

USC Yoga TT: Sleep Hygiene

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A Balanced Approach

- Because of its complexity, we'll approach sleep quality from a number of perspectives
- In this lecture, we'll explore Sleep Hygiene, the term used for the Best Practices for sleep
- Sleep hygiene aims to address potential factors that can influence your sleep, but it is essential to emphasize the word potential
- Everyone will have a completely unique experience of and reaction to these suggestions
- Some people are sensitive to noise and earplugs will help, but if your sensitivity is to light – earplugs are of no use to you and they are no guarantee of good sleep
- You are not meant to do ALL of these practices!
- Instead, each week you will select a practice that is of interest to you and you will try it out, reflect on it in your sleep tracker and reflection forms – and then determine if it will be of use to you ongoing
- Then, you'll try another one



Just A Reminder



- You may be having trouble sleeping for a **MULTITUDE OF REASONS** (cultural, chemical, psychological, etc.)
- If this is the case – you could do the best sleep hygiene for years – and it won't help
- Sleep Hygiene only helps **SOME PEOPLE**
- Do not assume that your sleep challenges are the same challenges as **ANYONE** else
- We are here to find out what works for **YOU**

What Is Sleep Hygiene

- Sleep Hygiene = Best Practices for Quality Sleep
- Sleep Hygiene is:
 - ≠ to a guarantee of good sleep
 - ≠ to be practiced all at once
 - ≠ all helpful to everyone
- If anyone ever tells you “Do this one thing and you’ll be able to sleep...”



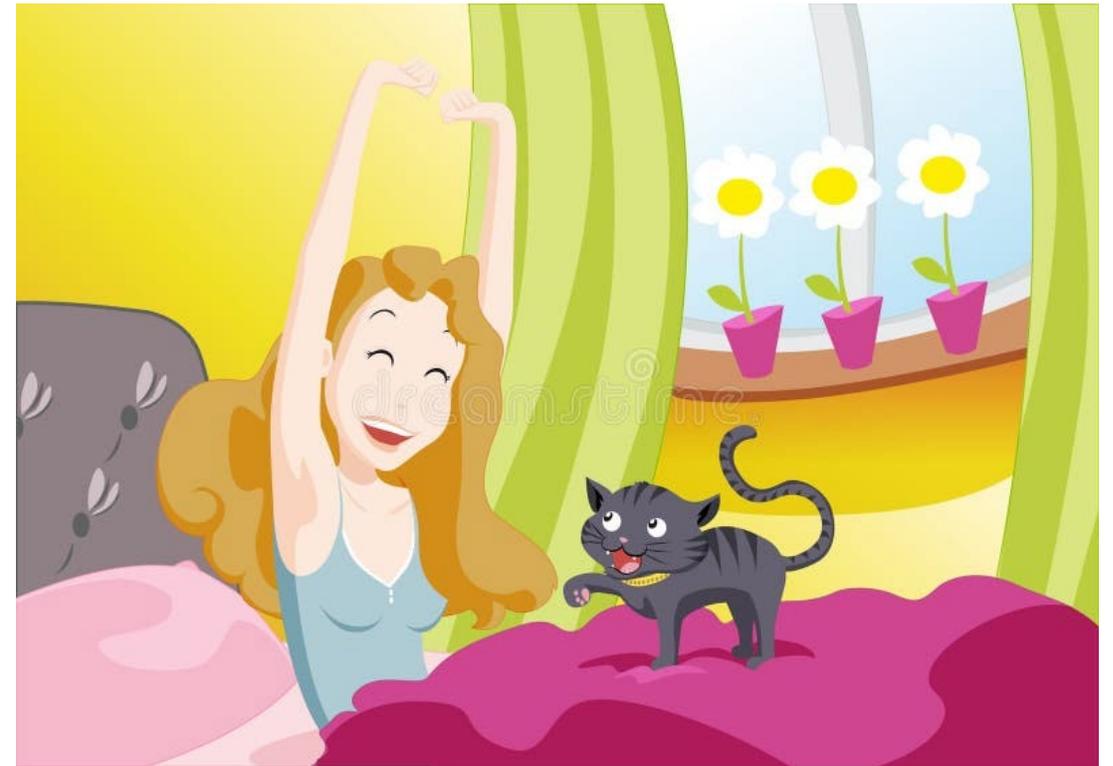
Agency In Sleep Habits



- From first thing in the morning to the moment you turn off the lights – your choices matter.
- Everything we do affects our sleep and our sleep affects everything we do

