

# Done with Dieting Podcast #104: Sleep Routines



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Elizabeth Sherman

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# Done with Dieting Podcast #104: Sleep Routines

On today's episode of the Done With Dieting Podcast, I am talking about sleep routines. What does that mean? It means how to create routines before you go to bed, and then first thing in the morning. So that you can become more productive, so that you can sleep better, so that you can have less anxiety and potentially lose a little weight without having to do much work.

So, tune into today's podcast and let's get started.

You are listening to the done with dieting podcast. The podcast for women in midlife, who are done with dieting, but still want to lose weight and feel good in your clothes.

You know that diets don't work long term. But you feel like there's this secret that everyone else knows that you just haven't figured it out yet.

I am your host, Elizabeth Sherman. And I've helped hundreds of women get off the diet roller coaster, change their relationship with food, exercise, and their bodies.

Through this podcast, my goal is to help you too.

Welcome. Let's get started.

Hey everyone, welcome to the Done With Dieting podcast, episode number 104

I was thinking about in episode number 102, I talk about two different cornerstone habits that if you just want to be healthier, even if you don't want to lose weight, if you just want to be healthier. These two cornerstone habits will really play off as far as your health is concerned.

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I was also thinking about some routines that I do. And the reason I've been thinking about this a lot recently is because a number of my clients have told me that getting their routines in order has been really helpful in terms of creating positive action in their lives and it's impacted the other people in their household.

So, one of my clients, Christine, was talking about how when we started coaching together, she didn't really realize how not having a routine impacted her children. And so, now that she has a routine for herself, and she has a routine for her kids that they have just become so much more happy and stable.

There was a time in my life when I was just traveling all over the place and my schedule was never the same two weeks in a row. And as a young woman in my early or mid-twenties, I probably really enjoyed it because I got to see a lot of the United States. I was in a different city every single week. I was sleeping in a different hotel. It was fun. It was exciting.

But I remember saying to my mom at one point, gosh, I really just want to get into a routine. When we use words, language is so important. And so, when we use words, words mean different things to different people. And so, for her, I remember her saying this to me and me just being really shocked that she said routines are boring.

And I remember just being a little taken aback because at the time I felt completely out of control. I didn't have any routine. I was sleeping in a different bed every single time. And in fact, when I said this to her, I was actually living on her couch. I don't remember why. But I was living on her couch for a period of time. But I remember just really wanting to have some stability and some routine in my life.

Since then, I've really learned the power of being consistent and finding something that works for me. And it's part of what I teach my clients. I teach my clients a lot about habits, forming habit, and forming discipline, and forming consistency through creating

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repeatable processes. And so today, what I want to talk about is not just the routine that you do before you go to bed. But then I also want to talk about morning routines.

So, the two routines that you do on either side of sleep. Because in a lot of the research that I've been doing recently, there's been so much research to show that the things that we do before we go to bed and the things that we do first thing in the morning really will impact our productivity, and our serenity, the things that we do to ground us. And so, I really want to talk about having a sleep routine and then also having a morning routine.

So, the two resources that I've really been using a lot of recently, have been one 'The Miracle Morning.' And you know, it's funny, I've only recently read 'The Miracle Morning' because it always seemed like something that I had already done. But what that book has really shown me is that there's science to back up having time and space in the morning to really pay attention to yourself and to really decide how you want the day to proceed.

Sometimes for many of you, you may wake up with your alarm clock and things are already going on in your household. And so, it feels like you're constantly playing catch up. And when you can be the first one awake and really decide and really ease your way into the day. It creates such a more controlled and serene day. And there's actually research to show why this happens.

When we wake up in the morning and we hop on the internet, we hop on Facebook, or Instagram, or we check our email first thing in the morning. What happens is our other people have an agenda for us, and we start to get bought into what they want for us. When we can spend just a few minutes in the morning having silence for some people, and I'm going to go through the exact steps that you can take in order to create your own morning routine.

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But whether you choose to journal, or read, or listen to a podcast, or listen to some sort of meditation, whatever it is. When you are the one that is in control, then what happens is you set the stage for how you want the rest of the day to occur. And so, what I'm going to do here is I'm going to talk about the two different routines that I suggest that you create.

And I'm going to offer them to you in different stages depending on where you are with them already. And through doing this, what it's going to do is harness the power of the subconscious mind while you sleep so that you can get a better handle on your day.

