

Lesson 1

How Well Do You Sleep?

Introduction

Like everyone else, you'll know what it feels like to have had a good night's sleep. You are lively, you can work more productively, you are more cheerful with your family and friends, and you do more life activities.

Many of us struggle to fall asleep or keep asleep, and this can make us grumpy. It can affect our relationships, our motivation at work, and our engagement in social activities.

If you'd like to know how to sleep better, improve your daytime functioning, and live longer, you're on the right course. Read on and give yourself the best chance to sleep better and feel great.

The science

The quality of your sleep is essential for your physical, cognitive, and psychological well-being. During sleep, our bodies and mind repair and re-energise for the day ahead.

It's important for several functions, including, learning, memory, and brain development.

Research has found that sleep is affected by a number of factors, including, stress at work; holidays; out-of-routine days/evenings; over-indulgence; and later bedtimes...is it any wonder why we might fail to achieve a good night's sleep?

Sleep, or lack of it, is a major contributory factor to depression as there is a close relationship between sleep and mental health, affect one and you affect the other.

The great news is that studies have identified things you can do to improve both the amount of sleep you have and the quality of sleep, making you feel replenished and ready to take on the day ahead.

Why this helps

Getting a better (night's) sleep can make you function at your optimal level when you're awake. You get through the things you need to get through, and this gives you time to devote to activities that promote your well-being/happiness. You have the energy to manage any conflicts in a more dynamic way, you are more resilient when challenges arise, and you are more optimistic.

Is improving your sleep important to you? If yes, there are plenty of exercises on this course that will help you achieve this and feel great. First, let's see how well you sleep.

Exercise

For this exercise, you will need 10 minutes.

Step 1

Rate your sleep by placing a tick on the line between Not happy at all, fairly happy, or very happy, or if you prefer, circle a number below the faces.

You might find that your sleep is up and down, so some days are better than others, but just give a general rating – how do you typically feel about your sleep over a week?

How happy are you with your sleep...? ☹️☹️☹️

☹️.....☹️.....☹️

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

☹️ not happy at all ☹️ fairly happy ☹️ very happy

Step 2

From the ones below, tick all the sleep blockers that are relevant to you and are known to interfere with your forty winks.

Sleep Blockers (put in bubbles?)

Bedroom factors

- noise
- darkness
- temperature
- comfort, e.g. pillows/mattress
- sleeping somewhere new

Biological factors

- pain
- drug use
- nicotine
- alcohol use
- strenuous activity
- hunger
- over-eating
- caffeine

Psychological factors

- stress
- worry
- excitement
- sadness
- fear
- doubt

Social factors

- family problems
- friendship troubles
- finances
- work difficulties
- loneliness
- social/cultural participation

Step 3

Jot down those blockers that prevent you getting a good night's sleep. Then, state whether you can do something about it yourself, or need help?

My Blockers

1.
.....
2.
.....
3.
.....

You will learn to see that those blockers relevant to your sleep as opportunities to help you feel great and sleep better.

Wrap

Investing time in improving your sleep will benefit you in a myriad of ways. You will move that step closer to feeling great.

By changing just one thing that helps you with the amount of sleep you have or quality of sleep you can enjoy, you will positively impact your daytime functioning, relationships, and physical and mental health.

With sleep responsible for so many of our functions, it is owed special consideration. Well done on making it a priority for you and signing up to this course.