Consistent Wake Up Time

- Setting a consistent wake time is considered essential for quality sleep
- The way melatonin accumulates up in our systems, we typically start to get tired about 14-16 hours after wake up
- So, when you wake up also helps determine when you should go to sleep in a balanced circadian rhythm cycle
- However, ENJOY yourself, but beware of social jet lag in college



AM Light



- Get as much light you can into your eyes as early as possible
- We will learn the physiology on how this works in future lectures
- Open the curtains, turn on all of the lights, and see if it is possible to get yourself outside for 10-15 minutes **BEFORE** you start anything else
- Read the paper lol, walk the dog, whatever it takes, get yourself out as quickly as possible for as long as possible as the sun will reset your biological clock

Exercise

- The earlier in the day, the better
- There is a LOT of debate regarding what type of exercise – how much, how long, what intensity, etc.
- The definitive will evolve and change over time and with research
- For now, whatever exercise you can manage and the earlier you can do it is great



Hydration



- Hydrate as much as you can as early as you can and then all day long
- Drink more than you think you need and flush your cells with this hydration to help you feel more energized and alive
- Then, around 8pm – STOP – so you will be less likely to be disturbed at night
- Perhaps the number one thing you can do to feel better on a day that you haven't slept is to hydrate; failing to hydrate will leave you feeling more depleted than you do already
- Drink, drink, drink as much as you possibly can AND drink pure, filtered flat water, drink bubbly water with a little bit of flavor in it, drink coconut water for its electrolytes, and drink non-sugary fresh pressed juices for their nutrition and alkalizing effects

Naps

- Everyone's Favorite Topic
- YES! They can be great for you!!!
- We will discuss this ALOT through the term
- Try taking a a NASANAP!
 - Keep it under 30 minutes (~26 min)
 - Do it it before 3 PM
- Consider a Nappuccino
 - Consume Caffeine BEFORE the nap



i NEED A NAP.

Naps (Continued)

- If you are only sleeping 4-6 hours at night, and thinking you are making it up with a 1-2 hour nap...You are **MISTAKEN**
- **REM RATIO INCREASES** throughout the night
- Most of your REM happens at the **END** of an 8 hour sleep
- The most **ESSENTIAL** hours of your sleep are the last hours
- We will learn more about this in future lectures



Evening Meals



- Most people suggest eating dinner early
- Ultimately, you have to experiment with and find what works for you as an individual
- Perhaps consider avoiding spicy/sour foods, sugary foods, drinks with caffeine like soda and espresso, alcohol, and heavy meats that are harder for the body to digest

Some Things To Avoid At Night

Caffeine

- Caffeine is the Adenosine Receptor Agonist – meaning that it blocks Adenosine build up in the basal forebrain, which is the prime activity of Sleep Homeostasis
- Half Life Of Caffeine = 6 hours (creates lingering effects that disturbs sleep quality)

Alcohol

- Alcohol is initially sedating as it acts on GABA and slows down brain activity
- However, it suppresses REM sleep and can create a rebound arousal with the release of epinephrine
- Also, it takes the body 3x longer to metabolize alcohol when you sleep as opposed to when you're awake
- It's also a diuretic meaning you have more frequent urges for urination as a result

Devices



- By mid-evening, perhaps start to DIMINISH your blue light exposure
- Use Blue Light Blocker Glasses
- Some Ideas For Cell Phones:
 - Night Shift Mode
 - Dark Mode
 - Dim Brightness
- Charge them on the other side of the room as you sleep

