

1954

Try Sleep

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Recommended Citation

Odegard, Mary (1954) "Try Sleep," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 34 : No. 1 , Article 6.

Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol34/iss1/6>

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Try Sleep

a key to good grades and a guide for health



Editor's note: Rosamond Romey, H. Ec. Sr., conducted the research for this story while studying Social Problems, Sociology 334. Her instructor, Dr. Walter Lunden, Department of Sociology, assisted her. For the survey, she questioned 83 women living in dormitories and 129 women living in sororities.

by *Mary Odegard*

Technical Journalism Senior

THOMAS EDISON called sleep a "bad habit"; but Benjamin Franklin claimed it will make you "healthy, wealthy and wise." What's your theory?

Maybe you agree with Mark Twain that one shouldn't go to bed because "too many people die there." According to Dr. Gail McClure, physician at the College Hospital, many students who apparently have that attitude should gain a more healthy respect for their "8-hour beauty rest"! The cure for most student ailments, she says, is more sleep.

suffer a loss if you underestimate your sleep needs. The activities of student life require 8 hours of sleep, or 7 hours at the very minimum, says Dr. McClure. Even a slight loss of sleep can cause you to spend more time and energy than necessary to accomplish your usual quality of work.

Work Better

Perhaps you think you are an exception to this 8-hour rule. Don't be too sure. You may not realize that you aren't working up to capacity. Or your work may seem unaffected in most areas, but fall down considerably in a single area. Tests run on a group of students who had lost sleep showed that many of them were apparently in fine shape until they had to do a specific task, such as taking notes. There the lack of sleep showed up. In many students it appeared only in their general attitude toward life.

Feel Better

Is this problem a serious one? If you are willing to accept the findings of another test as an indication, it is. An experiment performed on 413 undergraduates at Tufts College, Medford, Mass., proved a definite relationship between a student's feeling of well-being and the amount of sleep he received. The experiment showed that those who slept from 8 to 8¾ hours felt better than those who slept less than 8, and very much better than those sleeping less than 6.

Dr. McClure agrees that the problem is serious and noted that as the quarter progresses the number of students who come to see her increases. Winter



She'd study better if she were awake.

There are many fanatical ideas about the amount of sleep a person needs. Before you boast that you can get along perfectly well on 3 hours a night, you should think about the results of too little sleep.

Considering the amount of reading, note taking and paper work involved daily in being a student, you can

quarter, she says, is especially hard on students since it is shorter and the work is more concentrated. Many students come to her with ailments when their real trouble is lack of sleep.

Too little sleep may be showing on you in a number of ways. It makes you less accurate, dulls your memory and reasoning ability and lessens your endurance. You may be more easily upset because you have less emotional control when you are tired. Many problems seem large to the person suffering from fatigue. Dr. McClure has seen numerous instances of this in young women who cry over small matters, are irritable and "fly off the handle" in insignificant situations.

Live Longer

Another thing to consider when you're cutting your sleep quota is the indirect relationship between the amount of sleep you receive and your length of life. Although she has no statistics, Dr. McClure is convinced that later heart and cerebral disorders are caused by prolonged loss of sleep. The person who is nervously on the go in college is one who will probably continue at top speed, sacrificing sleep, during the rest of her life.

Why do so many young women end up at the doctor's office as the quarter draws to a close, when papers and reports begin to hang heavy over their heads? Is it because they underestimated the time demands of their schedules and carried too heavy a load? Usually it isn't the class schedule which is too heavy. Often a student looks at her classroom hours at the beginning of the quarter, decides she has spare time and takes on too many other responsibilities. She forgets that for each hour of lecture she attends she should allow 2 hours studying time outside of class. That could mean that with an average schedule of 17 class hours, you should allow 34 hours of study time per week or an average of 5 hours per day.

Budget Your Sleep

Suppose you find it necessary to miss sleep one night to meet an assignment deadline. Can you make up for that sleep loss? Dr. McClure says you can, providing you go to bed earlier within the next 2 days. It will do no good to attempt to make up the lost sleep a week later.

How well you sleep is an important factor, too. Some people can get their required 8 hours sleep and still be tired if their sleep has not been restful. You can learn to benefit from your sleeping time, no matter what amount it is.

If you are now 20 years old and have hopes of living to the age of 70, you have 16 years, 8 months, 3 days and 8 hours of sleep left ahead of you! So relax and enjoy it. You'll be much better off for having done so.



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