

Week 10: Handout A

SLEEP HYGIENE

What is sleep hygiene?

Sleep hygiene is a variety of different practices that are necessary to have normal, quality nighttime sleep and full daytime alertness.

What are some examples of good sleep hygiene?

The most important sleep hygiene measure is to maintain a regular sleep and wake pattern seven days a week. It is also important to spend an appropriate amount of time in bed, not too little, or too excessive. This may vary by individual; for example, if someone has a problem with daytime sleepiness, they should spend a minimum of eight hours in bed, if they have difficulty sleeping at night, they should limit themselves to 7 hours in bed in order to keep the sleep pattern consolidated. In addition, good sleep hygiene practices include:

- Avoid napping during the day; it can disturb the normal pattern of sleep and wakefulness.
- Avoid stimulants such as caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol too close to bedtime. While alcohol is well known to speed the onset of sleep, it disrupts sleep in the second half as the body begins to metabolize the alcohol, causing arousal.
- Exercise can promote good sleep. Vigorous exercise should be taken in the morning or late afternoon. A relaxing exercise, like yoga, can be done before bed to help initiate a restful night's sleep.
- Food can be disruptive right before sleep; stay away from large meals close to bedtime. Also dietary changes can cause sleep problems, if someone is struggling with a sleep problem, it's not a good time to start experimenting with spicy dishes. And, remember, chocolate has caffeine.
- Ensure adequate exposure to natural light. This is particularly important for older people who may not venture outside as frequently as children and adults. Light exposure helps maintain a healthy sleep-wake cycle.
- Establish a regular relaxing bedtime routine. Try to avoid emotionally upsetting conversations and activities before trying to go to sleep. Don't dwell on, or bring your problems to bed.
- Associate your bed with sleep. It's not a good idea to use your bed to watch TV, listen to the radio, or read.
- Make sure that the sleep environment is pleasant and relaxing. The bed should be comfortable, the room should not be too hot or cold, or too bright.

Why is it important to practice good sleep hygiene?

Sleep hygiene is important for everyone, from childhood through adulthood. A good sleep hygiene routine promotes healthy sleep and daytime alertness. Good sleep hygiene practices can prevent the development of sleep problems and disorders.

How does someone know if his or her sleep hygiene is poor?

Sleep disturbances and daytime sleepiness are the most telling signs of poor sleep hygiene. If one is experiencing a sleep problem, he or she should evaluate their sleep routine. It may take some time for the changes to have a positive effect.

How do I know the best sleep hygiene routine for me?

If you're taking too long to fall asleep, or awakening during the night, you should consider revising your bedtime habits. Most important for everyone is to maintain a regular sleep-wake schedule throughout the week and consider how much time you spend in bed, which could be too much or too little.

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Week 10: Handout B
CREATING A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP WITH FOOD, MIND, & BODY

- 1. Reject the Diet Mentality** Throw out the diet books and magazine articles that offer you false hope of losing weight quickly, easily, and permanently. Get angry at the lies that have led you to feel as if you were a failure every time a new diet stopped working and you gained back all of the weight. If you allow even one small hope to linger that a new and better diet might be lurking around the corner, it will prevent you from being free to rediscover Intuitive Eating.
- 2. Honor Your Hunger** Keep your body biologically fed with adequate energy and carbohydrates. Otherwise you can trigger a primal drive to overeat. Once you reach the moment of excessive hunger, all intentions of moderate, conscious eating are fleeting and irrelevant. Learning to honor this first biological signal sets the stage for re-building trust with yourself and food.
- 3. Challenge the Food Police** Scream a loud "NO" to thoughts in your head that declare you're "good" for eating under 1000 calories or "bad" because you ate a piece of chocolate cake. The Food Police monitor the unreasonable rules that dieting has created. The police station is housed deep in your psyche, and its loud speaker shouts negative barbs, hopeless phrases, and guilt-provoking indictments. Chasing the Food Police away is a critical step in returning to Intuitive Eating.
- 4. Make Peace with Food** Call a truce, stop the food fight! Give yourself unconditional permission to eat. If you tell yourself that you can't or shouldn't have a particular food, it can lead to intense feelings of deprivation that build into uncontrollable cravings and, often, bingeing. When you finally "give-in" to your forbidden food, eating will be experienced with such intensity, it usually results in Last Supper overeating, and overwhelming guilt.
- 5. 5. Respect Your Fullness** Listen for the body signals that tell you that you are no longer hungry. Observe the signs that show that you're comfortably full. Pause in the middle of a meal or food and ask yourself how the food tastes, and what is your current fullness level?
- 6. Discover the Satisfaction Factor** The Japanese have the wisdom to promote pleasure as one of their goals of healthy living. In our fury to be thin and healthy, we often overlook one of the most basic gifts of existence--the pleasure and satisfaction that can be found in the eating experience. When you eat what you really want, in an environment that is inviting and conducive, the pleasure you derive will be a powerful force in helping you feel satisfied and content. By providing this experience for yourself, you will find that it takes much less food to decide you've had "enough".
- 7. Honor Your Feelings Without Using Food** Find ways to comfort, nurture, distract, and resolve your issues without using food. Anxiety, loneliness,

boredom, anger are emotions we all experience throughout life. Each has its own trigger, and each has its own appeasement. Food won't fix any of these feelings. It may comfort for the short term, distract from the pain, or even numb you into a food hangover. But food won't solve the problem. If anything, eating for an emotional hunger will only make you feel worse in the long run. You'll ultimately have to deal with the source of the emotion, as well as the discomfort of overeating.

