Herbs for Sleeping Well

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If there is something important that I have learned over the years it's this: Sleep is NOT over-rated. Your body suffers if you do all the right things yet don't get adequate sleep. Did you know that your brain actually washes itself while you are sleeping? Brain waves help flush waste out of the brain as nerve cells coordinate to produce rhythmic waves that move fluid through the brain tissue. If you don't get sleep, your brain can't refresh and recover from the day. It's more than just feeling tired.

I get questions about herbs for sleep almost every day. The answer is not as simple as rattling off a list of herbs. There are types of sleeplessness, all of which respond differently to any herbal therapy you formulate.

My first response for a sleep question is what do you mean by that? Are you not able to fall asleep? Is your mind racing or are you just don't feel tired? Are you not staying asleep? Do you wake up too easily or too many times at night? Are you physically uncomfortable and unable to sleep?

This is where a few minutes of conversation is so important. It's not a quick answer pointing to a tea or suggesting an herb. The why of sleepless nights is just as important as a remedy. Here are some of my go-to herbal sleep remedies and the type of sleeplessness they seem to work well for.

Chamomile

Chamomile is a classic go-to for sleep. Its gentle, soothing effects help relax the body and mind, making it easier to drift off. A warm cup of chamomile tea before bed is a lovely way to unwind. The ritual of preparing for bedtime can contribute to a good night's sleep, making that tea with intention and letting your body relax can be a worthwhile solution to sleepless nights due to just being busy and responsible for so many things. I think of it as a restful herbal cup, one that gently works to remind your brain and body it is time to slow down and unwind. I find Chamomile glycerite is another lovely way to use this herb. I combine dried chamomile blossoms in a 75% glycerine/ 25% distilled water mixture for 6 weeks. Take a dropperful as your start your bedtime routine and give it a week or two to see best results.

Valerian Root

Valerian Root is a powerhouse when it comes to fighting insomnia and anxiety. This herb works by boosting GABA levels in the brain, which promotes relaxation. I suggest a tincture, just be aware, the taste can be a