



# Sleeping Better, From A to Zzzz

*A Sleep Management Workbook*

*for students, by students*



# About us!



Our names are Nicole and Tia, we are in our fourth year of the accelerated nursing program at Queen's University.

As students we understand that getting the recommended 7-9 hours of sleep per night isn't always possible. So, we made this workbook with people like you in mind.

We hope you enjoy using this workbook as much as we enjoyed making it 😊



# Disclaimer



This workbook was written as part of a NURS405 community placement project in conjunction with Health Promotion at Queen's University Student Wellness Services during the Winter 2022 semester.

The purpose of this workbook is to create a record of the different patterns and routines around your sleep habits, as a means of improving your sleep from your starting baseline. We hope this resource will be shared with anyone who may benefit from its use.

This workbook is NOT intended as a sole resource for anyone experiencing physical and mental health issues that interfere with your sleep. If you believe there are clinically significant issues affecting your sleep, we strongly urge you to seek out professional support.



# How was this resource created?

Health Promotion at Queen's University Student Wellness Services follows an evidence-based public health framework. However, we recognize that the university environment and the stressors associated with being a student can make it difficult to create behavioural change.

Therefore, we made this resource with the idea that what is outlined in the literature as evidence-based practice is not always accessible to students.

Because of this, this workbook lists sleep guidelines in the Appendix, but does not try to enforce specific numbers or metrics on a student for them to be "sleeping better".

*"Ultimately, there is no right or wrong way to fall asleep. There is only what works best for you and your lifestyle."*



# How do I use this resource?

We know how much schoolwork takes up time and energy so we made it easy to track your sleeping habits using a daily sleep tracker.

Before you start using this workbook, take the time to fill out of the next few pages to figure out your starting point. We recognize that not everyone using this book will be starting from the same place so it's important for you to make this book your own.



# What is your “Why”?

*(Estimated 10 minutes to complete)*

It is hard to make a change, especially around improving your sleep. However, it helps to examine your values and beliefs around sleep and examine why you feel it is important.

Sleep can improve your learning, memory, decision-making and mood, but there are other reasons for wanting to improve your sleep.

*There is no right or wrong answer, so what are **your** reasons for wanting to do this?*

**When I sleep well, I notice these things happen:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**When I don't sleep well, I notice these things happen:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# **Change is difficult --**

## ***what other difficult things have you overcome in the past?***

*(Estimated 10 minutes to complete)*

There's no denying that change is hard. However, there are many difficult things in the past that you have overcome.

Think of something you worked hard to achieve: was it easy? If there were challenges, how did you overcome them?

**A time that I overcame challenges was when:**

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**Some strengths of mine that I drew on to overcome these challenges included:**

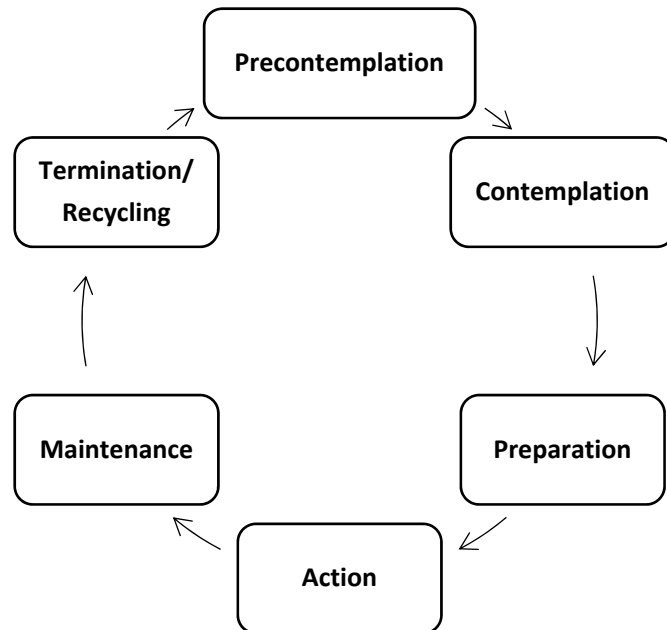
1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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## "But what if I fail?"



