)

Maulana Rum says:

O seeker! Cease your sleep at night and walk into the street of those who keep a vigil. You will behold them happy and blissful in the Lord's refulgence within, like lovers deep in contemplation of their beloveds, and in the same manner as a moth is enraptured by the light of a lamp.

Another Saint, Kutubdin, says:

O my son, forsaking your sleep at midnight, lie awaiting your Beloved's glance.

He further says:

O my heart, if you wish to bathe in the light of your Beloved's face, awake at early dawn, leave the comforts of your bed, sit in meditation in a corner, and you will behold Him.

Shams-i-Tabriz similarly states:

O thou beautiful moon-like seeker, if you do not sleep at night you will gain the treasure of immortality. Your night will become resplendent with that hidden sun. Your eyes will open and you will behold His splendor.

He then adds:

You have spent thousands of nights in endeavoring to fulfill your desires and cravings, but if you do not sleep for the sake of your Beloved, then what harm can befall you? Do you not know that whatever the spiritual kings possess, was obtained by them at night?

You should remain awake for the sake of that Giver of all gifts, and you should have no fear that sleeplessness will result in mental fatigue, because during that time flows the Foundation of Life, the Nectar of which will make you refreshed and heighten your consciousness. Therefore, do not sleep. Every morning the Voice of the Lord calls you. By listening to it, all your worries and troubles will vanish, and the stains of previous evil impressions on your mind will also be washed away. Do not sleep throughout the night, because at that time thousands of lives receive the sustaining life-force. Like the full moon, the Supreme Lord descends from the highest heavens to bless His disciples with the gifts of Grace and Mercy.

Farid also says:

God distributes musk at night. Those who remain asleep do not receive their share. And indeed what right have they to get it when they have a greater love for their sleep?

Again, Shams-i-Tabriz says:

Only at night the soul meets its Lord and has all its desires fulfilled. The hearts of those who realize the value of night become as brilliant as the noonday sun.

Laying emphasis on keeping a vigil at night, Shams-i-Tabriz further says:

There is seclusion at night. Our Beloved is within us, and what a gracious time it is! The Sound Currents of Naam are reverberating on all sides and are easily audible in the silence of the night. If you have an intense longing to meet your Lord, you should know the darkness of the night is like the long black tresses of the Beloved, spread everywhere. And if you continue to sleep at night, then you should be ashamed.

The solitude of night is like a river which has innumerable pure gems in it. If you are keen to acquire them, you dive deep into the ocean of the night. Do not be asleep. Behold the stars at night! How they keep awake and travel unimaginable distances! And learn the lesson that by keeping awake at night you also have to reach a Goal.

Hafiz also has similarly stressed that the key to the Treasure of God lies in meditation during the early morning hours and pining for the Lord the whole night. In other words, you should tread this path so that you may meet your Beloved. The lovers of God keep awake in meditation at night, particularly in the early morning hours. They repeat His Name, and are rid of all their sufferings and cares, anxieties and dissensions.

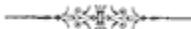


Early morning is the most beneficial time for meditation. Supreme oneness of thought upon the true Naam is had at the ambrosial small hours before dawn. So rise early, and shake off all feelings of sloth... When you arise in the morning, be awakened - have a bath or wake yourself by any means, but be really awake when you sit down for meditation. With these habits, even in sleep your meditation will continue; and when awake, even then you will have that meditative attitude all day. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/chaupar.htm)



So, when night comes along, be in His remembrance. Go into the Lord's lap and rest. If the night is used unwisely, the whole life is ruined, and those who use the nights to their advantage secure their whole future. Free your mind of all things and have but a single thought all night, and in the morning continue with that thought and sit in an awakened state; your soul will partake of the spiritual food, the very Bread of Life. With this, all gifts will be received.

(ruhanisatsangusa.org/chaupar.htm)



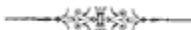
They say that if one's early morning hours are wasted in sleep, one dies before living.

(*The Teachings of Kirpal Singh*, vol. 3, 18)



Success awaits those who lose their heads in the pursuit of God. Living in ease and comfort, sleeping long and getting up when you will, meditating fifteen and twenty minutes at your convenience, and making up excuses for your lapses are not the means by which you reach Him.

(*Sat Sandesh*, July 1988, 23)

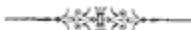


Rise early every day, and do your meditation. Rise before sunrise, and repeat the Naam; All negative effects will be mitigated, O Nanak. Early morning is the most beneficial time for meditation. Supreme oneness of thought upon the True Naam is had at the ambrosial small hours before dawn. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/pdf/ss72/ss197201.pdf)



The early morning hours are best suited for practice of the Sound Principle, for the mind is yet fresh out of sleep and has not yet wandered into the daily routine of the physical life. In the early morning hours commune with the Word leaving aside all attachments.