And you can sleep better because I know that when I told you that story about living with my mom and sleeping in different beds. I was in my late twenties, early thirties, and I remember I could sleep pretty much anywhere. I could sleep on planes. It was when my mom was in the hospital. I was sleeping when she was in the hospital. I could really sleep anywhere. And sleep was never really a problem for me.

But then at some point, I started paying attention to, Hey, I'm not sleeping as well as I used to think that I was sleeping. And so, I started paying attention to my sleep quality and my duration. And what were the different things that were influencing good sleep and why was I not having good sleep?

And just a little plug for episode number 59. If you haven't listened to episode number 59, I had an amazing sleep coach on my podcast. Her name is Janet Whalen. I will link to that podcast in the show notes. But if you haven't listened to that, I'm definitely going to recommend that you listen to that as well, if you are having trouble sleeping.

Now, why do you want to follow these two different routines, your morning routine, and your evening routine so that you can have better sleep. So that you can feel less anxious. Have better stress management and maybe eliminate or lessen some of the cravings that you have for those treats that you know aren't helping you. Those are just

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some of the advantages to starting to do a sleep routine, and then also a morning routine as well.

So, here's what I recommend. The first step is we want to work backwards. And what I mean by that is you want to think about how much sleep do you actually need? I don't want to say you're bare minimum, right? Because some of us think that we can get away with a lot less. But sleep is so critically important to how we manage our stress, what foods we choose, our energy levels, whether we can think straight, whether we can problem solve correctly, like sleep is so incredibly important.

And when a new client comes to me, and they tell me that they are not sleeping well, typically that is one of the very first things that we work on. Because when we are fully rested, then we have the ability to tackle the other parts of our lives, right? We have the ability to have the energy, to meal prep, to exercise, or handle problems.

So, when we can get adequate sleep, then we can move on to the other things. But all of these habits, our sleep, our stress management, our daily activity, as well as our eating plan, are all so tightly connected. And so, they do work off of one another. But sleep can oftentimes be the one cornerstone habit that when we get that one clued in, the other ones kind of take care of themselves.

So, first thing we want to do is figure out how much sleep we need. Work backwards. And what I mean by that is when do you need to get out the door? When do you need to start work? And then, when do you need to get ready? So, what time is that? How much time do you need? And then, what are all the other things that are happening in the morning and when do those occur? And how much time do those need? In order for you to feel like you have a good handle on it.

Then, what is the time that you need to get up? So, how much sleep do you need? And then, how much downtime do you need at the end of the day? There's something called

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revenge bedtime procrastination. And it's the time that so many women struggle with at the end of the day when everyone has gone to bed and they're like, ah, finally I get some me time.

Some of us preload that free time in the morning and have time to really ease into the day. Some people do it at the end of the day, figure out what works best for you, downtime at night. And then, really think about setting some social media limits and then also some screen time limits.

And what I mean by that, it's something that I've started doing recently, I've set up my phone so that I only get an hour of social media per day, so that means Instagram and Facebook combined. I only get an hour and they turn off at 8:30 at night. So, at 8:30 at night, yes, I could go in there, but it's an extra step. And what that's done for me is it's really allowed me to quiet my brain. I'm spending so much more time reading or listening to podcasts. I'm also doing some studying for certifications. And so, I'm spending that time much more richly.

So, you get to decide what it is that you want to do with your time. But it might be worth thinking about how much time do I want to spend on social media. How much time do I want to spend connected to the internet. And how much time do I want to spend or what are those limits? We do it for our children. Right?

And I've heard from so many parents that when they limit their children's screen time, when they limit their children's social media time, that their children become so much better behaved. The same thing is probably true for us. Think about how much downtime you need in the evening and how you want to spend that time.

Now, one of the things that I've had to do from limiting my social media time is I've had to create a note that says, okay, so you're not doing social media, so these are some of the other things that you want to learn about. And so, if you're doing a course, or if

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you're knitting, or if you're doing adult coloring books, or whatever. Sometimes our brains need a prompt that says, oh yeah, these are the other things that you wanted to do instead of spend time on social media.

We think that we're going to remember that we want to read, or we think that we're going to remember that we want to take that course on learning to speak Spanish or whatever it is. But sometimes I know my brain will often forget, oh yeah, I forgot that I wanted to learn that. And so, I need to keep a note that says, okay, if you're not going to do social media, then these are the things that you can do in the evening or in the morning if you want to.

As I'm saying that, as I'm suggesting that you limit your screen time, as I suggest that you're limiting your social media time or your internet time. I'd like you to notice, do you have resistance about that? And if you have resistance about it, I'm going to invite you to just get curious about it. Why are you resisting it?

