
DR KAT'S TIPS FOR SLEEPING WELL

Sleep matters to professional women personally and organisationally. Healthy sleep supports cognitive performance, physical health and emotional wellbeing; it helps you be the best you can be. And while sleep is an individual experience, how well you sleep affects the people around you – at work and at home. Well-rested people are less stressed, think more creatively and show more empathy towards others.

Here are strategies you can implement *now*, so you feel less stressed, sleep well and wake up feeling refreshed and are more alert during the day.

- 1)** Identify your personal sleep window: How much sleep do you need and when do you sleep best? Stick to these times weekday and weekend. When working long hours, focus on getting up around the same time every day.
- 2)** Seek natural sunlight especially in the morning. Go for a walk or have a cup of coffee in your garden, on the balcony or simply stand by a window. Move your desk near the window to increase the amount of natural light you receive during the day.
- 3)** It's ok to have caffeine. Have 1 or 2 coffees in the late morning and then cut it out after 2 pm. Be aware that tea and energy drinks also contain caffeine.
- 4)** During the day, take regular mini-breaks (5-10 minutes). Schedule calls to last for 55 minutes. Then you have 5 minutes to get up (regular movement supports sleep) and make a cup of tea or to take 3 slow breathes.
- 5)** Create a set of rituals to help your mind detach from the working day in the evening. This could be as simple as doing some indoor exercise (but not within 3 hours of your bedtime) or changing out of your work clothes – yes, even if you have been working from home all day! Tidy your workspace and mindfully step out of the physical work-zone.
- 6)** Have a healthy, balanced diet. Set an eating window of 8 to 12 hours that fits in with your sleep-wake cycle. Within this window, keep regular mealtimes.
- 7)** If your mind is racing, help it settle by doing a simple breathing exercise. The pace of the outbreath is key for activation of the parasympathetic system and slowing down. This won't make thoughts go away but help you gain more clarity on what is most helpful in this moment.

If you would like more support on how to sleep well, please email me at:

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