The Transtheoretical Model of Change (TTM) states that people looking to make a behavioural change need different supports based on which stage of the cycle they are at (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997).

By working through this workbook, you are most likely in the **Contemplation/Preparation** stage, before the **Action** stage (changing your sleep behaviours).

However, the TTM is a **CYCLE**, which means that it is normal to have setbacks. Sometimes that looks like having a poor night (or couple of days!) of sleep after trying to implement these changes.

Life (and school!) happens, and that's okay! However, what matters is a willingness to re-enter the cycle and try again.



# Where's Your Starting Line?

Before making any changes, we want to know where we're starting off.

To the best of your ability, fill in the following about your current sleep patterns:

**When I think about my current sleep routine, I feel like (circle which best describes you):**



## Waking Up:

On days I have class/work, I wake up at: \_\_\_\_\_

On days I don't have class/work, I wake up at: \_\_\_\_\_

## Going to Sleep:

On days I have class/work, I go to sleep at: \_\_\_\_\_

On days I don't have class/work, I go to sleep at: \_\_\_\_\_

## During midterm/exam/paper season:

I wake up at: \_\_\_\_\_

I go to sleep at: \_\_\_\_\_

# Where's Your Starting Line? (continued)

To the best of your ability, fill in the following about your caffeine intake:

## **Caffeine:**

I get my caffeine from: \_\_\_\_\_

On average I have this much caffeine per day: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Timing:**

I start having caffeine at: \_\_\_\_\_

I stop having caffeine after: \_\_\_\_\_

## **During midterm/exam/paper season:**

I have this much caffeine per day: \_\_\_\_\_

I start having caffeine at: \_\_\_\_\_

I stop having caffeine after: \_\_\_\_\_

# Sleep Strategies

There are many different strategies that can help you fall asleep and stay asleep – check off the ones that you're interested in and feel free to read more about why they work in the Appendix.

## **Calming Routine:**

- ☐ Going to bed only when you feel tired
- ☐ Cognitive shuffle exercise
- ☐ Meditation (5 minutes)
- ☐ Skincare/hygiene (10 minutes)
- ☐ Progressive muscle relaxation (5 minutes)

## **Sleep Setting:**

- ☐ Keeping a cool bedroom environment
- ☐ Keeping the room as dark as possible
- ☐ Minimizing sounds at night

## **Feeling Tired:**

- ☐ Working out (it is recommended to engage in physical activity at least 2 hours before bed)
- ☐ Minimizing alcohol/caffeine intake to 5 hours before bed
- ☐ Put away your phone 30 minutes before bed

# Sleep Tracker

We made it easier for you to track your sleeping habits and sleep strategies.

If you forget to do a day, that's okay. Continue where you left off and go from there.

# Sleep Tracker Instructions

To track your progress, circle the following icons if you...

|                                                                                   |                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | Followed the bedtime routine you set for yourself.<br>For worksheets on this go to pages 26-27. |
|  | Made changes to your sleeping environment.<br>For worksheets on this go to page 28-29.          |
|  | Consumed the amount of caffeine you set out to.<br>For worksheets on this go to page 33.        |

Next to these icons write what time you woke up that morning and went to bed that night. For worksheets on this go to pages 30-31.



and circle a face to say how your day went.



Use the blank spaces to make notes, journal or doodle anything that came up that day.

| SUNDAY                                                                                                                                                                        | MONDAY                                                                                                                                                                        | TUESDAY                                                                                                                                                                       | WEDNESDAY                                                                                                                                                                     | THURSDAY                                                                                                                                                                      | FRIDAY                                                                                                                                                                        | SATURDAY                                                                                                                                                                      |
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# Sleep Worksheets

Not everyone will have the time or mental capacity for worksheets. However, if you find that you want to take more notes or take a deeper dive beyond the current things listed in the sleep tracker, the following sheets are for you.

