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## HELP! I CAN'T GET OUT OF BED IN THE MORNING (AND I NEED TO GET TO WORK)

My alarm clock is a tyrant. I hate it. Inevitably at 4:50 am every morning my dreams are interrupted by a loud incessant shrieking noise that refuses to recede into the background. When I can't block out the noise any longer, I roll over, eyes half closed, and force myself to stumble across the room to turn off that evil plastic black box. I find a pair of warm fuzzy socks (It's usually about 15 degrees here in the mornings) and start my "routine". It's not always so easy. What about the time (s) I "accidentally" unplugged the clock and fell back asleep for an hour? Or the numerous mornings I've played the snooze button tango? Maybe you can commiserate. I do not have an absolutely fool proof way to make you leave the warm shelter of your bed in the morning, but as working adults we inevitably need to wake up and make it to work on time. The easiest way to wake up on time is to go to bed at a decent hour. This sounds ridiculously easy, maybe too easy. I am naturally a night owl so I know how difficult it is to do this if you have a day time job. Staying up until 1:00 am will not help you wake up at 5:00am. Know yourself. Understand how much sleep your body needs and set aside enough time to actually sleep. Do you need certain conditions to get a healthy, relaxing sleep? Do you need complete darkness to sleep? Do you sleep better with the light on? Does your room need to be toasty warm before dozing off or do you like it to be cooler? Take some time to really think about your optimum sleep conditions. Stop drinking caffeine and any spicy or heavy foods a few hours before you plan to sleep. Eating and drinking these things can make it more difficult to fall asleep when you need to. Some people find that certain decaffeinated teas or herbal drinks help them feel drowsy before going to bed. Prepare for your day the night before. Lay out your clothes, do some light housekeeping, perhaps make your lunch. By doing all of these things in the evening you will not be as rushed in the morning. Once you're in bed, relax and close your eyes. Put some music on if that helps you drift off. Don't stress about not being able to get to sleep, that most likely will keep you awake longer. Move your alarm clock to different locations in your room. Don't put it right next to your bed. By placing your alarm clock out of arms reach you are forced to get up. As soon as you get up take a shower, get dressed and take care of any morning chores. Sitting around in your pajamas will tempt you to get back into bed. If you live in a climate with cold winter weather conditions, make sure to scrape the snow off your car and warm it up if necessary. If you're in the middle of a morning storm this can take quite a while! Do you have trouble waking up in the morning? What strategies do you use to make yourself wake up and go?

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