**Exercise - 15 Helpful Sleep Tips**

Your challenge is to choose at least 3 of the 15 helpful sleep tips listed below and try them for the next 10 days straight.

1. Have a consistent sleep schedule to maintain healthy cortisol levels
   * Go to bed and wake up at roughly the same time every day
   * For adults, it's generally between 7-9 hours per night
2. Make your bedroom sleep friendly
   * Your bedroom should only be used for sex, reading, and sleeping
   * Minimize all external noise and light. Consider getting blackout curtains or a noise-cancellation machine
   * Cover your alarm clock light so that it isn't projected into the room
   * Minimize clutter
3. Cooler temperature in the bedroom
   * A cooler room is beneficial for sleep quality
   * Consider investing in comfortable sheets for every season. This will allow you to be the right temperature at different times of the year
4. Before bed, avoid caffeine, cannabis, nicotine, and alcohol
   * Consuming alcohol, caffeine, tobacco, or cannabis before bed interrupts the amount of REM sleep you get
   * They can all adversely affect the quality of your sleep
   * Even though you may be asleep all night long, you may not be entering a deep sleep or the REM sleep cycle, which is what makes you feel well rested
   * REM sleep is believed to benefit learning, memory, and mood
   * A lack of REM sleep may have adverse implications on your physical and emotional health
   * Lack of REM sleep can affect your coping skills
5. Ban the Blue Light
   * Blue light from electronic devices can delay sleep onset and affect overall circadian rhythm from the REM sleep interference
   * It's advised to stay off your phone, computer, or TV for 2 hours before bed
   * Try to filter the blue light off your phone with apps you can download
6. Deep Breathing
   * Deep breathing before going to bed triggers the body’s relaxation response
   * Inhaling deeply can drive cerebrospinal fluid flow to help clear brain waste and oxygenate the brain
7. Sleep on your side
   * Several studies have shown that sleeping on your side may help your brain to clear waste more efficiently than sleeping on the back or belly
   * During the day, your brain creates waste proteins that build up and clog the interstitial spaces in the brain
   * While you sleep, your body removes these toxic proteins
8. Exercise early in the day
   * Exercising early in the day is preferred.
   * Working out late in the day can impact your interval system and cause sleeping problems.
   * If you only have time to exercise late in the evening, try to minimize the vigorous exercises and opt for walking and yoga
9. Nap early or not at all
   * Naps confuse your internal clock
   * If you've had a terrible night sleep, try to stay awake until 8pm or close to your usual bedtime, to reset your internal clock
   * Napping during the day could contribute to restless sleep
10. No large meals 1-2 hours before bed
    * Don't eat a large meal 1-2 hours before bed as it will keep your digestive system turned on preventing the nervous system from clearing out toxins
    * Our most nutrient dense meals should be the first 2 meals of the day
    * We should ideally have a lighter meal at the end of the day, so we don't strain the digestive system
11. Balance fluid intake
    * Start drinking water upon rising.
    * Drink water throughout the day to stay hydrated, but finish drinking at least an hour before bed so that you don't wake up in the night
    * Try different things to get yourself to drink more water, such as setting a timer on your phone to remind yourself
12. Have a routine
    * Start a bedtime routine to train your brain and body to prepare for sleep 30 - 60 minutes before bed
13. Active Journaling
    * Start your bedtime routine in the early evening if possible, or practice active journaling to organize your thoughts. It also helps you to create to-do lists throughout the day, helping to clear your mind before bed
    * Try to write in a separate space so your brain and body don't associate being active in your bedroom
    * Active journaling and list writing generally empties out your brain and allows it to be free from cluttered thoughts once you're ready for bed
14. Turn off the TV
    * If you're in the habit of falling asleep with your TV on, use/buy a TV that has a timer where it automatically turns off at a set time in case you fall asleep
    * Watch something you have seen repeatedly so it's not keeping your active interest
15. Don’t watch the clock
    * If you're having trouble sleeping, checking to see what time it is can stress you out and have the opposite effect
    * If you’re awake and can't sleep. Get up in dim light, try doing something relaxing, and go back to bed without activating your nervous system