## **Your Stressful Thoughts...**

*Lay them to rest here...*



## Sleeping Your Best Sleep



*Imagine you wake up feeling rested, restored and satisfied with last night's sleep. How long did you sleep for?*

*What did you do the night before to wake up this well-rested? (Consider some sleep strategies listed on page 14)*



## Sleeping Your Best Sleep

*What are some things that you do on social media/your cellphone that affect your sleep? (Consider how it affects your quality, quantity, and/or consistency)*

*Is there anything that you could do before bedtime that doesn't involve electronic devices? (Consider some sleep strategies listed on page 14)*



## Setting Your Best Sleep

*Look at your sleep setting and circle the things that help you fall asleep (ie. pillows, blankets) or things you could change.*

*Use this image to guide your thinking*



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Dreamstime.com

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ID 111999311

Elena Akifeva | Dreamstime.com

*What is the temperature like? Too hot? Too cold?*

*Is it loud? Is it quiet?*

*Is it bright? Is it dark?*



## Setting Your Best Sleep

*Based on what you wrote on the last page, consider what you can change in your sleeping environment that can help you sleep better targeting, light, noise, and temperature.*



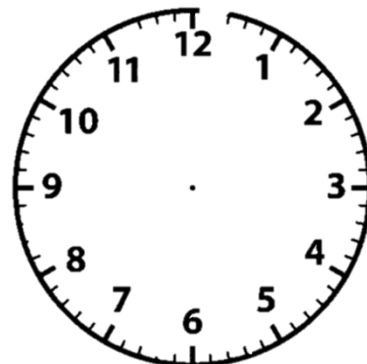
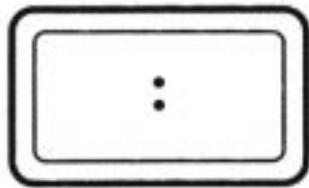
## Picking a Desired Wakeup Time



*Use this space to write out what you did when you woke up.*

*What wakeup time do you think would make you feel best?*

*Draw in one of the clocks what time*



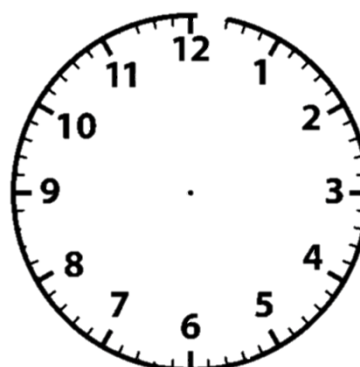
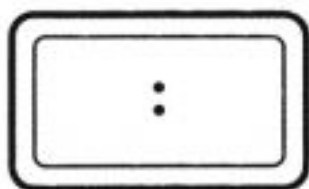


## Picking a Desired Bedtime

*Use this space to write out what you did before going to bed.*

*What bedtime do you think would make you feel best?*

*Draw in one of the clocks what time*



## Caffeine Intake



*Caffeine takes roughly 5-10 hours to leave your body*

*Based on your desired bedtime, what would the 5-hour mark be for you to stop or taper down your caffeine intake? \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM*

*Are there any instances that make it difficult to stop drinking caffeine? E.g., Late night classes, shift work.*

*What adjustments will you make with your routine to help cope with this change?*

# Queen's University Resources

If you are experiencing physical or mental issues that may exacerbate your sleeping routines, we strongly urge you to seek out professional assistance -- here are some of the resources on campus and in the Kingston area that provide a starting place:

## **EMPOWER ME by STUDENTCARE**

*24/7 Confidential & accessible counselling services*

1-844-741-6389

## **THERAPY ASSISTANCE ONLINE (TAO)**

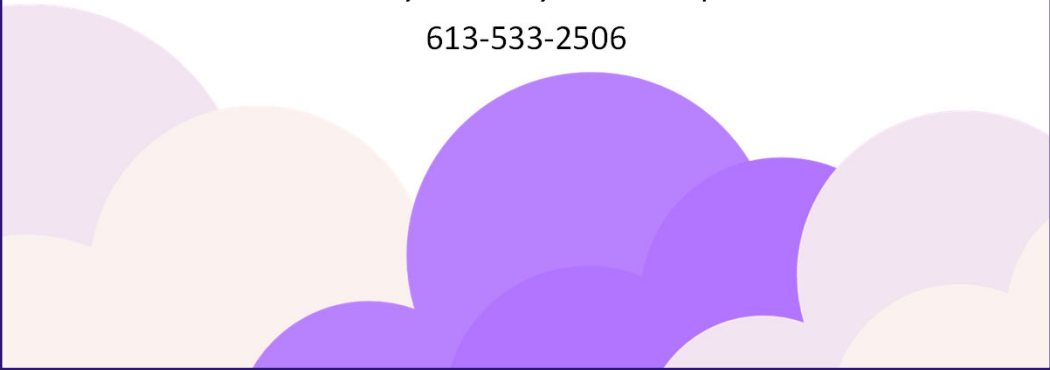
*Online library of pathways to promote wellness*

