Paradoxical intention

Progress Psychotherapy

One of the worst ways to get to sleep is to try and get to sleep. This leads people to worry about sleep quality or time. This is stimulating for the brain an d it keeps us awake. Sleep is an automatic process that we can't start, only stop by worrying. Not trying to sleep helps us sleep.

The simplest form is relaxing in bed. Go to bed, not intending to sleep as that happens automatically. It doesn't matter what time it is so don't check. You can read a book or listen to relaxing sounds but avoid screens as they are stimulating. or just enjoy the relaxation. Don't try to sleep.

The more advanced method is to resist sleep. Try to stay awake. Eventually, your body will give in and you will need to sleep. But your intention is to keep awake as long as possible. This breaks the worry cycle that maintains insomnia. Below, write your intention and what you plan to do in bed. You can either use it to relax and read or you can try to fight sleep.

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