



## What is Essential to All Human Beings, yet is Frequently Neglected?

By Michelle White

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The National Sleep Foundation recommends that adults get 8 hours of sleep per night. However, most adults sleep 6-7 hours on average during the work week, and one-third of adults sleep 6 ½ hours or less nightly. Moreover, 48% of adults will sleep less to accomplish more. According to the International Labour Organization, Americans work the longest hours of any industrialized nation in the world. This poses a variety of health risks and dangers, such as falling asleep behind the wheel of a car. "Drowsy driving" causes 100,000 car crashes annually.



A lack of sleep also slows our metabolism and our ability to process sugar, which turns into fat in our bodies, posing difficulty for anyone trying to lose weight or maintain their ideal weight. Furthermore, sleep deficiency slows our ability to heal or recover from injuries and illnesses.



A dominant 62% of Americans experience a sleep problem a few nights a week or more. There is obviously no blanket solution, but there is one method that attempts to get to the root of the problem. Rather than lying awake thinking about outside matters, go inside and release the tension there. Certainly this is easier said than done, but this releasing process actually slows down our brain wave frequencies. This is a naturally-occurring process that all mammals have in common: if you lie down and relax all your muscles, the brain wave frequency slows from beta, to alpha, to theta and to delta, which is the frequency that puts you to sleep.



Also, attempting to maintain a focus on three sensual details helps us to turn off our thinking. Our brains are built to send and receive, but not both simultaneously. The front half of our brain, the cerebral cortex, is for sending and thinking, while the back half, the sensory cortex, is for reception and feeling. Take a beach - a popular mental and actual destination - and focus on three details, such as listening to the pounding of the waves on the shore, the feeling of burying your toes in warm sand, and feeling a cool marine breeze on your face. The feeling and concentration required to maintain these images should leave no room for the mental-hamster-wheel type of thinking that can unwittingly take over at 3am.

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calendar

Tuesday May 20th

7:30 PM | Tartuffe: South Coast Repertory

Also, the National Sleep Foundation recommends the following tips:

1. Maintain a regular bed and wake time schedule including weekends.
2. Establish a regular, relaxing bedtime routine such as soaking in a hot bath or hot tub and then reading a book or listening to soothing music.
3. Create a sleep-conducive environment that is dark, quiet, comfortable and cool.
4. Sleep on a comfortable mattress and pillows.
5. Use your bedroom only for sleep and sex. It is best to take work materials, computers and televisions out of the sleeping environment.
6. Finish eating at least 2-3 hours before your regular bedtime.
7. Exercise regularly. It is best to complete your workout at least a few hours before bedtime.
8. Avoid caffeine (e.g. coffee, tea, soft drinks, chocolate) close to bedtime. It can keep you awake.
9. Avoid nicotine (e.g. cigarettes, tobacco products). Used close to bedtime, it can lead to poor sleep.
10. Avoid alcohol close to bedtime. It can lead to disrupted sleep later in the night.


You might try various tips to improve your sleep to find what works best for you. After all, you never know when a few extra zzz's can make all the difference!

For more information, check out [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org).

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Season Finale

**9:00 PM** | Victory Lap Variety Show !

**Wednesday May 21st**

**12:00 PM** | Free LOST Exhibit at The Paley Center for Media in Beverly Hills, For a Limited Time Only!

**7:30 PM** | Tartuffe: South Coast Repertory Season Finale

**8:00 PM** | Surely Lorraine's Anime Wong at Malo's Silver Lake Sessions

**Thursday May 22nd**

**12:00 PM** | Free LOST Exhibit at The Paley Center for Media in Beverly Hills, For a Limited Time Only!

**7:30 PM** | Hovorostovsky @ LA Opera

**8:00 PM** | Tartuffe: South Coast Repertory Season Finale

**9:30 PM** | Comedy Palace

*Feature Article*

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