(ruhanisatsangusa.org/naam/naam_shabd3.htm)



I am glad you are devoting a small time to meditation; try to take a little more time from your night's rest, perhaps the last portion. It will not bring fatigue, but will be very refreshing.

(ruhanisatsangusa.org/drops.htm)

The worldly people waste their time sleeping, but not the lovers of God. Guru Arjan says: *Sleep does not come to me.* How then do such people pass the night? They spend the night in sighing, for to them one single day of separation is like thousands of years. What use are all rituals and customs and outer modes of worship, if one does not achieve this condition?

(ruhanisatsangusa.org/mailings/WHAT_HAVE_YOU_BECOME-DE.pdf)



So when the Masters come, millions who enjoy their company are carried across the ocean of life. Guru Ramdas Ji also recommended a daily program for the disciple; he said, *He who calls himself disciple of the Satguru should rise early and meditate upon the Naam.* Anyone who calls himself a disciple of that personality who is the Truth personified - the daily routine of such a disciple should be to rise before the dawn every day, and contact the Naam Power.

(ruhanisatsangusa.org/pdf/ss72/ss197205.pdf)



Question: I remember when I asked you whether you slept any yourself and you asked me, “Are you worried?” and the answer was, “Yes.” Perhaps I should not be worried about this but I have a little worry about it. Do you ever sleep at all? Ever?

Master Kirpal Singh: Yes, why not?

Questioner: The rumor is that you don’t get much.

Master: Less than an hour or two. That is relaxation, sometimes when I'm tired. As you go on your need for sleep is lessened, as I told you.

Questioner: But in that hour you’re able to recuperate? For the next 23 hours?

Master: Yes, there is recharging. Daily you recoup. On spiritual health depends the life of mind and body both. Soul withdraws and again you come back in. That is recharging. When you’re very tired, then recharging comes. The curative power is in the soul...

(ruhanisatsangusa.org/lok/visions.htm)

Question: How much sleep does the body need?

Master Kirpal Singh: Both sleep and diet can be brought to a very little. For a working man, at least five to six hours is required. As you live in the beyond more and more, you will require less. The Prophet Mohammed was asked, “Do you sleep?” “No, I don't sleep, my body sleeps.” *Master explained how attention goes up in conscious sleep and down in unconscious sleep.*

“But don't try to force the number of hours. Five to six hours minimum.” (Sat Sandesh, 6/72)



Selections from Sant Darshan Singh Ji Maharaj

The first sign [of the lover] is that of sleeping less than normal...Sant Kirpal Singh Ji used to say that if those whose hearts are stricken with earthly love move about as though they are lost, then how much more oblivious would those lovers be whose souls are stricken with divine love? Why does the lover sleep so little? The reason is simple, such a one is constantly glimpsing his or her Beloved, the Lord. Once this impulse of divine love is awakened in us, it does not let us sleep; it keeps us awake.



One who is a devotee of God, who loves God, is never alone. Such a person is in constant dialogue with his or her Beloved, is always in the presence of God, and is lost to the world. And one who is in constant company of the Lord and conversing with Him, what has he or she to gain by sleeping? That is why God's lovers seldom sleep; they are content to stay awake. It is their love which keeps them awake. The world may sleep, but the lover is always up and about.



We sleep, the medical doctors say, in order to ensure rest for the body. But for God's lover, what greater rest is there than to be in direct communion with the Lord! If the lover can behold the Beloved within, even for an instant, and become lost in His wondrous glances just for a moment, such a one would lose all thought of himself or herself and his or her body. When one loses all thought of the body, it is a natural phenomenon that the body is in complete rest. As a result, it obtains the rest it would normally get from sleep, and the soul enjoys bliss and solace from the vision within. The truth is that one who catches the fever of divine love loses all thought of sleep.

How can we think of sleep when the journey before us is so long? The path of spirituality is a path which does not allow sleeping. For the lover, sleep is a sacrilege. The great Master, Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji, used to say that anguish and restlessness are the inheritance of the lovers of God. They know neither rest nor sleep. (*Streams of Nectar*, 293, 294)



Question: I heard that through meditation one can get more benefit than from sleeping.

Sant Darshan Singh: When we are sleeping, our mind is in a semi-conscious or unconscious state; but mind is still working. We have our dreams, we have our nightmares, and even though we may not be aware of it we sometimes move our hand, our foot, or our head, or we toss about in our sleep. So our body is not getting complete rest. But when we are in meditation and we learn to rise above body-consciousness, then our body is completely at rest. Our soul soars into the higher planes and our body is fully at rest. So if we are able to rise above body-consciousness and are even able to put in one hour in that state, then our body has complete relaxation for one hour; whereas in sleep even four or six hours of sleep might not give the same comfort and calmness to our body. So an hour of real meditation in which we soar above the body-consciousness is worth many hours of sleep so far as rest to our body is concerned. It is very scientific and very simple.

Question: For beginners on the path, can you give some idea of how much sleep one needs?