I know that when I first started limiting my screen time that I was resistant about it because I wanted to be connected. And there's this thing in the back of my head that was like, well, if I'm not on social media, do I really exist? Sometimes it just can be helpful to get curious about, oh, I'm resisting doing that. Why am I resisting doing that?

Now, let's talk about bedtime first. So, the first thing that I suggest my clients do is create what I call a bedtime routine. The reason that we're creating a bedtime routine is because we want to create a set of habits that we will do that will tell our brain, it's time to get ready for bed.

Now, level one of creating a bedtime routine does not have to be advanced. For some people, it's doing your general personal hygiene. So, brushing your teeth, washing your face, getting the coffee ready. At night, maybe putting your clothes out, whatever it is.

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So, doing something really basic. It's just a series of tasks that you're doing in the evening before you go to bed.

One of the worst things that you can do is fall asleep on the couch, wake up, and then go to bed. And the reason why is because then you wake yourself up, and you're moving, and you're getting ready. And then, if this is something that you've done before, you probably then have trouble falling asleep in your second sleep. Right?

I actually have my Fitbit create an alarm for me that tells me, Hey, it's 10 minutes to bedtime. Which then signals, okay, now it's time for me to create my sleep routine, get all of my things together, and then I go to bed, and I start reading.

And so, whatever it is for you, everyone's going to be a little bit different in terms of what they prefer. But be aware that what you want to do is you want to intentionally go to bed and you want to intentionally do the habits or the behaviors before you go to bed. Again, it does not need to be candles, and baths, and aromatherapy, and all those lovely and nice things. It can be. But it doesn't have to be. So, just a simple series of tasks that you do every night before you go to bed.

Now, some of the suggestions that I have for you might be to read. If you want to read on your Kindle or your phone, that's totally fine. Both of those have technology which will limit the amount of blue light that comes into your brain. And so, why we want to limit the blue light is because it will have an alerting effect to our brain. Our brain will be more alert when we have more daylight, when we have more blue light. And so, that's one of the reasons why we want to limit our screen time in the evening. So that we limit the amount of electronic light that is getting into our brain, it will help us to sleep better.

So, if you want to read, you can read. What my husband and I call an old timey book, like a paper book. Or you can read on a Kindle, or you can read on an iPhone, or an

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iPad. But just make sure that you have that special nighttime mode on there so that you are reading with limited light going into your eyes.

Again, you can make your coffee and put your clothes out. One of the things that I hate doing in the morning is making coffee because I just don't have the cognitive ability. So, I try to do that at night, so that I don't have to think about it in the morning. I just have to press the button on the coffee pot. Do your personal hygiene. Again, do not fall asleep on the couch.

Now, one of the things that you may want to also do, this is just a suggestion, but you can start to create a log about your sleep quality and the things that you're consuming at night to see if there's any correlation. And one of the things, a couple of the things that my clients have noticed is that when they limit alcohol, they sleep better. When we limit carbs, starches, or sugar, then that can help us to sleep better in the evening as well.

And then, the other thing is not going to bed on a full stomach. So, really trying to create a buffer of about two hours between when you've eaten your last meal and when you go to bed. Because when we go to bed on a full stomach, what happens is because we're lying down, we're not digesting food properly and sometimes for some of us, we can have a GERD or acid reflux because the stomach is still trying to digest all of that food.

So, just be aware that that's kind of like the level one set. So, limiting alcohol, carbs, sugar, limiting eating before you go to bed, doing some basic sleep hygiene, maybe reading, listening to some sort of meditation. Limiting your screens and then doing anything else that you need to in order to get your day started off right. Now, that's level one.

Now, level two, and this can really help if you're waking up in the middle of the night and you are thinking about what you have to do the next day. So, for my clients who are

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waking up in the middle of the night and they're having disrupted sleep, what I recommend is that they do three things together.

One is review your calendar for the following day. So, look at your calendar for the following day or maybe the next two days. And look at all of the meetings you have, all of the commitments that you've agreed to. And then, think about and write down, what are all the things that I need to do.

So, you're going to have your calendar and you're going to have a to-do list. And you're going to write down all of the things that you need to do the following day. You can also do what I call a thought download, which is just getting all of your thoughts out of your head and onto paper. And so, what that can do is it can really alleviate some of the worries or some of the concerns that you've had throughout the day. Or the worries or concerns that you have about the upcoming day.

So, what's going to happen tomorrow? Do you have a presentation? What are the thoughts that you're having about it? Are you worried about it? Are you anxious about it? And so, doing a thought download while you're reviewing and thinking about what you have to do tomorrow can really be helpful in order to preserve your sleep overnight. Okay, so that's level two. Review your calendar, do a thought download, and do a to-do list download.