- 8. Respect Your Body** Accept your genetic blueprint. Just as a person with a shoe size of eight would not expect to realistically squeeze into a size six, it is equally as futile (and uncomfortable) to have the same expectation with body size. But mostly, respect your body, so you can feel better about who you are. It's hard to reject the diet mentality if you are unrealistic and overly critical about your body shape.
- 9. Exercise--Feel the Difference** Forget militant exercise. Just get active and feel the difference. Shift your focus to how it feels to move your body, rather than the calorie burning effect of exercise. If you focus on how you feel from working out, such as energized, it can make the difference between rolling out of bed for a brisk morning walk and hitting the snooze alarm. If when you wake up, your only goal is to lose weight, it's usually not a motivating factor in that moment of time

Honor Your Health--Gentle Nutrition: Make food choices that honor your health and taste buds while making you feel well. Remember that you don't have to eat a perfect diet to be healthy. You will not suddenly get a nutrient deficiency or gain weight from one snack, one meal, or one day of eating. It's what you eat consistently over time that matters. Healthy progress, not perfection, is what counts

Week 10: Handout C
TEN STEPS TO POSITIVE BODY IMAGE

One list cannot automatically tell you how to turn negative body thoughts into positive body image, but it can help you think about new ways of looking more healthfully and happily at yourself and your body. The more you do that, the more likely you are to feel good about who you are and the body you naturally have.

- 1) Appreciate all that your body can do. Every day your body carries you closer to your dreams. Celebrate all of the amazing things your body does for you – running, dancing, breathing, laughing, dreaming, etc
- 2) Keep a top-10 list of things you like about yourself – things that aren't related to how much you weigh or what you look like. Read your list often. Add to it as you become aware of more things to like about you
- 3) Remind yourself that "true beauty" is not simply skin-deep. When you feel good about yourself and who you are, you carry yourself with a sense of confidence, self-acceptance, and openness that makes you beautiful regardless of whether you physically look like a supermodel. Beauty is a state of mind, not a state of your body.
- 4) Look at yourself as a whole person. When you see yourself in a mirror or in your mind, choose not to focus on specific body parts, See yourself as you want others to see you – as a whole person
- 5) Surround yourself with positive people. It is easier to feel good about yourself and your body when you are around others who are supportive and who recognize the importance of liking yourself just as you naturally are.
- 6) Shut down those voices in your head that tell you your body is not "right" or that you are a "bad" person. You can overpower those negative thoughts with positive ones. The next time you start to tear yourself down, build yourself back up with a few quick affirmations that work for you.
- 7) Wear clothes that are comfortable and that make you feel good about your body. Work with your body, not against it.
- 8) Become a critical view of social and media messages. Pay attention to images, slogans, or attitudes that make you feel bad about yourself or your body. Protest these messages: write a letter to the advertiser or talk back to the image or message
- 9) Do something nice for yourself – something that lets your body know you appreciate it. Take a bubble bath, make time for a nap, find a peaceful place outside to relax
- 10) Use the time and energy that you might have spent worrying about food, calories, and your weight to do something to help others. Sometimes reaching out to other people can help you feel better about yourself and can make a positive change in our world

Week 10: A Gentle Exercise and Mindfulness Coping Skill

A Walking Meditation

Most people cover miles in the course of their daily routines. This makes walking a good opportunity to practice mindfulness as well as get gentle exercise. Focus on the act of walking much the same way you might focus on your breath in a sitting meditation.

- Stand up and relax your abdominal muscles. Take several deep belly breaths. Feel your abdomen expand and contract with each breath. As you practice this exercise, try to continue breathing from this relaxed stance. Mentally repeat the word “in” with each inhalation and “out” with each exhalation.
- Without controlling your breathing too much, try to arrange it so that one of your feet touches the ground at the beginning of each “in” breath and each “out” breath. Now, see how many steps seem natural to take during each inhalation and each exhalation.
- As with all meditations, when thoughts or images interrupt your focus, make a mental note of this and then return to focusing on walking and breathing.
- Pay attention to the sensations of walking. Notice your feet and lower legs. Notice which muscles and working—contracting and relaxing—as you move your legs. Notice which part of your foot touches the ground first. Pay attention to how your weight shifts from one foot to the other as you walk. What are the feelings in your knees as they bend? Pay attention to the ground. Does it have texture? Is it hard or soft? Notice any cracks or stones. When your thoughts wander, notice, then let them go and return to paying attention to your walking.

Other ways to do walking meditations:

- Count your steps in time with your breathing so that you are saying to yourself something like “In...two...three...four. Out...two...three...four.”
- Count your steps as you walk up to twenty, then start again at one.
- Make a mental note of everything you hear as you walk.
- Rather than having a goal to walk a certain distance, walk for 5 or 10 minutes in one direction, then turn around and walk back, walking as slowly and mindfully as you can.