

Restful Insomnia

*How to Get the Benefits of Sleep Even When You Can't
(excerpt)*

Reframing and Using Insomnia

Insomnia wins or you win. That's how most insomniacs view the nights: a lonely battle with sleeplessness, the diabolical enemy. You can gather combat forces, but it's hard to outwit insomnia. You need a modern John Wayne who strides into your bedroom and proclaims: *"Insomnia, this bed ain't big enough for both of us, so get outta here by sundown."*

OK, so that only works in the movies.

But there is a hero in real life – you. You can rescue yourself, if not for the sleep poacher, at least from suffering with it. It starts with reframing—changing how you view insomnia.

Reframing means looking at something from a new perspective. You do it all the time. When you look at the famous optical illusion and see a vase, then two profiles, you've changed how you're seeing the picture. When you flinch at a bug and then find that it's a piece of lint, you've changed how you're looking at your environment. When you groan over your dog's failed house-training only to learn that your roommate spilled lemonade, you're putting a new frame around what's exactly there, and it becomes a different experience.

Once when I explained Restful Insomnia to a new acquaintance, she replied in a soft drawl, *"Isn't insomnia great? I just love that time of night. In fact, when I sleep right through the night, I miss it."*

All of you, who agree with her, please raise your hands. Hmm...I see four of you with hands partway up. The rest of you million readers (a little positive image for the author here) spend sleepless nights being worried, grumpy, and wanting to sleep already. That was me last night....Then I remembered Restful Insomnia. I didn't have to be this grumpy; I could change what I told myself. My mantra became, *"It's OK to just rest...put on the eye mask and roll your eyes down...breathe..."* And indeed, Restful Insomnia worked—once I let it. I became rested, so it didn't matter if I slept (and I did).

Although I've had several years of practice reframing insomnia, you can make a difference in your view of wakefulness in just one night.