

Live Well Be Well

"Let's Talk Sleep Strategy for Racing Minds"

Welcome to Live Well, Be Well! A podcast where we speak candidly about all things health and well-being! My name is [Renee Dell'Acqua](#), and I'm a [Health Educator in Health Promotion Services here](#) at UC San Diego.

On this episode of Live Well Be Well, I'll be discussing a simple mental exercise for those nights when your mind is racing, preventing you from getting a good and restful night of sleep.

So we hope you get inspired, we hope you feel connected, and we hope you discover new ways to live your best life. Let's get started!

Have there ever been times when you can't fall asleep because your mind is racing, thinking of all the things you need to get done tomorrow or all the things you didn't get done today? Or maybe you can't fall asleep because you're replaying an experience you had during your day and all the emotions and feelings tied with it?

Well if you've been down this path before, not to worry, I have too, one too many times in fact. And it wasn't until a former educator taught me this super simple exercise to help manage those nights where your mind won't power down because of all those thoughts racing through your head. And ever since she's imparted this wisdom, I've never looked back since and I wish the same for you all!

So let's go through this exercise step by step as if you were preparing to sleep for the night.

First, settle into a comfortable and relaxing position. Gently close your eyes and take slow and deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth. Now, imagine you're in a nearly empty room and the only thing in there is an open filing cabinet and pieces of paper scattered throughout the floor. You may be wondering, why are there papers carelessly tossed across the floor? Well, visualize every thought and worry keeping you up as one of those pieces of paper.

Now, begin to pick up each piece of paper.

Once each paper is picked up and organized into a neat stack in your arms, imagine placing this stack of paper into the open filing cabinet.

Visualize closing the filing cabinet and locking it.

Now walk away from the filing cabinet and say, "these thoughts and worries are being filed away right now. It doesn't mean that they're not important, it just means that they'll be addressed tomorrow. Right now is my time to rest."

And throughout this exercise, take slow and deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth.

Now if you've done this exercise but there's still that lingering anxiety about forgetting tasks you need to complete the next day, jot those down. What I've found to be very helpful is keeping a notebook and pen on my nightstand. I write down any task or appointment that I may have the following day and it gives me comfort knowing that it won't get mentally lost because it's now physically written down.

Same goes for an experience or feeling that seems to be bursting from your mind preventing you from sleeping. Take a few minutes - I would say max 20 minutes - and write down those thoughts. And when you're writing down those emotions, feelings, and experiences, visualize the weight of those thoughts and feelings being carried away from your mind and transferred onto paper.

I hope this simple exercise helps you slow down your mind and collect your thoughts (pun intended), and allows you to relax, recharge, and refocus in order to meet the needs of your days ahead.

So that concludes this episode of Live Well, Be Well! If you like what you heard today and would like to learn more about topics related to health and well-being, there's much more to come!

Please be sure to check out our website healthpromotionservices.ucsd.edu and also follow us on Instagram and

Facebook under @UCSDHPS. Stay tuned for our next episode of Live Well, Be Well.

Until next time, be kind, be true, be you. And remember, to be well is to live well.