Stall Street Journal

Sleep: The Elusive Ingredient to Success

Pulling an all-nighter is a "*right of passage*" for college students... but is it the healthiest way to approach being a successful student? The research says no. Students who pull all-nighters had lower GPA's compared with students who never stay up all night.
(Jounal of Behavioral Sleep Medicine, January 2008)

W&L student stats:
- 34.6% say they feel rested no more than 2 days/week
- 28.5% said sleep difficulties impacted their academic performance

2008 National College Health Assessment data

Not Enough Sleep Results In:

- Lack of concentration
- Decreased reaction time
- Difficulty processing information
- Impairment of memory
- Mood and behavior changes
- Difficulty fighting off illness
- Tendencies to make mistakes

Any of these can have a harmful effect on your grades, work, athletic performance, driving ability or relationships.

Stuck on the Sleep-Deficit Treadmill?

- Maintain a regular sleep schedule - most of us need 7-9 hours per night.
- Avoid distractions like TV shows, Facebook, internet, video games - all interfere with study time, making long nights the norm.
- Finish eating 2-3 hours before going to sleep. Eat only light snacks late at night. Sleep depriviation reduces a blood protein that suppresses appetite, affecting how the brain senses when it has had enough food. So, too little sleep may result in eating more than we realize.
- Too many long naps during the day interferes with sleeping at night.
- Exercise in the morning or late afternoon vs late-night.
- Avoid caffeine & nicotine close to bedtime. They are stimulants that can dramatically reduce the quality of sleep.

Alcohol Affects Sleep

It takes a minimum of **three days** for the body to recover from a night of heavy drinking. Alcohol interferes with REM, the deep sleep stage needed to feel rested and refreshed. For example:

Saturday Night - Intoxicated Ike goes to bed and sleeps 10 hours - his brain does not enter the REM stage. He awakes feeling tired and sluggish.

Sunday Night - Intoxicated Ike expects to "*catch up*" on his sleep. But tonight his sleep-deprived brain enters REM REBOUND, staying too long in the REM stage. He wakes up feeling tired and sluggish. He struggles to stay focused on studying.

Monday Night - Finally Ike's brain returns to a normal sleep cycle. He wakes up Tuesday feeling rested and refreshed. But if he goes out again on Wednesday night the cycle is repeated...

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