



Homework Week 3: Gentle Changes

The goal for homework this week is to help you identify and set out a plan for any change you may want to implement with your child regarding their sleep. As always, I am available in office hours to help you with this plan if you feel it's needed.

Step 1. Identify where you are at and where you want to be (your end goal). Please be realistic about this given the expectations you can have for your child's development and needs (remember week 1).

Where are you?	Where do you want to be?
<i>Ex. My child will only nurse to sleep with me and won't sleep for anyone else.</i>	<i>Ex. I want my child to be able to fall asleep with Dad some nights.</i>

Step 2. Identify the middle ground steps that you will use to get to your end goal and your time-frame for these (know that the time-frame will be flexible, but you will need to have some idea and writing it out can help you set a realistic time-frame).

Stage	What You're Doing	Timeframe
Starting Point	<i>Nursing to sleep every night with just me</i>	<i>n/a</i>
First Stage	<i>Dad takes over the bedtime routine up to nursing time</i>	<i>2 weeks to get her used to this change</i>
Second Stage	<i>Dad starts to rock her for 1 minute in the dark before I take over</i>	<i>1 week</i>
Third Stage	<i>Dad slowly increases the time by 1 minute before I take over – hopefully getting to 5 minutes</i>	<i>3-4 weeks</i>
Fourth Stage	<i>Delay bedtime a bit at this stage so that hopefully after 5 minutes, she's comfortable with Dad and may fall asleep; keep building time up to whatever is needed</i>	<i>As long as needed?</i>
Final	<i>Dad is putting her to sleep some nights</i>	<i>Probably 2-3 months to achieve unless she adapts faster</i>



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Your chart:

Stage	What You're Doing	Timeframe
Starting Point		
First Stage		
Second Stage		
Third Stage		
Fourth Stage		
Final		

Step 3. Troubleshooting. We can lay out the best plans and our kids may not take to them. If you hit this stage, I often don't recommend persisting indefinitely, but rather take a look at what some of the common issues might be. These issues include:

- Routine has been set. Sometimes if we try to make changes that are too similar to the previous routine, our kids resist because they have such strong associations between one person and a sleep event. This means we may need to change the environment a bit to help remove that association.



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- Forgot to consider tired levels. Whenever we make changes for our kids, it's helpful if they're more tired than they may need to be for their usual routine to work. This means we need to add time to bedtime/naptime/whatever in order to make sure they're tired enough for the change to be easier on them.
- The replacements or changes don't work for your kid. Not all kids like rocking or bouncing or whatever you've chosen and so you may need to find a different way to change things up. You'll learn through experience.
- When changing people, the original person may need to be away for a bit. Our kids find it harder to accept things when the person they want is *right there*. It's easier if you can show them the person isn't there at that time to help them accept that someone else is going to comfort them.
- You've jumped ahead too quickly. If we push too much, too soon, our kids can rebel back because it's all "too much". Taking it slowly helps them build their confidence, but if you have jumped up too much you may need to backtrack for a bit before starting again.
- Your child isn't ready. Sometimes the issue is the goal isn't appropriate for your child. In this case you'll need to re-evaluate your goal.