Sant Darshan Singh: Sleep is a matter of our personal physical need. Doctors generally prescribe six to seven hours sleep for the average person, but we have seen that a good student sleeps less because he needs to put in more time for studies. And I can give you an example from my own life regarding sleep. We used to go through our course work and have as many revisions or reviews as possible, and in that process there have been many nights that became complete vigils. And sometimes I have gone to the examination hall without having had a wink of sleep. And that is true of other good students also.

Question: Do you think it is good to do that?

Sant Darshan Singh: It is just a matter of your own passion and zeal for the objective in view. It is good if that becomes a way of life with you. But it all depends on how much passion and zeal you have for your goal. And then we always adjust it to meet our physical needs. If somebody is sick, he might need a little more rest. If somebody is in a normal state, he might need four, five, or six hours sleep according to one's own physical needs and zeal for the objective in view. There is a phrase about those who have attained heights in their worldly and spiritual spheres: They have burned the midnight oil. So it all depends on how we are able to adjust our physical needs and our goals.

Question: Can we do it if we really have the desire?

Sant Darshan Singh: Yes. And once we start becoming really spiritual or start coming above body-consciousness, then our need for physical sleep lessens.

One of my relations once went and complained to our Beloved Master Sant Kirpal Singh, "Darshi (the affectionate name Beloved Master used to call me) sleeps only for about an hour and a half." And the Beloved Master replied, "An hour and a half? Even fifteen minutes should be enough for him!"

Question: When I try to sleep less, I cannot avoid being sleepy the next day. Then, anytime I sit for meditation I fall asleep.

Sant Darshan Singh: How much do you sleep?

Question: About four or five hours.

Sant Darshan Singh: Then in your case, you should sleep for six hours and then be alert. When you sleep, you should sleep. When you are awake, you should be awake. When you play, you should play. When you study, study. Increase your time of sleep from five to six hours. But then don't get up and feel drowsy because that doesn't pay.

When we sit in meditation we have to be conscious; we should not be drowsy, we should not feel sleepy. Have your full quota of sleep. You are a young man, if you need a little more, then you can have it, but when you get up you should insure that you are fully awake. We can really become fully awake when we become fully conscious and that is a higher stage of spirituality. But at least physically we should be fully awake. (*Sat Sandesh*, August 2001)



Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj

[The following is part of Sant Rajinder Singh's answer to the question "Why do I not get inner experiences all the time when I sit for meditation?"]

We might be meditating when we are very tired. If we are very tired, it is conducive to sleep. This is why, traditionally, over the years the saints have advocated meditation as the first thing in the morning. Why? Because in the morning, if you have a regular job, you sleep at night – you go to sleep at night at ten, eleven, or twelve and you get up in the morning at a reasonable hour.

It is also interesting that the time from three to six in the morning has been called the best time to meditate, called the *amrit vela*. It is interesting when you find out why.

These things are coming from the old days. This is coming from a time when there was no electricity. When there is no electricity and when the sun goes down around six, seven, or eight o'clock and you have to light a fire to do anything, chances are you will want to go to sleep.

So, if you went to sleep at eight o'clock, you could get up at three o'clock. If you went to sleep at twelve o'clock, you could not get up at three o'clock.

We have to look at the environment in which we live. If you say that three o'clock is very good, and you keep on working until twelve o'clock at night or if you do not sleep at night and you are up doing whatever activities you are doing, then you won't be able to get up early.

Early morning is said to be good if you have gotten your sleep so the body is well rested. Most people in the old days would take a shower so they were wide awake, so that they were really meditating not "sleepitating."

It is very interesting – some of these things have reasoning behind them, because people would sleep early so they could get up early and if they could get up early, they could meditate early. If you go to sleep very late, it is difficult for you to get up in the morning and do your meditation and then go to work.

We do what we think is important in our lives, so when we give importance to meditation, then we will make our lives such so that we go to bed at a reasonable hour and we get up at a reasonable hour. Then, when we sit down to meditate, we are not tired.

If you come back from work and you think you are going to meditate, chances are you will be very tired. If you have gone all day, whether you work physically or you work mentally, it strains the body. That is maybe not the best time to meditate. (*Sat Sandesh*. 9/11)



Do You Need Less Sleep When You Meditate?

Zoe Blarowski

w.care2.com/greenliving/do-you-need-less-sleep-when-you-meditate.html

It's no secret that meditation can help you increase awareness, improve health and reduce stress. But despite its many benefits, it can be a struggle to fit meditation into your busy schedule. What if there were an alternative? Research is showing that meditation can actually replace sleep. Instead of trying to work it into your regular day, you can try meditating in place of sleep.

Meditation increases short term mental performance and reduces need for sleep. This was the conclusion of a 2010 University of Kentucky study that looked at different groups of meditators.

