

# Regarde ze Sheeps

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So what's all this then - Is it new?

- ... maybe... not really!

Is it that thing about counting sheep to fall asleep?

- ... yep!

Why would anyone want to write about that?

- ... couldn't fall asleep counting sheep!

So it's about something that's boring *AND* doesn't work?

- ... well - I made it work, and if you read it you'll find out how!

Is it long?

- ... well that's up to you - there's the short version that tells you *how-to*, and then there's a bit about why the *rules* are the way they are.

RULES?

- ... just read it!
- ... and no, there aren't any pictures!

# Why? 1

Well, a couple of years ago I started having trouble falling asleep. This was probably be due to several different things, but mainly long and stressful work hours. When I eventually got to bed, my head was still full of a days work and tomorrows agenda.

One night I remembered the sheep thing and in desperation I gave it go. It just didn't work! So with nothing better to do, I thought I might tweak the concept to make it work. Eventually I of course fell asleep - not because I'd sussed it, but just because everyone falls asleep eventually. Nonetheless, I'd had time enough to figure that there must be more to it than just *counting sheep*.

As my troubles falling asleep kept on, I eagerly kept on refining my sheep counting - if nothing, I had something else to think about instead of work. I have not carried out extensive studies to verify that *my method* is better than my original conception of the *game*. I have, however, shared the rules with a few - now rested - souls for whom it apparently worked.

The apparent flaw in the art of counting sheep, is that you tend to count the sheep. As you'll find in the following the most important rule of all is *DON'T COUNT THE SHEEP!* The title is intended to reveal the *solution*, however, as *watch the sheep* sounded a bit too boring, it somehow acquired a french twist - *Regarde ze Sheeps* - not that this matters in any way, but I fell asleep that night too.

As you'll find in the following, there are no pictures. As this technique rests on the ability to picture things in your head, you might as well start now. Worst case scenario, you'll find this accumulation of black doodles so boring, that it puts you to sleep just trying to get through it - *win win*.

In case you don't make it all the way to the last page, I'll express my final notes on the subject here. Two methods are better than one. Not to discredit my findings I've spent many sleepless nights not *not counting sheep*, but instead wording this doodle. My point is, as you may gather, the idea is to concentrate on something utterly useless - without concentrating, as opposed to reviewing your current worries. Lets face it, if it's worth worrying about it'll still be there tomorrow. This is then just one way of clearing your head for a sufficient time span, allowing you to fall asleep.

*If you've already fallen asleep - good on you!*

# Basic Rules

Obviously you want to start of with going to bed with the intension of actually falling asleep. You want to turn everything off and really give it a go. When you've realised that you're not going to fall asleep - *ever* - try following the steps below. It may take some practice, but eventually you'll get there. If for some reason (most probably) it doesn't work, you might want to read the next chapter. Here the details of the rules are explained in more depth, and you should get the jist of how and why it works. For instance, below you'll notice that the sheep have to enter from the right - this is part of what makes it work. Either you accept it, or you'll want to read on and find out why.

Also, you obviously won't want to be reading this when you're actually trying to fall asleep, so you'll have to remember the steps before you give it a go - but somehow it's not that difficult once you get started. Also, you might find a twist that works better for you, rather than what works best for me.

1. Picture an empty field with a hedge down the middle - splitting it left and right.
2. Wait till you've cleared your head of all todays and tomorrows stuff.
3. In time, start filling the right half with sheep. Let them enter from the right (outside the picture).
4. Let the sheep jump over the hedge (right to left) one at a time.
5. Adjust the frequency of the jumping sheep, as to not stress yourself with an action packed sheep-a-thon.
6. Leave yourself observing *approximately* how many sheep have jumped the hedge. Say to yourself "that was about 10... 20... 40..." aso. Focusing on *NOT* being precise.
7. It is important that you don't concentrate on keeping track of the number of sheep.
8. If you loose track of how many sheep have jumped - just come up with a "reasonable" figure.
9. What ever you do - DON'T COUNT THE SHEEP!

... And that's all there is to it. Find out why in the next chapter. I have found some of the elements above to be quite essential, even though it sounds a bit silly that they *must* jump from right to left.

# What Did I Miss?

Here I'll try to first of all explain the ideas behind the rules - meaning how it works for me. Secondly, and sometimes all at once, I'll attempt to explain why this is important - as in why does this work. It may be important to note that I by no means have any form of education or training which *allows* me to profess in the arts of a good nights sleep. Fortunately this does not prevent me in interpreting favourable methods through reason. So, even if it works - for reasons of which I am unaware or have misinterpreted - it still works. If it doesn't work, you've just lost.

## 3.1 The Empty Field

Make sure the field is properly oriented. It's all about where the field should be if it was actually there and you opened your eyes. Sometimes this may, however, stress your eyes as they will attempt to look in that direction, even though your eyes are closed. If you're lying on your back - or face down in the pillow? - you'll want to see the field ahead of you, as if you were standing upright, perhaps looking slightly downwards. If your head is facing sideways, then the field should be just there, where your eyes naturally rest. Make sure you see the field here, as you would when lying on your side - i.e. the left and right sides are kind of top and bottom relative to your body.

