



SLEEP ASSESSMENT

Yoga Self-Assessment

For detailed guidance in doing self-assessment related to general physical conditions and in relation to asana, pranayama, and meditation practices, see my book *Yoga Therapy*.¹ The same guidelines are here: www.markstephensyoga.com/yogaforbetersleep.selfassessment.

In doing yoga self-assessment, start by reflecting on where you are in your daily life with respect to the yamas and niyamas discussed in chapter 3. Write each of the five yamas and five niyamas at the top of separate pages in a personal journal. Write whatever comes to you, giving greater attention to those that might feel troubling. Do one at a time.

After a few minutes of this self-reflective journaling, put your journal aside and come to a comfortable upright sitting position with your eyes resting lightly closed. Tune into the breath,

visualizing the inhalations flowing directly into your heart center, and visualizing the exhalations fading out behind you like the wake of a boat. Begin breathing your journal reflections into your heart, into the infinitely spacious love in your heart. With each exhalation, allow what you are feeling to fade out behind you. Keep doing this with just that one feeling, with each breath getting more deeply into it, its source, its effects in your life, its reality, and keep letting it go. As you stay with it, imagine any negative power of the feeling softening in your heart, attenuating, letting go.

Now come back to your journal and add whatever seems important or insightful to your page. Then go to each of the next yamas, then each niyama. Breath by breath, tuning in and letting go, allow this to deepen your svadyaya.

Sleep Diary

Use these questions to discover more about your sleep patterns and experiences. Use the Sleep Log to track some of these patterns and experiences over a period of a few weeks.

1. What time did you wish to wake up this morning? What time did you wake up?
2. What caused you to awaken in the morning?
3. Did you awaken during the night? If so, was it due to needing to urinate?
4. What did you do during the last two hours before you went to bed?
5. How did you feel during the day (mood, drowsiness, etc.)? Why?
6. What time did you begin and end any daytime naps?
7. What medications did you take during the day (sleeping pills, caffeine, and alcohol)?

8. When did you eat dinner, and what did you eat?
9. What did you do in the last hour before going to bed?
10. How stressed (if at all) were you before going to bed, and why?
11. When did you go to bed?
12. When do you think you fell asleep?
13. What can you recall thinking or doing in the last few minutes before falling asleep?
14. If you woke during the night, why? How many times? How long did it take to fall back asleep?
15. How well do you feel you slept? How rested do you feel?
16. How were your dreams?

Sleep Log

	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
Complete When You Awake in the Morning:							
Time you went to bed							
Time you got out of bed							
Hours slept							
Number of times you awoke during the night							
Complete Before Going to Bed:							
Did you do yoga today?							
Minutes you exercised today							

	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
Activity during the two hours before going to bed							
Number of caffeinated drinks today							
Number of alcoholic drinks within three hours of going to bed							
How was your energy today? (1–10)							
How was your mood today? (1–10)							

Conventional Sleep Assessment Tools

If you wish to go further in your sleep assessments, consider using one or several of the different assessment instruments taken from sleep medicine and sleep psychology sources. Each tool can be found by referring to the endnote.

- The Insomnia Severity Index assesses sleep quality, fatigue, psychological symptoms, and quality of life.²
- The Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index provides a questionnaire to evaluate clinically derived sleep difficulties related to quality, latency, duration, habitual efficiency, sleep disturbances, use of sleep medication, and daytime dysfunction.³

- The Multidimensional Fatigue Inventory measures general fatigue, mental fatigue, physical fatigue, reduced activity, and reduced motivation using a five-point Likert scale.⁴
- The Beck Depression Inventory consists of a twenty-one-item questionnaire measuring depressive and anxiety symptoms in the past week (both anxiety and depression are measured due to their frequent co-occurrence).⁵
- The Beck Anxiety Inventory consists of a twenty-one-item questionnaire measuring anxiety symptoms in the past week.⁶
- The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory assesses situational (state) versus general (trait) qualities of anxiety.⁷
- The SF-12 Health Survey questionnaire has twelve items in eight health domains: physical functioning, role physical (limitation in routine activities due to physical conditions), bodily pain, general health, vitality, social functioning, role emotional (limitation in routine activities due to emotional conditions), and mental health.⁸