<https://ca.taoconnect.org/register>

## **STUDENT WELLNESS SERVICES**

*Monday to Friday 9am-4:30pm*

613-533-2506





# Queen's University Resources

## **GOOD2TALK**

*24/7 Counselling for post-secondary students*

1-866-925-5454

Text GOOD2TALKON to 686868

## **KFL&A ADDICTION & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

*24/7 Crisis line in Kingston ON*

1-866-616-6005 or 613544-4229

## **TELEHEALTH ONTARIO**

*Connect with registered nursing staff for medical  
advice or information 24/7*

1-866-797-0000



# Appendix

1. The Transtheoretical Model of Change
2. Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines
3. Importance of Relaxation and Sleep
4. Relaxation Exercises
4. Importance of Environment and Sleep



# The Transtheoretical Model of Change

The Transtheoretical Model of Change (TTM) posits that the adoption of desired health behavioural change involves progressing through six different stages (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997):

1. **Precontemplation**
2. **Contemplation**
3. **Preparation**
4. **Action**
5. **Maintenance**
6. **Termination/Recycling**

The model assumes that the strategies that work best for eliciting a desired behavioural change will differ based on what stage of change someone is in. For example, someone who is in the Precontemplation Stage is not intending to take action in the foreseeable future (usually the next six months), and therefore would benefit from *Consciousness Raising* or health education (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997).

Those in the Contemplation/Preparation phases (likely you!) the processes that work best include *Self-Evaluation* (exploring one's self-image in relation to their behaviours), *Environmental Re-Evaluation* (the risks and rewards of continuing their behaviour) and *Social Liberation* (how others around them grant support throughout this change).

You may notice that these processes coincide with the worksheets in the beginning of the workbook – that's intentional! The worksheets are intended to help guide you to the Model of Change so that you progress towards the Action stage.

# Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines

Health Promotion at Queen's Student Wellness Services references the Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Adults aged 18-64 years, which is a composite of three main recommendations (Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology, 2021):

1. **Moving more**
2. **Reducing sedentary time**
3. **Sleeping well**

These guidelines are evidence-informed and recommend the following for each:

1. **Moving More** – Moderate to vigorous aerobic physical activities leading to an accumulation of 150 minutes per week, and strength-training at least twice a week
2. **Sedentary Behaviour** – Limiting sedentary time to 8 hours or less, which includes no more than three hours of recreational screentime, and breaking up long periods of sitting as long as possible
3. **Sleeping Well** – getting 7 to 9 hours of good-quality sleep on a regular basis, with consistent bed and wake-up times

For more information, you can visit:

<https://csepguidelines.ca/guidelines/adults-18-64/>

# Sleep and Relaxation

Sleep is a state of mind with reduced consciousness (Medic et al., 2017). Generally, high quality sleep involves regularly obtaining 7-9 hours of uninterrupted sleep that leaves one well-rested (CESP, 2021).

The areas of the brain responsible for sleep are also involved in the stress response. When you are in a state of high arousal, the body releases adrenaline: a hormone involved in the fight-flight-fright response (Medic et al., 2017).

In contrast, sleep is a state of low arousal: your muscles relax, your heartbeat slows down, and you physiologically reset from the day's stressors (Medic et al., 2017). However, the bidirectional relationship between sleep and stress means that it will be difficult to sleep well if you are in a high-state of arousal beforehand. That is why we encourage taking on calming and relaxing activities prior to you trying to sleep.

The following page details a few exercises you can engage in; however, we also encourage you to look at your own calming activities as well!

# Relaxation Exercises

## **Cognitive Shuffle (Serial Diverse Imagining)**

The cognitive shuffle, also known as Serial Diverse Imagining, is a technique that prevents your mind from ruminations that prevent you from sleeping.