The first part of the study found that after 40 minutes of meditating, novice meditators did better on a mental performance test compared to their normal performance. This suggests the participants were mentally well-rested after the meditation. Interestingly, their mental performance returned to normal when tested again after one hour. They were also tested after a 40-minute nap, and their performance was worse than normal.

The second part of the study looked at the amount of sleep and mental acuity of experienced meditators compared to a group of non-meditators. Each of the meditators had at least 3 years of meditation experience and meditated for 2.3 hours per day on average.

Researchers found that the meditators slept an average of 5.2 hours per night, compared to 7.8 hours for the non-mediator group. The experienced meditators tested well on their mental performance and had no signs of sleep deprivation, regardless of their lower hours of sleep.

There may be a learning curve. A study published by the New York Academy of Science concluded that Buddhist types of meditation practices may improve wakefulness and reduce the need for sleep, especially in long-term practice.

The researchers found that reduced sleep is fairly common during times of intensive meditative practice, such as multi-day silent retreats. Sleeping less is often considered a sign of meditative skill and progress. Buddhist texts suggest that proficient meditators sleep around 4 hours a night.

In addition, the study found that novice meditators often go through an adjustment period. For instance, they spoke to a meditator who had done a 3-month Tibetan-style *shamatha* retreat. She said she actually slept more than usual in the first two weeks of the intensive retreat. Then her sleep began to diminish to 1.5 to 3 hours per night by the eighth week.

This trend has been shown in many different studies, even for new meditators who start with short periods of meditation. It appears the effort involved in learning a new meditative practice may cause more fatigue at first. Then the later stages produce greater wakefulness during the day and a reduced need for sleep at night.

As the New York Academy of Science study showed, it may take a while to adjust to a new meditation routine. You might need more sleep at first. Pay close attention to how you feel during the day and how your body responds as you try out different schedules. You can slowly increase the length of your meditation sessions and experiment with shorter sleep times.



Can Meditation Make Up for Lost Sleep?

Dr. Adrian Williams

<https://www.headspace.com/blog/2015/11/11/do-meditators-really-need-less-sleep/>

“There aren’t enough hours in the day.” Have you ever heard those words? Uttered them yourself? Wondered how much more you could accomplish if you needed, say, four hours of sleep instead of your typical eight?

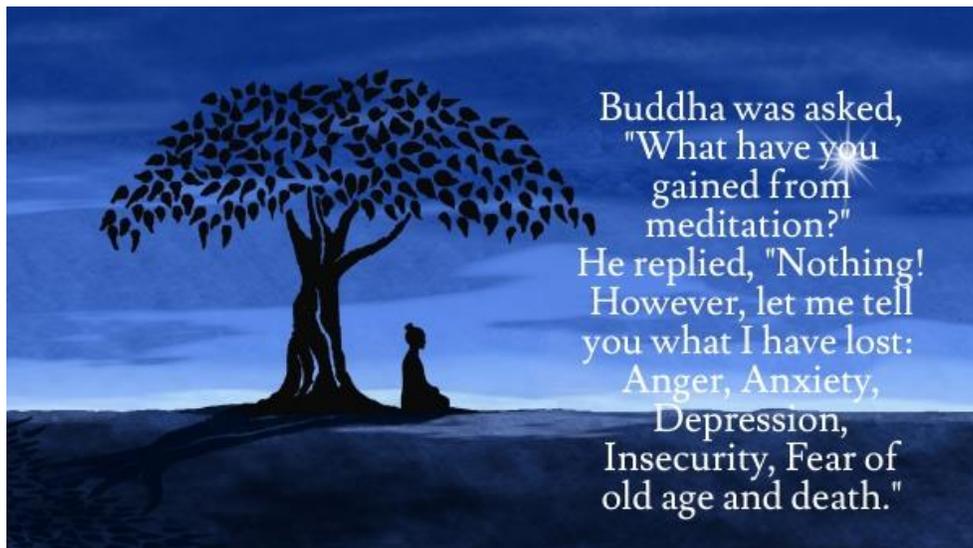
We all know that sleep—and enough sleep—is essential. In the words of sleep scientist Allen Rechtschaffen, “If the many hours of sleep accomplished mean nothing, it is the greatest mistake nature ever made.”

Meditate more, sleep less?

Interestingly, anecdotal evidence suggests that long-term expert meditators need significantly less sleep. In fact, according to some Buddhist texts, a full night’s sleep totals approximately four hours among proficient meditators. Studies outside of a retreat context also support this idea.

But why? We know that a regular meditation practice can lead to changes in the body that are similar to changes that occur in sleep. The restful alertness you might experience with meditation is associated with decreased heart rate, reduced metabolism, and changes to the nervous system that reduce arousal that occurs during sleep.

Neuroimaging studies are beginning to support the idea that a meditation practice promotes greater wakefulness and lower sleep propensity as it progresses in intensity. So in the early stages of a practice, if you meditate one to two times per week, you might experience relaxing and sleep-promoting effects (which are great in and of themselves). But as you meditate more often, a reduced need for sleep might become more apparent. Of course, the length of time spent meditating, the type of meditation practiced and the quality of sleep experienced all factor into this explanation.



