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Why does one wake up tired in the morning, and what should one do to have a better sleep?

If you wake up tired in the morning, it is because of tamas, nothing else, a formidable mass of tamas; I myself noticed it when I began to do the yoga of the body. It is inevitable so long as the body is not transformed.

You must lie flat on your back and relax all the muscles and all the nerves — it is an easy thing to learn — to be like what I call a rag on a bed: nothing else remains. And if you can do that with the mind also, you get rid of all those stupid dreams that make you more tired when you get up than when you went to bed. It is the cellular activity of the brain that continues without control, and that tires one much. So, a total relaxation, a sort of complete calm, without tension, in which everything is stopped. But this is only the beginning.

Afterwards, you make a self-giving as total as possible, of everything, from top to bottom, from outside to inside, and an eradication, as total as possible, of all the resistance of the ego. And you begin repeating your mantra — your mantra, if you have one, or any word which has a power for you, a word leaping forth from the heart spontaneously, like a prayer, a word which sums up your aspiration. After repeating it a certain number of times, if you are accustomed to do so, you enter into trance. And from that trance you pass into sleep. The trance lasts as long as it should and quite naturally, spontaneously, you pass into sleep. But when you come back from this sleep, you remember everything; the sleep was like a continuation of the trance.

Fundamentally, the sole purpose of sleep is to enable the body to assimilate the effect of the trance so that the effect may be received everywhere, and to enable the body to do its natural
nocturnal function of eliminating toxins. And when you wake up, there is not that trace of heaviness which comes from sleep: the effect of the trance continues.

Even for those who have never been in trance, it is good to repeat a mantra, a word, a prayer before going into sleep. But there must be a life in the words; I do not mean an intellectual significance, nothing of that kind, but a vibration. And its effect on the body is extraordinary: it begins to vibrate, vibrate, vibrate... and quietly you let yourself go, as though you wanted to go to sleep. The body vibrates more and more, more and more, more and more, and away you go. That is the cure for tamas.

It is tamas which causes bad sleep. There are two kinds of bad sleep: the sleep that makes you heavy, dull, as if you lost all the effect of the effort you put in during the preceding day; and the sleep that exhausts you as if you had passed your time in fighting. I have noticed that if you cut your sleep into slices (it is a habit one can form), the nights become better. That is to say, you must be able to come back to your normal consciousness and normal aspiration at fixed intervals — come back at the call of the consciousness. But for that you must not use an alarm-clock! When you are in trance, it is not good to be shaken out of it.

When you are about to go to sleep, you can make a formation; say: “I shall wake up at such an hour” (you do that very well when you are a child). For the first stretch of sleep you must count at least three hours; for the last, one hour is sufficient. But the first one must be three hours at the minimum. On the whole, you have to remain in bed at least seven hours; in six hours you do not have time enough to do much (naturally I am looking at it from the point of view of sadhana) to make the nights useful.

To make use of the nights is an excellent thing. It has a double effect: a negative effect, it prevents you from falling backward, losing what you have gained — that is indeed painful — and a positive effect, you make some progress, you continue your progress. You make use of the night, so there is no trace of fatigue any more.
Two things you must eliminate: falling into the stupor of the inconscience, with all the things of the subconscient and inconscient that rise up, invade you, enter you; and a vital and mental superactivity where you pass your time in fighting, literally, terrible battles. People come out of that state bruised, as if they had received blows. And they did receive them — it is not “as if”! And I see only one way out: to change the nature of sleep.