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## Your Morning Routine

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It sounds corny, but it's true: a good night's sleep starts with your morning routine. That's why it's recommended that you establish personal, and well-thought out, morning habits.

It is especially important that you maintain regular morning rituals, during the month you start practicing good sleep hygiene and cognitive behavioral therapy techniques. However, a morning routine may be something you need to adhere to, even when the symptoms of sleep deprivation, or other sleep disorder, start to become alleviated since you don't want your sleep problem to return with full force.

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## The Benefits

A lot of people are more productive in the morning and besides, if you always wake up at a set time, you can create a routine that leaves you a bit of extra personal time. Who wouldn't want that, right? Besides, having a productive morning routine, means you are setting yourself up for a successful, positive day. Try to incorporate the following into your morning routine.

## Wake up at the Same Time Every Day

This is a must. It's also part of good sleep hygiene. Waking up at the same time syncs up your internal clock. Having a routine, where you wake up and go to bed at the same time every day, even weekends, will help your body return to its normal circadian rhythm, and will, therefore, work for healthy sleep.

## **Let the Daylight in**

Speaking of internal clock – you now know that light is an essential part of your sleep patterns. If you let some daylight into your room, you'll be energizing your mind and body. As you learned during the conversation on circadian rhythms, light indicates that we need to be awake and active.

Depending on the season and Daylight Saving Time, you might have to wake up before sunrise, so turn on the lights as soon as you wake up. Also, you may be able to see the sunrise which is not at all a bad way to start your day.

## **The Bed Is For Sleep And Sex**

The alarm clock goes off; the snooze button gets hit a couple of times, and when you're finally somewhat awake, the sheets seem to possess magical abilities that make you want to stay curled up under them. By the time you get out of bed, you're already late. It happens, we've all been there, but it's not ideal.

One of the primary objectives before you, if you want to deal with your sleep disorder, is to allow your brain to associate the bed only with restful sleep. The only other activity that is okay in bed, besides sleep, is sex.

Don't spend time in your bed, while awake, because you are sending mixed signals to your body and confusing it.

## **Don't Snooze**

This is certainly easier said than done, but once you manage to master it, you'd feel significantly better. Hitting the snooze button means your alarm will go off again soon. Whenever this process is repeated, you are only allowed a few minutes of sleep.

As you now know, sleep happens in various, equally important stages and the cycle of steps needs to be repeated several times, with different length, throughout the night. When your alarm goes off the first time, it may interrupt the cycle, before it has been completed, and so you feel drowsy and want to snooze some more. However, the snooze button plays a cruel joke on your sleep – the more times you hit it, the more times the cycle of sleep gets interrupted in various stages, and so you end up getting out of bed groggy, instead of happy and refreshed.

The solution is to get up as your alarm goes off, and not more than 5 seconds later. This may be tough to do at first, but the results are worth the effort.

## **Be Thankful**

As soon as you wake up, stretch, get up and turn on the lights. After that, take one little minute (or more if you like) and be thankful that you're alive and well. This can and does make an impact on your day. Consider how we sometimes wake up already stressed out about the day ahead of us. It is then alarmingly easy to overlook so many things that we should be thankful for. Transform your perspective and start your day on a grateful note. Also, remember to stuff your worries in the Worry Box.

The simple act of thinking something positive first thing in the morning will promote a positive attitude and mood throughout the day.

## Create Your Ritual

There are some things you have to do. Have breakfast, shower, prepare for work or school, and don't forget: fill out your Sleep Diary.

What else can you add to your morning routine to make it a little more fun and bring happiness into your day? Perhaps you'd enjoy putting in a bit of extra effort and having a special breakfast, or playing a couple of your favorite songs each morning, having your coffee at the park, doing some art, etc. Whatever you choose, make it your own. Have a personal ritual that makes you want to get up.

Having a routine can give you peace of mind since you won't have to worry about trivial decisions.

Enjoy waking up and establishing a routine. Not only will it help with your sleep, but it'll also get you some time to prepare and start your day with the right foot forward.

Own your mornings!

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