Meditation vs. Sleep: Replacing Sleep with Meditation

<https://eocinstitute.org/meditation/require-less-sleep-with-meditation-460/>

Soon after beginning a meditation practice, many people report needing less sleep. Why is this the case?

1. Needing Less Sleep Through Meditation: Less Stress, More Melatonin

If you are looking to have a more succinct sleep cycle, then getting more of the highly critical chemical melatonin into your body is key. Melatonin is a hormone known for creating restful sleep. Many insomniacs have problems producing enough of this very vital chemical, and is key if you want to sleep like a log.

What inhibits your body's production of melatonin the most? Stress.

Stress is a real negative vortex, the number one enemy for those looking to sleep fewer hours per night. Thankfully, there is a time-tested, all natural solution.

In a highly cited Rutgers University study, meditation was effectively proven to boost melatonin levels by an average of 98%, with many participants showing increases of more than 300%!

Meditation's biological rebalancing enables the perfect amount of melatonin to flow throughout your body, helping you reach a far deeper, more efficient level of sleep.

When your head hits the pillow, deep REM sleep will come more quickly and easily.

Note: Training your body through meditation to naturally generate more melatonin is far more healthy, in the short and long term, than through supplementation. Play the long game.

2. How to Sleep Less Through Meditation: Training the Mind to Need Less Sleep

It is so easy to take our personal crises, never-ending to-do list, and other problems with us under the covers.

Our minds like to feed us the same stale, repetitive set of limiting thoughts, spiral of anxieties, and useless, fear based past/future narratives which do not matter to us in the present moment, especially when trying to get a good night's sleep.

What then, is the most effective way to retrain the "monkey mind" to more effectively deal with everyday stress, while making you immune to the mind chatter that so often prevents/delays an efficient night of sleep? Meditation.

Meditation trains you to be mindful of your incoming thoughts, weakening both the physiological link and strength that each thought has on you, as well as decreasing the frequency of incoming sleep-preventing thoughts.

Meditation forces the worrywart, insomnia causing mind to shift into the present moment, while realizing that the day is now over, and tomorrow is not yet here.

This “in the moment” thought awareness and mental stillness are critical and often the only way to allow the mind to fall asleep quickly, sleep deeply, and in turn, maximizing your sleep efficiency, needing fewer hours per night.

Meditation retrains the ready-for-bedtime brain, ensuring deep, efficient sleep becomes the standard. Want to perfect your sleep cycle? Discover meditation.

3. Meditation Instead of Sleep: Better Brainwaves and Biological Balancing

Since the body repairs itself while you are asleep, seven to eight hours of sleep each night is critical to your long-term health and well-being.

Like sleep, meditation balances, repairs and heals the body in a number of similar ways, from boosting your growth hormone and DHEA, to reducing your stress hormone cortisol.

Moreover, your healthiest brainwaves get stimulated in much the same way during both meditation and sleep, from boosting your Alpha, Theta, and Delta Waves to reducing your stress/anxiety associated Beta Waves.

These biological benefits are part of the reason so many new meditators report needing less sleep after beginning a program.

The more you meditate, the shorter your sleep cycle, with your body needing less to fully recharge your battery.

“Despite it being a very private, solitary time, getting up crazy early also feels a little like joining a club. One that never actually meets but whose members nod at one another across space and time.”

Rumi

The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you. Don't go back to sleep. You must ask for what you really want. Don't go back to sleep. People are going back and forth across the doorsill where the two worlds touch. The door is round and open. Don't go back to sleep.

The Vigil

Don't go to sleep one night. What you most want will come to you then. Warmed by a sun inside, you'll see wonders. Tonight, don't put your head down. Be tough, and strength will come. That which adoration adores appears at night. Those asleep may miss it.

One night Moses stayed awake and asked, and saw a light in a tree. Then he walked at night for ten years, until finally he saw the whole tree illuminated.

The day is for work, the night for love. Don't let someone bewitch you.

Some people sleep at night but not lovers. They sit in the dark and talk to God, who told David, "Those who sleep all night every night and claim to be connected to us, they lie."

Lovers can't sleep when they feel the privacy of the Beloved all around them. Someone who's thirsty may sleep for a little while, but he or she will dream of water, a full jar beside a creek, or the spiritual water you get from another person.

All night, listen to the conversation. Stay up. This moment is all there is.

Death will take it away soon enough. You'll be gone, and this earth will be left without a sweetheart, nothing but weeds growing inside thorns.

Search the Darkness

Sit with your friends; don't go back to sleep. Don't sink like a fish to the bottom of the sea. Life's water flows from darkness. Search the darkness, don't run from it. Night travelers are full of Light, and you are, too; don't leave this companionship. Be a wakeful candle in a golden dish, don't slip into the dirt like quick silver. The moon appears for the night travelers, be watchful when the moon is full.



