

Exercise sheet

PROTOCOL NIGHTMARE

STEP BY STEP



When nightmares prevent you from sleeping

- 1 To be sure you are ready to work on modification of Nightmares, train in relaxation, meditation.

Gradually relax, calm your breathing, and/or try Enlightened spirit exercises. Listen to music or guided imagery; Review your survival skills for a Distress Tolerance crisis.

- 2 Choose a recurring nightmare on which you want to work.

This will be your target nightmare. Choose a nightmare that you can manage now. Leave aside the traumatic nightmares until you're ready to work on them - or else, if you're targeting a traumatic nightmare, skip step 3.

- 3 Write your target nightmare.

Include sensory descriptions (visions, odors, sounds, tastes, etc.). Integrate also all the thoughts, emotions and affirmations concerning you during the dream.

- 4 Choose a different outcome at the nightmare.

The change in the nightmare must occur before something traumatic or bad happens to you or to others. In fact, you want a change that prevents the usual bad outcome. Write an end that gives you a feeling of peace when you wake up.

NB: the change in the nightmare can be very unusual or unlikely (e.g. you become a superhero who can escape or repel the attackers). Changing the outcome can include a change in thoughts, emotions and facts about you.

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- 5 Write the full nightmare, changes included,
- 6 Repeat and relax every night before going to bed.
Repeat the modified nightmare by visualizing the entire dream, changes included, every night, before practicing relaxation techniques.
- 7 Repeat and relax during the day.
Visualize the entire dream, change included and practice relaxation too Often as possible during the day.