This should leave you no room to start thinking about why the field is upside down, or eventually have a giggle about the immensely steep hill which the sheep must climb to get to the hedge - or the major plunge the sheep take into the endless abyss.

Make sure you limit the scope of your view to only a small section of an infinitely large field. If you see too much you may start searching for details which you of course dictate the presence of. The smaller the scope, the less room for otherwise *interesting* details. Remember it's an *empty field* - there's nothing there except the hedge down the middle.

Also, you don't want too much sunshine - and you certainly don't want to see the sun. After all you're trying to fall asleep - avoid brightness, maybe put on some shades so the lighting is pleasing for the eye.

## 3.2 Clearing Your Head

Think of steps two and three as a meditative initiation of your journey to the land of dreams. It may seem contradictory to expect no thoughts when just looking at nothing - but you want to remember, that if you're patient something *good* is going to happen.

Including step three lets you gradually achieve the goal of no present thoughts - besides the fact that

this is all thought up. When you let the sheep enter one by one and letting them wait for you to be ready for the jumping spree, kind of forces you to concentrate on *not concentrating*. They won't - and you shouldn't let them - jump before your head is clear.

### 3.3 The Sheep

For some reason I've found that perfectly white sheep are just too bright to look at when trying to fall asleep. Also, it's just too suspicious, if the sheep are too white. Black sheep don't work either. Black sheep associates with something negative or wrong or something. Silly unnatural colours just don't work either - you'll start to think too much about why the sheep look so wrong and/or stupid.

Find yourself a *nice* grayish tone - similar to *real* sheep which aren't as white as on telly. It's the same as with the bright sunlight.

### 3.4 Right to Left

Having the sheep enter from the right, and later jump from right to left, is full of meaning though difficult for me to word. Example: When reading/writing you start from the left and finish on the right. So, if the sheep traveled left to right, you'd be starting something and thereby expecting some sort of end. You've let the sheep out, and you'll eventually have to bring them home again. Just more for you to do, and ultimately one more worry than when you started.

Should the sheep on the other hand travel right to left you're not starting something, it's a gathering process - you're bringing the sheep *home*. When they're home in their enclosure, you no longer have to think of where they went - they can't run off. No additional worries. By the way, the sheep don't eat, drink, freeze, sweat, die, get sick or any plausible conceivable real life turn of events. When they're home it's all just fine and dandy - if they're not home, that's fine also.

### 3.5 Step Back

Eager to fall asleep, you may tend to rush into the action and have the sheep jump all over the place... Don't! If necessary, take a step or two back. Make the sheep stop jumping until you're relaxed and ready again. Remember it should be peaceful to watch - a mass of mischievous sheep is just not sleep inducing.

### 3.6 How Many Sheep?

As mentioned above, you don't want to stress out on too much action. Find a pace at which it's relaxing to *Regarde ze Sheeps*. Remember, you don't - under all circumstances - want to count the sheep, yet you

still want to have an idea of how many sheep have jumped the hedge. Just acknowledge every now and again approximately how many sheep have *come home*. Seriously, it doesn't matter how many you've got. Let's face it, you've got an infinite number of sheep waiting to jump, and no matter how many or how few you collect, you won't be needing them for anything. Also, the ones you didn't bring home will just be there for you tomorrow again.

Should you loose track of how many sheep you've gathered - well as just stated, it doesn't matter - come up with something *plausible*. If you guess too far off the mark, you'll start concentrating on the fact that you've cheated - someones got more sheep than they should've, whether it be you or who ever you're taking the sheep from, it doesn't matter.

### 3.7 DON'T COUNT THE SHEEP

Funnily enough, I seem to have placed *thee main rule* last besides having already mentioned it. Just *DON'T COUNT THE SHEEP*. Counting keeps you occupied i.e. you're doing something rather than falling asleep. Think of a job where you have to keep track of how many people come through the door. As boring as it may seem you'll be *busy* in doing it. Think of a simple infinite while loop counting away (in terms of computer programming). If you let it run, you'll find your coolers start to run - the computer's busy as hell with the worlds simplest task. *DON'T COUNT!*

### 3.8 Give It A Go!

Sometimes I find *not* keeping track of the sheep at all helps - it varies. Sometimes some alternate method all together works. Anyway, if you've made it this far, I'm sure you won't have problems remembering the rules tonight - so you might as well give it a go. Even if you're not having problems falling asleep tonight, give it a go. Should you try to *Regarde ze Sheeps* - and it amazingly works, it might just work next time when you need it to. I'm guessing this borders on the placebo effect...

### 3.9 How About Something Else All Together?

Well, as this *technique* is an evolution of counting sheep resulting in *NO COUNTING*, it might as well have been something different all together. You've now read some five pages - *yes!* *The first page doesn't count* - on something utterly useless. You should by now have gathered, that it's merely a matter of occupying your mind with something new, different, out of the ordinary yet keeping it sleep inducingly uneventful.

*Sleep well*