Now, level three for your bedtime routine. And I want to stop here and just say that if you aren't having a bedtime routine right now, this may sound really overwhelming. But if you don't have a bedtime routine right now, just do the level one stuff. And then, as you get that under control, then move on to level two.

And as you do level two and you're feeling good about looking over your calendar, and thinking about what you need to do tomorrow, and getting that done. Then on only then, move on to level three. And level three is where we can really harness the power

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of the subconscious mind. Because in level three, what we're doing is we're journaling a little bit.

Now, I grabbed this concept from the book, the Gap in the Gain. I've talked about it before on the podcast. It's a book written by Benjamin Hardy and Dan Sullivan. And in the book, he talks about creating a journal. And in the journal, what he does and what I've adopted is that every night I write down three wins from the day. What are three things that happened today that went well?

And the reason why we're doing this is we're changing our brain. We're forcing our brain to look at the positive things that happened in the day because our brains are all very negative. And without making our brains find something positive in the day, and this can actually be really difficult. I'm not going to lie to you. It can be difficult. Some days I'm like, nothing went well. And so, sometimes it's just I went for a walk today and that has to be enough.

So, every night, I write down three wins that I had from the day. I will also write down thoughts that I want to practice. And thoughts that I want to practice are things like mantras. Not necessarily affirmations, although you might want to call them affirmations. But thoughts that I want to practice.

So, for example, one of them that I will often write down is knowing my luck, my results are going to happen faster than I had anticipated. So, thinking about what are positive things that I want to practice thinking that will help me. Some other thoughts that I've practiced over the years are, I don't have to prove myself. I don't have to prove myself to myself.

I am worthy as I am. I am an emotional being and it's okay to express my emotions. I am thoughtful and intentional in how I spend my money. I am responsible with my

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money. I easily create money with my brain. I am fully resourced, and I know everything I need to be successful.

So, those are just some of the things that I've written down in the past that have really allowed me to control my brain and think positive thoughts. So, it's allowed me to change my default negative brain and become more positive over the past.

Now, the next thing that I write down and I love this next piece and it is problems to solve. So, when we're going to bed, our brains are working. Even though we are sleeping, we are working. And our brains have two different problem solving phases.

One is what we call focused thinking, and that's when we're thinking about a problem and really trying to solve it. And then, we also have what's called diffuse thinking. And exercise is fantastic for diffuse thinking. Have you ever had that experience where you've been in the shower and all of a sudden, you've gotten this great idea about how to solve a problem? That's diffuse thinking.

We can actually use our sleep time to think about problems. And so, this next piece is something that I've done in the past and it works so incredibly well. It's a problem that I need to solve. At night, what I'll do is I will actually give my brain directions on a problem that I need to solve. And it may not get solved that night. It may take a couple nights. But eventually, I am going to solve that problem.

And so, this problem to solve is just it works so phenomenally. And I might not realize that it actually works that night, again. But eventually, I'm going to come up with the solution to whatever it is that's bothering me.

And then, the final thing, and this is all level three stuff. Three expected wins for tomorrow. And again, what this does is it sets us up for success the following day. So, as you're going through your schedule for tomorrow and as you're thinking about what

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is it that I need to do tomorrow. Also, think about what are three things that if these three things happen, I will be happy.

And so, we just kind of prime our brain so that while we're sleeping, our brain is getting used to executing what we need to work on tomorrow. And you would probably be surprised at how well this actually functions. So then, when we wake up the following morning, what I'm going to suggest is that you create some sort of morning routine.

Now again, try to do this. Try to have some time where you have some at least silence in the morning. So, that's your level one morning routine. Have some time where you just have silence. Okay?

Now, for many of my clients, they just don't want to get up in the morning. They're like, oh, bed is so lovely, and I get it 100% I do. However, once you start establishing a morning routine where you are spending time alone and really relishing that time alone. That actually becomes so much more rewarding than sleeping in.

Because just the ability to sit on the couch, or sit at the table, drink some coffee, drink some tea, spend some time alone just gathering your thoughts and allowing yourself to start the day slowly as opposed to starting with a jump and already feeling behind. It is so incredibly satisfying. Because again, what's happening is you are controlling how you want your day to occur versus being on someone else's schedule.

So, level one for your morning routine is really just sitting in silence. Level two could be adding in some reading or doing some journaling. And when we're journaling, I'm going to go back to the evening routine, and I am going to suggest that you then think about your day ahead and write down three expected wins that you would have for the day.

