



HealthyBodyHealthyLife  
with *Melissa Koerner*

## Module 4 - Part 2

Action Steps Plan to Get a Good  
Night's Sleep



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## | ACTION STEP #1: GET TO AT THE SAME TIME EVERY NIGHT.

The more consistent your sleep/wake cycle, the more consistent your body will function. To determine your ideal bedtime, subtract 7.5 hours from the time you need to get up. Remember, on average we need 7.5 hours (5 cycles X 90 minutes = 450 mins./60min. = 7.5 hrs.) Ideally, you want to wake up without an alarm – this allows your natural circadian rhythm to come thru. Go to bed when naturally feel tired and wake up when naturally want to wake up – this is your *cronotype*.

## | ACTION STEP #2: EAT A BALANCED MEAL FOR DINNER

Remember, eating too many carbs and not enough fat and protein with dinner can lead to *nighttime hypoglycemia* (blood sugar crash) causing you awake and disrupt your sleep. If you experience gastric reflux, which shows up as heartburn, a sour stomach, a bad taste in your mouth, and/or asthma-like respiratory distress, after eating you want to wait three hours before going to bed or lying down on couch. If you are truly hungry before bed, eat a higher fat/protein snack like raw nuts and nut butters, seeds, raw cheese, avocado or canned tuna to keep your blood sugar stable throughout the night.

## | ACTION STEP #3: DETOX FROM MAINSTREAM MEDIA AT LEAST 90 MINUTES BEFORE BED

The news is mostly negative and watching triggers your stress response system. It's common to have vivid dreams and nightmares watching something negative before bed. If you do watch TV, make it something light, fun and inspirational.

## | ACTION STEP #4: AVOID STIMULANTS AND DEPRESSANTS BEFORE BED

Consuming coffee, soda, caffeinated teas, alcohol and sugary snacks before bed is NOT a good idea. These stimulants create a spike and fall in your blood sugar, which triggers cortisol, signaling to your brain it's time for action and waking you up later into the night. If you are already stressed out, adding caffeine to the mix only increases stress hormones even more and disrupts sleep quality. If you're going to drink coffee, drink it no later than lunchtime—it has a half life of 6 hours. Alcohol, while making you feel sleepy, does NOT allow for quality rest, which in turn will make you feel even more stressed if you have a hangover the next day. It also makes you less able to fight viruses. Coffee and alcohol are diuretics, making you wake up dehydrated.



## | ACTION STEP #5: REDUCE YOUR EXPOSURE TO BLUE WAVELENGTH LIGHTS

A big sleep disruptor is exposure to blue wavelength light. Different wavelengths of light have been shown to affect human physiology and sleep cycles in different ways. Blue light, a short-wavelength light, has been singled out as being more significantly disruptive to sleep than other colors on the light spectrum. Research has shown blue light **delays** release of the sleep hormone melatonin, disrupts sleep/wake cycles, and may influence negative changes to mood. Sources of blue light are high-efficiency light bulbs, and digital devices like computers, TV's, iPhones and iPads. Reduce your exposure to these electronic devices at least two hours before bedtime.

Tips:

- Download f.lux to your computer if you need to use your computer later during the day (It makes the color of your computer's display adapt to the time of day, warm at night and like sunlight during the day.)
- Use blue light blocking glasses to help you wind down and produce melatonin on the right schedule.

## | ACTION STEP #6: REDUCE YOUR EXPOSURE TO BRIGHT LIGHTS

Better night lights:

- To create relaxing mood lighting you can use natural beeswax candles.
- You can also use low-wattage yellow, orange, or red light bulbs if you need a source of light at night
- The light in these bandwidths does not shut down melatonin production in the way that white and blue bandwidth light does.
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## | ACTION STEP #7: UNPLUG ELECTRICAL DEVICES IN YOUR BEDROOM

Electromagnetic pollution from electronic appliances prevent many people from sleeping well. If your sleep is disrupted, try unplugging all electrical devices to see if your sleep improves. If your sleep does improve, but you need to keep some of these devices in your bedroom try rearranging them as far away from the bed as possible—at least three feet away.



## | ACTION STEP #8: MAKE YOUR BEDROOM DARK, QUIET AND RELAXING

A dark bedroom signals your brain it's time to sleep. The smallest amount of light from street lamps, headlights, alarm clocks, fire alarms, TV signals etc. can wake some people. Cover your windows and all light-emitting devices to prevent premature waking at night. Use ear plugs if you sleep with someone who snores. Use an essential oil diffuser in your bedroom with lavender oil to promote relaxation.