No Phones In Bed

- Don't scroll on your phone in bed
- Many of you think you are having trouble sleeping, but you're not trying to sleep – you're “trying” to scroll your phone – and you're really good at it lol!
- Put it down and read a book or try something else less visually engaging and stimulating
- Eye movements = signals



Sound

- Sound disturbances can sometimes be trickier to deal with than light or visual disturbances
- Train yourself to sleep with earplugs
- **NO THEY WILL NOT STOP YOU FROM HEARING YOUR ALARM**— or get a louder alarm lol!
- It is illegal to create an earplug that blocks all sound (safety, fire alarms etc.)
- Also consider white (or brown) noise machines
- White Noise App
- Soothing Sounds (Rain, Ocean, Dolphins, Whales, etc.)



Temperature



- Your body temperature **NEEDS** to drop when you sleep
- But, temperature is harder to control, especially if you live with other people
- If you get hot>cold>hot>cold and throw the blankets off, wake up freezing, throw them back on...
- Ditch the pretty duvet cover
- Get a “boring” thin blanket

Create A Sleep Sanctuary

- To the best of your ability create a safe, clean, quiet space for sleep
- We have “location associations” when we sleep, soooo...
 - If you’re doing your homework on your bed, eating on your bed, watching shows, scrolling social media...when it’s time to go to bed, your brain will think “Well, what are we going to do now?”
- If you are in a dorm or an apartment and have no other option, consider doing all of those things above “turned around” with your head where your feet go and feet at head

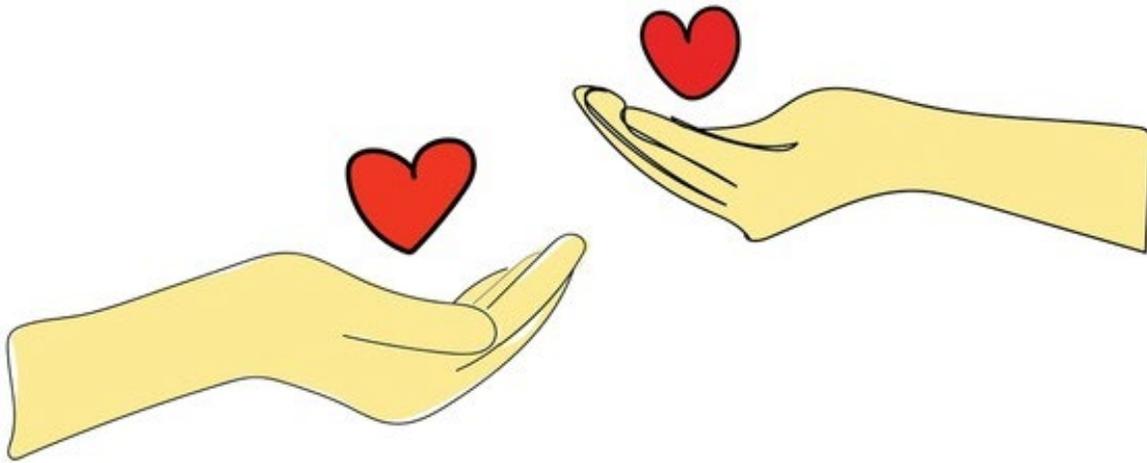


Create A Pre-Sleep Routine And “Bedtime Rituals”



- Deliberately Downshift!
- The more you stick to a routine, the more the routine can help serve you as a good habit
- You already brush your teeth and do your skin care routines
- So, consider mindfully relaxing with meditation, breathwork, stretching, Yoga nidra, a warm beverage, etc.
- When you walk to your bed, sit down. Pause. Close your eyes, let the day go, and maybe even say a prayer or two or share some loving-kindness if you feel called to do so