Enter the tumultuous night and from its ocean gather gifts unnamed. The night hides the beauty of the hidden; the day cannot compare with mysterious night. Sleep he will not want, and sleep unsound he who has not seen the magical night. Many pure hearts and minds are nothing but slaves to the night. The night is but an empty black pot if you want to discover the mystery of the night. The way is long, God speed, O friends, if you want to discover the mystery of the night. The trade of day is in commerce; it's quite another trade at night!



There is some kiss we want with our whole lives, the touch of spirit on the body. At night, I open the window and ask the moon to come and press its face against mine. Breathe into me. Close the language-door and open the love-window. The moon won't use the door, only the window.



When I am with You we stay up all night. When You're not here, I cannot go to sleep. Thank God for these two insomnias and the difference between them.



Man's work in this world is nothing but to cry in intense longing due to separation from the Lord. Look at the infant. It cries as soon as it is born. It comes into the world crying. Therefore, just as a light burns throughout the night, in the same manner you should shed tears after midnight in longing for the Lord, and continue weeping and asking for His Light.



The dead regret not dying, but having lost opportunities in life. Well said that leader of mankind, that whosoever passes away from the world does not grieve and lament over his death, but grieves ever over lost opportunities.



Those who don't feel this love pulling them like a river, those who don't drink dawn like a cup of spring water or take in sunset like supper, those who don't want to change, let them sleep.

Hafiz

When you were born God brought you so many gifts that you will never open them all. Love's voice keeps saying, "Everything I have is yours." So why do you still feel this pain? Your soul long ago drowned in the middle of a vast sea while you pretend to be thirsty. Life's infinite song pours through you yet you hold your breath to squeeze it inside. God kisses you awake every morning, but you insist on sleeping and sleeping. Hafiz can only smile.



O Wayfarer, be like Hafiz: get up and make an effort! Don't lie around like a bum. He who throws himself at the Beloved's feet is like a workhorse and will be rewarded with boundless pastures and eternal rest.



O Master, You are so gracious. After all these years You still remember who I am: the one who wears the dust of Your door like a crown. Tell me, who taught You to be so generous to Your slaves? O Holy Bird, please bless this path I'm on, for I'm new to this traveling, and it's a long way I have to go. O morning breeze, take my prayers to the Master, and tell Him that each day I am on my knees at dawn.



Sadi

One night in the desert of Faid, I fell asleep. A camel driver shook me awake and said, “Get up now! The bell is ringing! Do you want to be left behind? I too would like to sleep like you but the desert stretches ahead. How will you reach the end of the journey if you sleep when the drum of departure beats?”

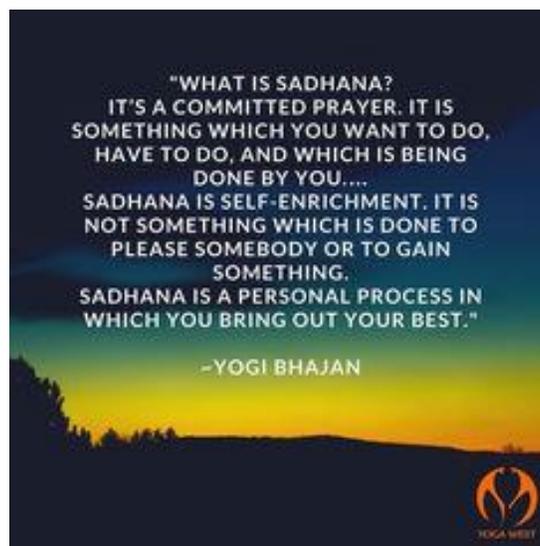
Happy are those who have packed their bags before the beat of the drum! Those asleep by the road do not lift their heads and the caravan passes out of sight. The one who was awake early traveled furthest; what use is waking up when the caravan has gone? Now is the time to sow the seeds of the harvest you want to reap. Do not go bankrupt to the Resurrection; sitting in bitter regret is useless. The stock you have already you can increase, but no profit grows on stock you consume yourself.

Strive now, when the water does not reach beyond your waist; do not wait until the flood has raced over your head. Listen to the advice of the wise today, for tomorrow the Angel of Death will question you sternly. Value your soul as priceless, for a cage without a bird has no value. Do not waste your time in grief and regret; opportunity is precious and time is a sword.



It is reported that Ali Sahl once wrote a letter to Junaid (an early Sufi mystic) in which he declared that sleep is a form of negligence. The letter went on to declare that if a lover sleeps he is hindered in his goal and will become negligent about himself.

In reply, Junaid wrote, “Our conscious effort to stay awake is a business transaction on the way to God, whereas our sleep is the active volition of God upon us. Therefore, it can be said that whatever happens from God in the absence of our conscious choice is better than what we ourselves choose in order to reach Him.”



