

ready dark.

If you sleep in pajamas, put on your pajamas. If you brush your teeth before bed, then brush your teeth. If you take off your glasses or contacts when you sleep, then take those off too.

Set your alarm for a few minutes ahead. Lie down in bed just like you would if you were sleeping, and close your eyes. Get into your favourite sleep position. Imagine it's early in the morning a few minutes before your desired wake-up time. Pretend you're actually asleep. Visualize a dream location, or just zone out as best you can.

Now when your alarm goes off, turn it off as fast as you can. Then take a deep breath to fully inflate your lungs, and stretch your limbs out in all directions for a couple seconds, like you're stretching during a yawn. Then sit up, plant your feet on the floor, and stand up. Smile a big smile. Then proceed to do the very next action you'd like to do upon waking such as going for a shower.

Now shake yourself off, restore the pre-waking conditions, return to bed, reset your alarm, and repeat. Do this over and over and over until it becomes so automatic that you run through the whole ritual without thinking about it. If you have to subvocalize any of the steps (i.e. if you hear a mental voice coaching you on what to do), you're not there yet.

Feel free to devote several sessions over a period of a few days to this practice. Think of it like doing sets and reps at the gym. Do one or two sets per day at different times, and perhaps 3-10 reps each time. Yes, it will take some time to do this, but that time is nothing compared to

how much time you'll save in the long run. A few hours of practice today can add hundreds of hours each year and create huge jumps in your spiritual practice.

With enough practice you will condition a new physiological response to the sound of your alarm. When your alarm goes off, you'll get up automatically without even thinking about it. The more you run the pattern, the stronger it will become. Eventually it will be uncomfortable not to get up when your alarm goes off.

Kundalini Yoga Wake up Set

Many new people who become Sikhs learn about Sikh dharma through Kundalini Yoga. This style of yoga has a useful wake up routine which is outlined below:

1. Take a couple of deep breaths and fill all your lungs while you are still lying in bed
2. Touch the palms of your hands together and touch the soles of your feet together and rub them fast. Continue deep breathing for about 1 minute
3. Keeping your legs straight, lift them up to about 45 degrees and do the breath of fire (fast breathing into your belly). Continue for a couple of minutes
4. Finally bring your knees to your chest and roll on your back until you are sitting up

Summary

These are just some of the good wake up techniques available. They can be combined however you like to get the desired effect.



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Techniques to Wake Up Early

Sikh Dharma

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Introduction

Sikh dharma is a spiritual lifestyle which involves waking up between the hours of 3am and 6am to do meditation and singing (Keertan). This time of the day is called the ambrosial hour or Amrit Vela and it is special because the power of our meditation is greatly magnified. The Sikh Holy Scripture, Shri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGSJ) says:

"In the Amrit Vaylaa, the ambrosial hours before dawn, chant the True Name, and contemplate His Glorious Greatness." (SGGSJ, p.2)

As our spiritual practice improves and enhances our experience of God consciousness we remain connected to truth 24 hours a day.

"Twenty-four hours a day, meditate on God. Constantly sing the Glories of the Lord of the Universe." (SGGSJ, p.44)

"Meditate on the Lord, with every breath and morsel of food" (SGGSJ, p.82)

"While standing and sitting, while sleeping and while awake, meditate on the Lord, all your life." (SGGSJ, p.101)

We should start our spiritual practice as soon as and ideally while we are still young because it is a difficult journey.

"As long as there is youth and health, meditate on the Naam." (SGGSJ, p.82)

There is no doubt that waking up between 3am and 6am is a difficult task and our mind (ego) will always give us an excuse to not get out of bed. The Guru Granth Sahib also says that any-time at which we meditate on God is a very blessed time.

"Blessed is that moment, and blessed is that time, when my tongue chants the Name of the Lord, Har, Haree." (SGGSJ, p.191)

Benefits of Waking Up Early

There is a saying in the west which says, "Early to bed, Early to rise keeps you Healthy, Wealthy and Wise".

Oversleeping is also a big waste of time in which you can learn about spirituality, build businesses, do selfless service or experience the wonders of God's creation. For example, if you oversleep just 60 minutes a day, that's 365 hours a year, the equivalent of nine 40-hour weeks. That's a lot of time!

Wake Up Techniques

This section looks at a few techniques which you can try and use to wake up early and enjoy the amazing feeling of meditation when most people and nature is still sleeping.

Alarm Clocks

For someone who is very disciplined one or two alarm clocks is usually enough to wake them up at 3am. However the ego in most people will put the "snooze" button on these clocks to good effect thereby rendering them useless!

Another version of this technique is where you record your own voice telling you to wake up. This does work for some people.

Finally you can try to put a loud alarm in the opposite corner of your bedroom or even in a different bedroom, so that when the alarm goes off you will physically have to get out of bed to turn it off!

Music Technique

A slight variation on the alarm clock is for a Gurbani tape to start playing at 3am. It could be traditional keertan such as Prof Surinder Singh's Gurbani tapes

or Dya Singh's fusion music versions or anything else that you like. Just make sure it gets you out of bed!

Seva Technique

This technique involves jumping out of bed as soon as the alarm goes off and going down stairs or to another room to do some cleaning or ironing or some other house chore for about 15 minutes while your brain is becoming active. You could even go round the house and light some incense sticks to help stimulate a spiritual atmosphere.

Cold Shower

This technique involves jumping out of bed and straight into a cold shower. Put cold water on your head and watch the sleep vanish!

Lemon and Water

Try putting a slice of lemon and a glass of water next to your alarm. When you get out of bed to close your alarm, suck on the lemon and drink some water.

Behavioural Change Exercise

The thing that makes waking up early a difficult task is the self battling with the mind. So a good method would allow the subconscious mind to take over. This can be done in the same way you learned any other repeatable skill. You practice until it becomes routine. Eventually your subconscious will take over and run the script on autopilot.

This is going to sound strange, but it works. Practice getting up as soon as your alarm goes off. That's right - practice. But don't do it in the morning. Do it during the day when you're wide awake. Go to your bedroom, and set the room conditions to match your desired wake-up time as best you can. Darken the room, or practice in the evening just after sunset so it's al-