Compassion



- Please practice self-compassion
- If you were struggling with a different disease or disorder, there would be protocols and methods for support. We are only just learning about the impact of sleep deprivation and thus far don't have the usual methods of treatment, accommodations, or support groups. Hopefully, all of this will exist in the future, but the most important thing you can do for now is ...
- **GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK**
- Please, please just be as nice to yourself as you possibly can. Beating yourself up will only reinforce the cycle of stress and disrupted sleep. Start by telling yourself that you are doing the best you can at this moment. Just the way you would be kind to a friend that is struggling, be kind to yourself. Kindness and a few deep breaths will go a long way...
- How do you speak to someone about showing up sleep deprived?

Sleep Aids

- What about pharmaceutical sleep aids like melatonin and other supplements?
- We have a whole entire lecture just on sleep aids and will also cover this in future lectures
- For now, just continue doing whatever works for you and we will discuss options throughout the term

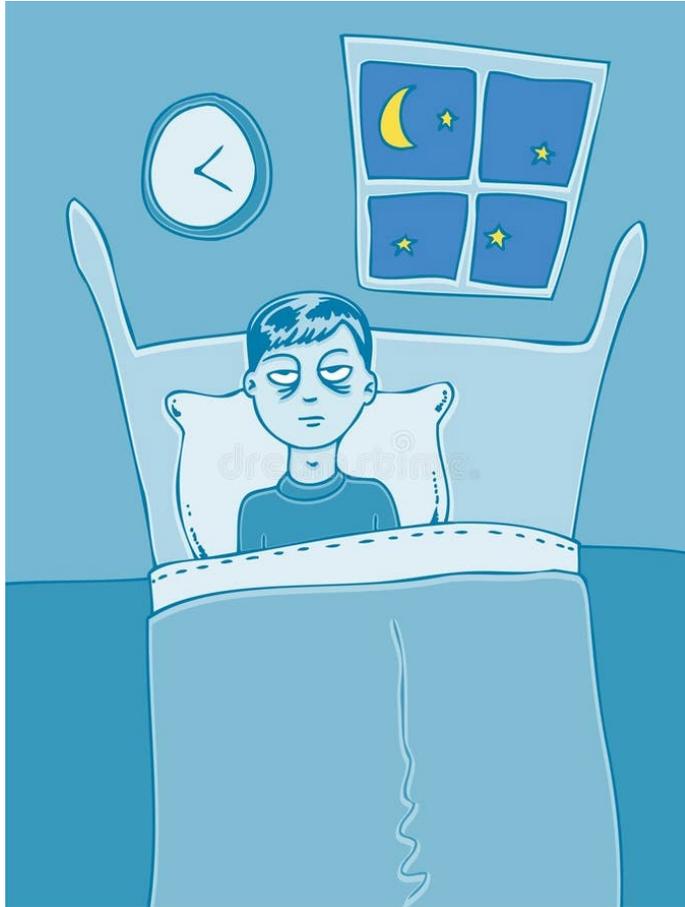


What To Do If It Didn't Work

- If you try to fall asleep and it just isn't happening, try getting up and doing something else – and come back to it in a bit
- Your brain is programmed to repeat patterns, so you don't want it to reinforce and repeat the pattern of not sleeping



I Fell Asleep, But Woke Up And Couldn't Get Back To Sleep ...



- There are MANY reasons this could be happening and we will go through this at length through the term
- Don't panic, there is nothing wrong with you
- As it said on the previous slide, go do something else and try again after an hour and a half

Isolate The Helpful Intervention Variable

- Reminder: Try one or two good things or interventions each week to determine which practice is actually helping
- **DON'T DO ALL OF THEM!**
- Or it will become another dreaded to-do list
- Learn the practices that actually help you, even if it's only the bare minimum
- You'll be more likely to stick with it and keep doing them that way