Kabir on Sleep

Kabir, why do you slumber such long hours? Why do you not see wisdom and arise? O, pray, attach yourself to Him from whom you have been separated for long unknown ages.

Kabir, why do you slumber such long hours? Arise and remember the Name of the All-Merciful. The day is not far off when you will sleep the long sleep with your limbs stretched out in death.

Kabir, why do you slumber such long hours? Sleeping is doing you incalculable harm. Even the throne of Brahma was dashed to pieces, and Brahma died on hearing the roaring call of Kal. Can your own death be very far away? Remember the True Name of the Lord while you are still alive.

Slumber not at the hour of duty to the Lord; wake up and keep your vigil; you know not if the cold hand of death will grasp you the next moment.

Your days are spent in the company of the world; but this world goes not with you to the next. There you will have to travel all alone. With your own hands you have ruined yourself entirely because you did not make the spiritual journey here.



Awake, my heart, your Master is near. Run to the Beloved so close by your drowsy head. Having slept for ages without number, isn't this the morning to wake up?



O my blessed beloved, awake! Why do you sleep in ignorance?



Kabir, as long as there is life, continue fearlessly repeating the One Lord's True Name. When the oil of life is exhausted, and the wick of the lamp extinguished, there then will be quite time enough to sleep both day and night.



Quotes

Do not spend all your night in sleeping. Sleep as much as it is required for maintaining good health, but don't spend all your night in sleep. Wake up early in the morning and do the meditation. (Guru Arjan)

Those who get up in the morning and do the meditation of Naam and take advantage of this precious time, they are not bothered by the tricks of the Negative Power. They become free of it. (Guru Arjan)

Meritless as I am, I intensely pray for my turn, O Nanak. All the spouses had Thee in abundance, spare a night for me as well. (Guru Amar Das)

So long as a lover breathes, he seeks the Lord and tries hard to meet his dear Beloved. He keeps awake night after night in devoted attention to this end. (Guru Amar Das)

Sleep – death without dying – living, but not life. (Edwin Arnold)

When the world is finally calm and asleep be awake, alone, distant from yourself, and let your heart call your Beloved. That which one might receive on such a night is unlike the trinkets we are here offered. (Attar)

The breeze of dawn blows every particle of dust to ecstasy; whoever received a robe of honor received it at this hour. Rise early and let your longing sigh, for nothing brings a human more joy or may elevate one as high. (Attar)

At night when the sun of my soul rises and my Beloved arrives, I think of a thousand tricks to stitch my night to eternity wishing the day would never arrive. (Attar)

God appears, and God is Light to those dear souls who dwell in night: but doth a human form display to those who dwell in realms of day. (William Blake)

Before the Buddha goes to bed, he cast his Buddha eye around the world to see who has the "Great Wish" and draws that person to himself. (Buddhist Scripture)

It is futile to look for your true Friend elsewhere, empty your heart of all and you'll find him right there. Cut down on your sleep to bring your Beloved into your dreams, for this great boon is granted in early dawn to the sleepless dreamer. (Jami)

Before the dawn comes be of the early risers. During the day be of the mourners. Cling to the One who cannot leave you, and from all else wash your hands. (Jami)

Oh night that guided me, oh night more lovely than the dawn, oh night that joined Beloved with lover, lover transformed in the Beloved! (Saint John of the Cross)

Arise in the midst of the night and commune with thy God. The ego will be crushed and things will be revealed to thee thou did not know before and thy path in life will be made smooth. (Koran)

The heights by great men reached and kept were not attained by sudden flight, but they while their companions slept, were toiling upward in the night. (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

Sleep...Oh! How I loathe those little slices of death. (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

In my travels I spent time with a great yogi. Once he said to me, "Become so still you hear the blood flowing through your veins." One night as I sat in quiet, I seemed on the verge of entering a world inside so vast I know it is the source of all of us. (Mirabai)

O friend, I sit alone while the world sleeps. In the palace that held love's pleasure the abandoned one sits. She who once threaded a necklace of pearls is now stringing tears. He has left me. The night passes while I count stars. When will the hour arrive? This sorrow must end. Mira says: My Beloved Lord, please return. (Mirabai)

Another night wasted. Years pass and not one sign. Mira is a slave to her Lord, her life one long night of craving. (Mirabai)

The more you sleep, the less you live. (Polish saying)

Your prayers were light and your worship peaceful, your sleep an enemy of prayer. Your life was a test, but you let it go by without a thought. It's ever-passing, slowly vanishes before you know it. (Rabia)

O God, the stars are shining, all eyes have closed in sleep; the kings have locked their doors. Each lover is alone, in secret, with the one he loves. And I am here too: alone, hidden from all of them – with You. (Rabia)

