

MODULE 8 ACTIVITY

Best Possible Sleep

This is a basic process used in sleep studies to help individuals with chronic sleep problems such as insomnia improve their sleeping environment and routine enough to improve quality or quantity of sleep, or both. The initial part of the activity takes approximately 5 minutes, and if you choose to complete Part 4, the activity will take approximately a week. This activity is easier to do with a practice partner/team that can help with Parts 3 and 4.

Part 1: Sleep Self-Assessment

On the two rating scales below, provide your average number of hours of sleep per day within the last two weeks, as well as your overall quality.

On average, how many hours of sleep do you get per day?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11+
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On average, how well rested do you feel each night (0 = not at all, 10 = well rested)?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Part 2: Sleep Checklist

Below you will find checklists of research-backed practices that improve sleep, and research-backed common habits that many of us do that reduce sleep. Go through and check which sleep improving and sleep reducing habits you do.

Beneficial Sleep Practices include:

- Regular exercise
- A designated worry/planning time at least 1 hr before bed (worry time is a designated time, usually around 5 minutes, that you allow your mind to worry and stress without judgment or trying to stop it, then you follow that up with a problem-solving time to address some of the worries. Doing this with enough time before bed helps train the brain to worry and solve issues before bed, not in bed)

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- Relaxation exercises:
 - *Paced breathing*
 - *Progress muscle relaxation*
- Relaxing activity with minimal cognitive drain (e.g., taking a hot shower, reading an easy book)
- Black out curtains
- Set temperature of bedroom around 68-70 degrees Fahrenheit

Sleep Reduction Practices include:

- Late and long naps (best recommendation is to nap for 10-15 minutes and not within 6-8 hrs of bedtime)
- Watching television in bed
- Using phone/laptop within ~30 minutes of sleeping.
 - *Especially if using within the bed. This trains the brain to recognize the bed as a place to watch shows, read, play games, etc., and therefore it isn't being conditioned to rest while in bed*
- Overconsumption of caffeine throughout the day, or within 6 hrs of sleep
 - *This includes teas, kombucha, certain hot chocolates*
- Overconsumption of alcohol before bed (may not interrupt quantity but can affect quality of sleep)
- Eating a heavy meal before bed (~2 hrs)
- Staying in bed even if you are having issues sleeping (trains brain to stay awake in bed)

Part 3: Smallest Change Possible

Select **one of the checked items that reduces sleep** and **one of the unchecked items for improving sleep**, and incorporate both of them into your rest tonight.

Complete the following sentences:

Tonight, I will _____ to
improve my sleep.

Tonight, I will _____ to
improve unhelpful sleep habits.

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Part 4: Maintaining Changes

We all know sleep is important. And changing up our habits one or two nights is not difficult. What is difficult is maintaining those changes, especially if we have a lot of work, projects, deadlines, family responsibilities, and other hobbies on our plates.

Use the space on the next page to identify all the barriers that will prevent you from maintaining the two behavior changes you selected in Part 3. After you have identified all the barriers, select one and problem-solve to eliminate that barrier or reduce its effect.