



Some Whys And Hows Of Better Sleep

Why we need to sleep

Sleep in our modern culture is much undervalued. Nowadays a high premium is placed on grind and hustle, on how much you can accomplish during the day, even if it means missing out on much-needed shuteye. What many people don't know is that sleep serves a number of very important functions. When we sleep:

- Our body regenerates and repairs tissue that's been worn and torn during the day
- Our brain backs up memories, learnings and experiences from the day
- Our energy is renewed in preparation for the day to come

A great many road accidents and medical missteps happen due to lack of sleep, evidence that sleep is much more essential than a lot of us think it is.

A good book on the importance of sleep is Dr. Matthew Walker's *Why We Sleep*.

Our chronological clock

Different people have different sleep needs and function in varying degrees of effectiveness during the day. Dr. Michael Breus's book, *The Power of When*, places people into one of four chronological groups according to when they do certain activities best - exercising, socializing, sleeping, eating, etc. He provides a free quiz to determine your chronological group: thepowerofwhenquiz.com. While you needn't follow his recommendations to the letter, it provides a good baseline starting point for arranging your schedule to achieve maximum productivity and wellbeing. This is a great help for those of us who may for a long time have arranged our lives around the needs of others, ignoring our natural biological tendencies, and who now have the leeway to follow our real chronological bent.

Our needs can change

Between the demands of work and family, you might have been staying up late and waking midday and thinking you were naturally a night person. This can change. An environment where work ends early, and where you have the benefit of exposure to morning sunlight, may boost your energy levels earlier in the day and have you seeking rest sooner at night.

Once you've got a natural sleeping routine, you may find an alarm clock is no longer a necessity, unless you need to wake up unusually early or if something



the night before - that late night show you just had to watch, for example - throws you off schedule.

Technology is your friend

If you're the type that wants to keep a sharp eye on your sleep quality, a device to consider would be the Oura ring. This monitors your sleep patterns, sleep depth, duration, heart rate, etc. to let you know when you need more sleep or when the quality of your sleep has suffered and why.

Rigging your space for sleep

Quality snooze time can often start with your environment. A few pointers will optimize your bedroom and set you up for sound sleep:

- Make sure it's cold. Research shows it's better to sleep between 16 and 18 degrees Celsius. Get air-conditioning if necessary.
- Keep it dark.
- No tech in the bedroom. If you can, quit your devices at least two hours before bed. If you do bring your phone into the room, switch it off or place it on airplane mode.
- Keep things quiet. Even the hum of a fan can keep some people awake. If you must, use earplugs.
- Keep your space clean. If you've got carpets, vacuum them and the space beneath them.
- Have a quality mattress. Consider the softness, the make, the breathability, whether it retains bacteria.
- If you sleep with a companion, consider a mattress that doesn't bounce when the other person bounces. Also consider separate single duvets to avoid the conflict over who gets the most area.
- Keep your bedding fresh.

Get more guidelines to healthier living, check out Anita Chaperon's training at superfastbusiness.com/anita

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