O God, another night is passing away, another day is rising. Tell me that I have spent the night well so I can be at peace, or that I have wasted it, so I can mourn for what is lost. I swear that ever since the first day You brought me back to life, the day You became my Friend, I have not slept – and even if you drive me from Your door, I swear again that we will never be separated, because you are alive in my heart. (Rabia)

The devotees of the Lord plant the seed of the Lord's wealth in the ambrosial hours of the Amrit Vaylaa; they eat it, and spend it, but it is never exhausted. In this world and the next, the devotees are blessed with glorious greatness, the wealth of the Lord. (Guru Ram Das)

Each night I pray is a happy night for me, because the messenger of my Friend is near to me. Everyone loses his light when night comes. For me, my Light comes when time for prayer comes! Day of separation gone, the night of Union arrives; O day, please end, let the night remain! (Sanai Ghaznavi)

Rise early at dawn, when our storytelling begins. In the dead of the night, when all other doors are locked, the door for the lovers to enter opens. Be wide awake in the dark when lovers begin fluttering around the Beloved's window, like homing pigeons arriving with flaming bodies. (Shaikh Abu-Saeed Abil-Kheir)

It is the dark of the early morning, Friend. All those thirsting after You have their foreheads on the dust at Your gate. O Beloved source of the Water of Life, pray order Your wine bearer to water this pile of dust! (Shaikh Abu-Saeed Abil-Kheir)

Every dawn I bring my heart to You, my lamentations are to soften Your heart, so You grant me the honor of being a beggar at Your gate, and no one else's. (Shaikh Abu-Saeed Abil-Kheir)

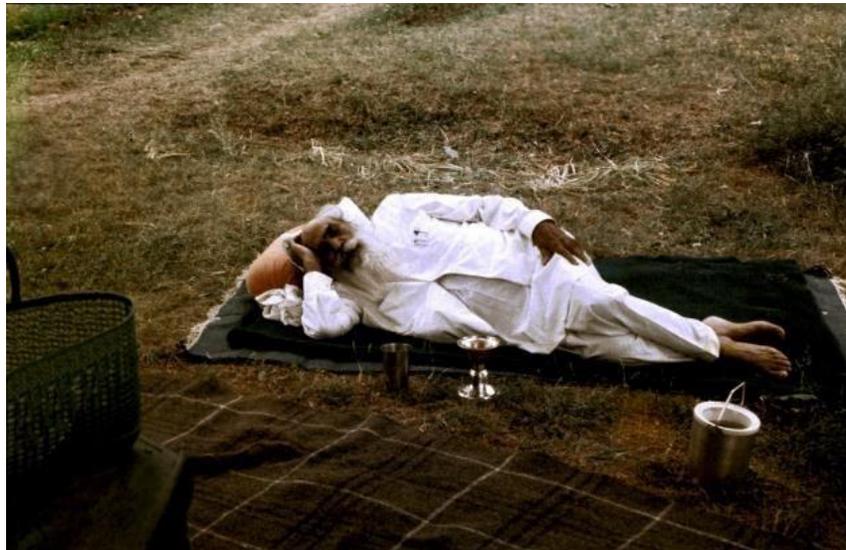
I have no sleep tonight. Ever and again I open my door and look out on the darkness. I can see nothing before me. I wonder where lies Your Path! By what dim shore of the ink-black river, by what far edge of the frowning forest, through what mazy depth of gloom are You threading Your course to come to me, my friend? (Tagore)

What do I long for? Something that is felt in the night but not seen in the day. (Tagore)

The night is nearly spent waiting for Him in vain. I fear lest in the morning He suddenly come to my door when I have fallen asleep wearied out. Ah, my sleep, precious sleep, which only waits for His touch to vanish. Ah, my closed eyes that would open their lids only to the Light of His smile when He stands before me like a dream emerging from darkness of sleep. Let Him appear before my sight as the first of all lights and all forms. The first thrill of joy to my awakened soul let it come from His glance. And let my return to myself be immediate return to Him. (Tagore)

He came and sat by my bed but I didn't wake up – what a curse it is to sleep! O miserable me! He came when the night was still with His harp in His hands and the melodies He played sounded in my dreams. Ah, why do I lose my nights? Why do I miss the sight of Him whose softest breath caresses my sleep? (Tagore)

Arise, awake, and stop not until the Goal is reached! (Upanishads)



Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj

You imagined that you would accomplish this task through your own strength, activity, and effort. This is the rule that has been established: expend everything you have in journeying on the Way. Then the bounty will come to you. On this endless road, you are commanded to travel with your own feeble hands and feet. God knows that you cannot traverse this Way with feet so feeble. Indeed, in a hundred thousand years you will not arrive at the first way station. However, when you travel this road until your legs are exhausted and you fall down flat, until you have no more strength to move forward, then God's grace will take you in its arms. (Rumi)



Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj

These three things will help you: to eat less, sleep less and have mercy, forgiveness and love.
(Sant Kirpal Singh, ruhanisatsangusa.org/gemsq.htm)

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