

## Good Steps for Good Sleep

- Early after noon, after lunch, no more caffeine
- Early evening, after dinner, no more alcohol
- Approximately twelve hours before you have to wake up, stop working and stop thinking about work. Turn your attention to care for your home, family, friends, and self
- Go for a relaxing walk at sunset (if you have a chance for more vigorous movement earlier in the day, it would be very helpful.)
- Nine or ten hours before you need to wake up, begin dimming the lights, quieting the home, and turning off the screens. Refrain from more liquids.
- Try reading a book, having a conversation with your housemates, painting, journaling, meditation, doing a jigsaw puzzle, etc
- Approximately eight hours before you are supposed to wake up, lie down in bed, turn out the lights. A quiet, still, dark room is most conducive to sleep.
- Keep the curtains to one bedroom window open so your body can sense the sunrise; especially if that window faces east.
- Don't get impatient, frustrated, or agitated if you don't fall asleep (or can't fall back to sleep). With your conscious, decision-making mind, allow your body to be as soft, still, and relaxed as possible. Let your mind be as quiet as possible; as if you were asleep. Play opossum. Then, allow the involuntary parts of your brain to take you into actual deep sleep in its own time.
- Try to wake up without an alarm. Set it, if you must, as a backstop for the latest time you could oversleep and still make your first destination. Allow your body to wake naturally, on its own, when it is ready.

These basic, conservative suggestions are widely and consistently helpful for good sleep. If you are not doing *ALL* of the above *AND* experiencing periods of sleeplessness (difficulty falling asleep, difficulty returning to sleep), try implementing the steps you are not using. See if that helps. If these steps do not help, and poor sleep continues, consult with your therapist or physician for good next steps.