First, get into bed, ready to sleep.

Second, think of a random, emotionally neutral word at least 5 letters long. For example, GRAPE.

Third, spell out the word, and for each letter of the word, think of a word that starts with that letter. Then imagine the item associated with that word. For example, G: Globe (imagine a globe), grass (imagine lush green fields of grass), guitar (imagine guitar music), etc. Once you get bored of the letter, move onto the next letter of your chosen word, and so on and so forth.

## **Meditation**

Meditation is something anyone can do. If you have not meditated before, you may find it helpful to work through a sleep-based guided meditation. However, you can also do unguided meditations by focusing on your breath, inhaling through your nose for 3 counts, holding it for 3 counts, then exhaling for 3 counts. You can also practice mindfulness by paying attention to how different parts of your body may feel.

## **Mindfulness during Skincare/Hygiene**

It is easy to go on autopilot and focus on racing thoughts. However, a good opportunity to practice mindfulness is through your bedtime hygiene routines. If you have a skincare routine, pay attention to the feel of each product on your skin, massage your face or feel the sensations that you may not have noticed before. When brushing your teeth, count the number of times you move your brush around, pay attention to the taste of your toothpaste, or the feel of the bristles on your brush.

# Relaxation Exercises (cont.)

## **Progressive Muscle Relaxation**

Progressive Muscle Relaxation is a two-part process. First, you systematically tense muscle groups in your body by taking a deep breath, squeezing and holding. Then you release the tension and notice how things feel when you relax them.

Here is an example of how you go through the different muscle groups:

### **1. Lower Body**

1. Foot (curl your toes downward)
2. Calves (tighten your calf by flexing your toes towards you)
3. Entire leg (squeeze thigh muscles and the above)

### **2. Upper Body**

1. Hand (make a fist)
2. Entire arm (tighten your biceps while clenching your fists)

### **3. Core**

1. Buttocks (tighten by pulling together)
2. Stomach (suck your stomach in and brace)
3. Chest (take a deep breath and hold)
4. Neck and shoulders (raise your shoulders up to touch your ears)
5. Face (squeeze your face like you just ate something sour)

# Sleep and Environment

## **Keeping a Cool Bedroom Environment**

The human body operates on a 24-hour circadian rhythm. During the night (or whenever you fall asleep), your core body temperature is more likely to lower, compared to when you are awake, where your core body temperature rises (Okamoto-Mizuno & Mizuno, 2012).

It must be noted that extreme temperatures (either too hot or too cold) is not helpful for getting a good night's sleep. However, keeping your room just slightly cooler than body temperature can help lull you to sleep. If you can't control your room's temperature, other ways you can keep your room cool include wearing breathable fabrics that help with heat loss, like linens, using thinner sheets, opening the window or using a fan.

## **Keeping the Room as Dark as Possible**

Melatonin is a sleep hormone that is largely produced at night. This is because melatonin secretion is enhanced by darkness, and disintegrates when our eyes are exposed to light (Tordjman et al., 2017). Sometimes, the blue light from our devices (like phones or computers) can contribute to the degradation of melatonin, but so can other ambient, artificial lighting.

If you turn off your room's lights and there's still light outside, try to get curtains that help block out that light. Alternatively, you can try getting a sleep mask if you can, try to get curtains that help block out street lights. Alternatively, you can get an eye mask to help block out light, or try tapering down your device use earlier before you sleep.



# Sleep and Environment (cont.)

## **Minimizing Sounds at Night**

Quiet environments are ideal for quality sleep settings (Caddick et al., 2018). Loud noises from traffic, construction, or housemates can lead to a bad night's sleep.

For noises you can't control, ear plugs or headphones can help muffle sound and minimize sleep disruptions (Foulkes et al., 2019).

A white noise machine or listening to meditation music has shown to be effective at countering sleep interruptions (Riedy et al., 2021).

## **Phone and Social Media Use Before Bed**

Kaya et al. (2021) identified a correlation between poor sleep quality and phone/social media use.

With everything going on in the world it can be easy to lose sleep over ruminating or scrolling on social media.

It is recommended to put away all electronic devices at least 30 minutes before going to sleep (Quante et al., 2018).

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