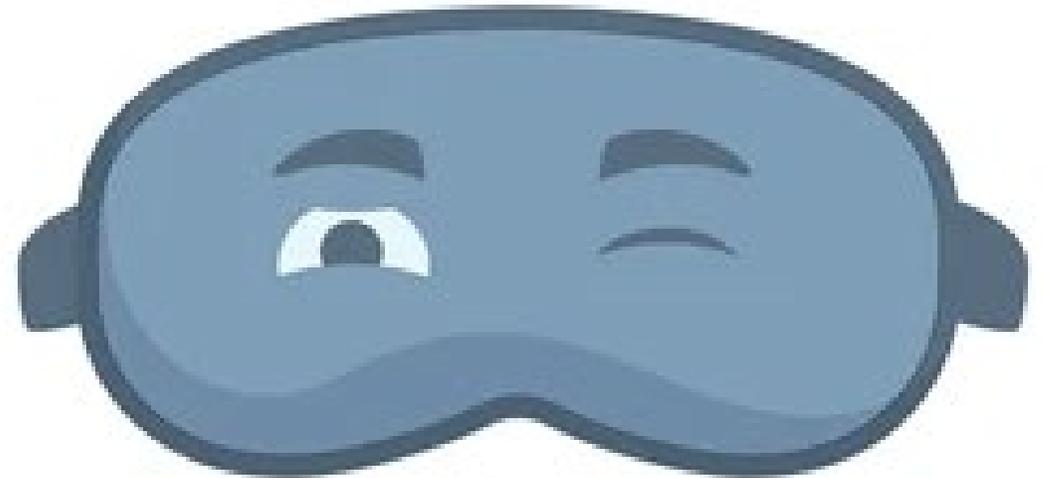
Try Getting Into Nature During The Day



- It's hard to scientifically quantify why getting into nature is so important to sleep, but...it just is.
- Connecting to nature helps us remember that there is more to life than our to-do lists, and it is one of the best ways to relieve the effects of devices
- If you live in a metropolitan area, there are still ways to find it, stand near a fountain and watch the movement of the water, find a botanical garden (rose garden across the street from USC), or kick your shoes off and walk in the grass. Even stopping to pet a dog can help relieve stress, help you hit the reset button, and course correct

One Last Thing...

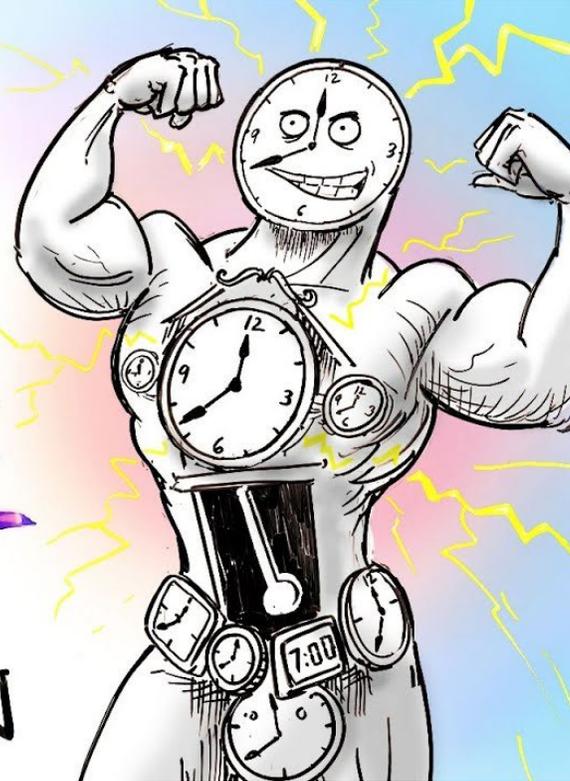
- If you do all of these things for sleep hygiene and you still can't sleep – there is nothing wrong with you
- It just may be that sleep hygiene may not be your issue preventing your sleep



For More Please Watch This Video...

THE **OPTIMAL**
MORNING
ROUTINE

by
ANDREW HUBERMAN



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gR_f-iwUGY4