



**WILLIAM JAMES
COLLEGE**

GRADUATE EDUCATION IN PSYCHOLOGY

Sleep Hygiene for Self-Care

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Sleep Hygiene

(American Sleep Association)

Maintain a regular sleep routine

- Go to bed at the same time. Wake up at the same time. Ideally, your schedule will remain the same (+/- 20 minutes) every night of the week.

Avoid naps if possible

- Naps decrease the 'Sleep Debt' that is so necessary for easy sleep onset.
- Each of us needs a certain amount of sleep per 24-hour period. We need that amount, and we don't need more than that.
- When we take naps, it decreases the amount of sleep that we need the next night – which may cause sleep fragmentation and difficulty initiating sleep.



Sleep Hygiene, Cont.

(American Sleep Association)

Don't stay in bed awake for more than 5-10 minutes.

- If you find your mind racing, or worrying about not being able to sleep during the middle of the night, get out of bed, and sit in a comfortable chair in the dark. Do your mind racing in the chair until you are sleepy, then return to bed. No TV or Internet during these periods!
- If this happens several times during the night, that is OK. Just maintain your regular wake time, and try to avoid naps.



Sleep Hygiene, Cont.

(American Sleep Association)

Don't watch TV or read in bed.

- When you watch TV or read in bed, you associate the bed with wakefulness.

The bed is reserved for two things – sleep and l'amour!

- Do not drink caffeine inappropriately.
- The effects of caffeine may last for several hours after ingestion. Caffeine can fragment sleep, and cause difficulty initiating sleep. If you drink caffeine, use it only before noon.
- Remember that some soda and tea contain caffeine as well.



Sleep Hygiene, Cont.

(American Sleep Association)

Avoid inappropriate substances that interfere with sleep.

- Cigarettes, alcohol, and some over-the-counter medications may cause fragmented sleep.

Exercise regularly.

- Exercise before 2:00 pm every day. Exercise promotes continuous sleep.
- Avoid rigorous exercise before bedtime. Rigorous exercise circulates endorphins into the body which may cause difficulty initiating sleep.



Sleep Hygiene, Cont.

(American Sleep Association)

Have a quiet, comfortable bedroom

- Set your bedroom thermostat at a comfortable temperature. Generally, a little cooler is better than a little warmer.
- Turn off the TV and other extraneous noise that may disrupt sleep. Background 'white noise' like a fan is OK.
- If your pets awaken you, keep them outside the bedroom.
- If your children awaken you, send them to my house.
- Your bedroom should be dark. Turn off bright lights.
- Have a comfortable mattress.



Sleep Hygiene, Cont.

(American Sleep Association)

If you are a ‘clock watcher’ at night, cover the clock.

Have a comfortable pre-bedtime routine

- A warm bath, shower
- Meditation, or quiet time
- (Retrieved from <https://www.sleepassociation.org/patients-general-public/insomnia/sleep-hygiene-tips/>)



Social Supports

Peer-mentorship programs have been shown to be helpful for psychology graduate students, and each of you will be paired with a 4th year student who is a supervisor-in-training. Using them as your peer mentor will give you extra support as you enter this culture.



Emotion Regulation Strategies

Rummell (2015) found that

- half of her sample of psychology graduate students endorsed symptoms of anxiety;
- almost 40% reported symptoms of depression;
- they reported twice as many diffuse physical complaints as the general public.

However, only 19% said that they would use psychotherapy if they thought they needed it! Why?



Emotion Regulation Strategies, Cont.

STIGMA!!

Let's do all we can to eliminate the stigma of using psychotherapy when we need it.



*Take good care of yourselves...
and each other!*



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References

- Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). *Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness*. New York: Delacorte Press.
- Rummell, C. M. (2015). An exploratory study of psychology graduate student workload, health, and program satisfaction. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 46*(6), 391-399.
- Shapiro, S. L., Brown, K. W., & Biegel, G. M. (2007). Teaching self-care to caregivers: Effects of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction on the mental health of therapists in training. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology, 1*(2), 105-115.