And then, the other thing that I might suggest is doing a little bit of exercise. So, getting your body moving. And the more you can get sunshine on your face, get outside in the

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world, and get your body moving, the more it's going to help. It has scientifically been proven to help you with your mood, and your productivity, and just your sanity.

And so, the more you can get moving, and it doesn't have to be a lot, it could be just walking around your block, or doing a little bit of stretching, or doing some yoga poses. Again, it doesn't need to be a lot. That's level two so reading or journaling and then doing some exercise.

So, level three is what I'm going to recommend the book, *The Miracle Morning*. He uses an acronym, which is called SAVERS. And SAVERS stands for silence, reading your affirmations for the day. Which again, can be new thoughts that you want to think. Having some visualization.

So, thinking about how you want your day to occur or how you want your week, or your month, or your year to occur, whatever level of visualization you want to invoke is totally fine. Adding in exercise. So, S A V E, the R is doing some sort of reading. Lots of my clients like to read the Bible or some other religious text. And then, finally the last one is S, which he calls scribing, but it is a level of journaling or writing.

I've found that over the years, I've gone through a lot of different variations in my morning routine and like I have at night where I have a list of different things that I want to do and I have to remember, oh yeah, that's right, you have this certification chapter that you need to read. Or you wanted to listen to this podcast, or you wanted to watch this webinar, or this coaching call.

I do the same thing in the morning because there was a period of time when I was reading a chapter out of a book every day. Eventually, I just decided that you know, what? I was kind of getting bored with that and I needed something a little bit different. So, I started coming up with a list of a couple different things that I could do. And I choose from that list every single day, depending on what I feel like doing.

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So again, keep a list of things. Certification coursework, listening to podcasts, or reading books. And so, those are the things that allow me. One of my clients recently asked me, Elizabeth, how did you become so productive? And these are the ways that I actually do that. Now, sleep is my number one priority. And it's so important to me because I know how I function when I don't get enough sleep. And so, that has actually become the catalyst to doing all of these other things.

I dump out my brain at the end of the day so that I don't have any worries or problems that are plaguing me overnight. And then, I also allow my brain to problem solve while I sleep. So that the next day, I can be productive as possible and do all of the things that I've set out to do. So, those are the sleep routines and morning routines that I wanted to suggest for you.

I hope you can try them out and when you do try them out again, you don't have to go all into level three. Start out slowly. Think about what is it that I can commit to. I'm also going to ask you, like really think about if you're having resistance to any of this, think about why are you having resistance to it.

So, I go to bed at nine o'clock at night. And I know that when we are younger, we have resistance to doing those types of things because we think that going to bed early is for squares, or something like that, or maybe it's for old people. And so, really thinking about what are the judgements that I have about people who do these behaviors. And really asking yourself, is that really true? And what does that mean about me if I do one of these things?

Anyway, that's all I have for you today. Oh, one thing I didn't talk about is that the sugar cravings reset is starting next week. So, next week the sugar cravings reset is a five day

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challenge where if you are having problems getting your sweet tooth under control, I am totally going to invite you to join us.

It's a \$15 investment. Totally affordable. You will definitely get a return on investment in that because you're not going to be eating sweets as much. You do not have to detox. You do not have to get rid of all sugar. You get to set the rules for how much sugar you're going to have. And I'm going to walk you through all the different layers that you need in order to be successful.

In those five days, I did the reset back in October and it was a huge success. The women who joined Lost Weight, they drastically reduced their sugar cravings in just five days. And so, I would love for you to join us. If you're interested, go to [elizabethsherman.com/sugar](http://elizabethsherman.com/sugar), and join us in the reset.

So, it's going to be coaching with me. Every single day, I'm going to have about a 30 minute, lecture. We're going to have community and it's just a fantastic challenge. So, after the holidays, and if you allowed yourself to have a little bit more sugar than you really wanted to have. Then of course, join us because it's going to really help you get back on track for 2023. Alright?

So, have an amazing week, everyone. I will see you next week and I hope you join the challenge. So again, go to [elizabethsherman.com/sugar](http://elizabethsherman.com/sugar) and I will see you there. Bye-bye.

Hey, Thanks for listening. If you're done with dieting and would like to work with me as your coach, I'd like to invite you to reach out to myself and my team to ask about programs and pricing.

Go to [elizabethsherman.com/contact](http://elizabethsherman.com/contact) to get started today. I can't wait to hear from you. See you next week.