## | ACTION STEP #9: USE YOUR BED FOR SEX AND SLEEP

Don't bring screens to bed and don't watch TV in bed. Remember, the blue in your electronic screens interferes with melatonin (sleep hormone) production. Resist sending those last emails or watching a violent movie while in bed. One of the worst barriers to sleep is watching the nightly news.

## | ACTION STEP #10: GET 30 MINUTES OF OUTDOOR TIME

Get at least 30 minutes of outdoor time every day (even if it's not sunny). Your circadian system benefits from bright light. If possible, get 10 to 15 minutes of morning sunlight. It will send a message to your internal clock that daylight has arrived, making it less likely to be confused by weaker light signals during the night. If you work indoors, make a point to get outdoors for at least a total of 30-60 minutes during the brightest portion of the day



## | ACTION STEP #11: STOP DRINKING LIQUIDS THREE TO FOUR HOURS BEFORE BED

When you drink liquids too close to bedtime you're likely to awaken to urinate during the night. Getting up to use the restroom disrupts your sleep cycles, which leads to feeling unrested in the morning. Make it a habit to drink water first thing in the morning and throughout the day—when you're hydrated properly you won't be so thirsty right before bed. If you do wake to use the bathroom, *don't* turn on the light.

## | KEY #12: ALLOW FRESH AIR IN

Keep a window partially open at night—fresh air promotes restful sleep. Try to keep your room cool—cool air promotes a decline in body temperature, which is critical to restful sleep. If it's too warm, you may sweat and feel stuffy triggering your stress response and waking you up. The ideal temperature for sleeping is 60-65 degrees.

## | ACTION STEP #13: CREATE A POWER-DOWN HOUR

You can break the hour into four 15-minute segments:

### **First 15 Minutes: Wrap Up Projects and Plan for Tomorrow**

- Set a timer to remind you to stop work or hour projects at least 1 hour before you go to bed.
- Do the dishes, clean up etc.
- Do a “brain dump” to get everything off your mind so these thoughts don't wake you up in the middle of the night.
- Create a plan for tomorrow.
- Prep-meals or work projects so you're ready to go in the morning.

### **Second 15 Minutes: Do Your Nightly Hygiene Routine**

- Take a hot shower or bath. (Your body temperature decreases when you get out, which helps product melatonin naturally.)
- Use lavender oil on your temples, wrists and feet.
- Brush your teeth.
- Put on PJs.



### **Third 15 Minutes: Do Something Relaxing (But no technology!)**

- Light exercise: stretching, gentle yoga or Pilates
- Inspirational reading (nothing too engrossing)
- Talk with a friend (keep the conversation upbeat)
- Deep breathing exercises: 4-7-8 breathing; alternate nostril breathing
- Pray or think about positive memories or plans for the future
- Journal: write down 3 wins and/or 3 things you're grateful for; send love to someone who's upset you
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Tip: File unresolved challenges in your "mental filing cabinet" to re-open tomorrow.

### **Fourth 15 Minutes: Meditate**

- Benefits of meditation on sleep:
- Increases melatonin (the sleep hormone)
- Increases serotonin (precursor of melatonin)
- Reduces heart rate
- Decreases blood pressure
- Activate parts of the brain that control sleep

Tip: Set an alarm 1 hour before your bedtime to remind you to start your Power Down Hour. Be sure to shut off all screens (TV, iPhone, iPad, laptop).

## **| IF YOU'VE DONE ALL THE ABOVE AND YOU'RE STILL NO SLEEP WELL TRY THIS...**

1. See the trouble-shooting tips in the Module 4 Part 3 coaching video.

2. If tried all of the above, *and* all of the trouble-shooting tips, and you're still not getting a good night's sleep, consider fixing your gut and healing your adrenals. When your gut has an overgrowth of unfriendly bacteria or yeast, is hosting parasites or holding excess toxic waste your adrenal glands are under constant stress. When the adrenal glands become exhausted it disrupts sleep patterns. If you have adrenal fatigue and/or dysbiosis you may need to take measures to rebalance your gut and hormones.

I offer Functional Medicine Testing for hormones and gut-health as part of my private coaching program. Email me at [melissa@healthybodyhealthylife.com](mailto:melissa@healthybodyhealthylife.com) to set up a complimentary consultation to learn more.