

10 Ways of coping with Tiredness and Sleep Deprivation



1) Rest is Best (well, other than actually sleeping of course)

Everyone needs some rest and recovery in their day, especially those who are up multiple times in the night. A nap would be fantastic, but if you can't manage that, some rest is second best. You can rest by lying down for a bit, doing a guided meditation, or simply relax as deeply as you can while you're sitting down doing pretty much anything (trapped under a sleeping baby, watching paw patrol on repeat, whilst struggling to go to sleep at night etc)

2) Legs Up (even if ever so briefly)

Fastest way to give yourself a little energy boost - lie on the floor with your legs up on a sofa, or straight up against the wall. Even 30 seconds of this will force some blood up towards your brain and with that give you a boost. And you'll give your back a nice rest at the same time. Bonus.

3) Nap

It's not as easy as "sleep when the baby sleeps" because who's going to do the washing up, the laundry, the looking after older siblings? Also the baby?

But if you can, even if it's only every now and again, prioritise your sleep and have a nap. It doesn't have to be an hour long one, a quick 20 minutes is better than nothing.

4) Into Bed Early

I've heard this called a reverse lie in, and it's the best thing ever. Especially when you're up at silly o'clock every day and the memories of a lie in are almost painful. Get into bed as soon as you can either to go to sleep or to watch TV, read a book or a magazine, meditate, or whatever floats your boat. Heaven.

If you can't get a full 8 hours of sleep, at the very least you can make sure you're in bed for a good 8 hours. You can trick your body into thinking you've had a good rest at least.

5) Pyjama Priorities

Getting into pyjamas early (or maybe never changing out of them?) works on multiple levels. First of all you'll be super comfy, which is a big bonus when you're tired.

Secondly you'll be able to get into bed as soon after the kids have gone down as possible.

6) Drink Up

Sleep deprivation and dehydration do not mix. At all. Your brain is foggy enough when you've not slept so make sure you drink enough to not add to the tiredness symptoms. Straight up water is best, but any liquid counts. Personally I find ice cold fizzy water refreshing, as well as hydrating. Play around with what you like but drink, drink, drink. And consider this - we carry bottles of water around for our kids, why not do the same for ourselves?

7) Move Through It

Movement is hugely powerful in changing your mood and your energy. If you're low on energy, some big muscle moves like squats or star jumps might help to give you a boost for a little while. If you're feeling frazzled, overwhelmed and exhausted some slower movement like stretches or yoga can help to get you out of your head and back into your body and into balance and calm.

8) Breathe for Energy

The rest and recovery hierarchy goes something like this: Sleep / rest / breathe. So if it's a fail on the first two, you've always got your breath to carry you through the day. How often have you gotten through to the end of the day and the sigh of relief you breathe as the kids go to sleep is the first deep breath you've taken all day? Taking lots of conscious deep breaths throughout the day will bring you steady energy and calm.

9) Careful with Caffeine

This is fairly obvious but caffeine, even fairly early in the day, can effect how well you go to, and stay, asleep at night. If you are sensitive to caffeine, don't consume it after 12pm, for anyone else after 3pm. As well as it affecting your sleep, it can also amplify and feelings of anxiety and overwhelm.

10) Don't keep Count

Whatever you do, do NOT count the amount of times you are up in the night, or tally up the hours of sleep you've had. All you'll do is drive yourself crazy and it will make you feel even more tired. And you know what? You've made it through every single day so far no matter how tired you were and you'll do it again. And again and again!

Bonus Knowledge - this really won't last forever and you WILL make it through every day, no matter how tired you are.

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