



# Resilience In Focus

## **The Importance of Sleep & Having a Sleep Routine**

*From the Army Resilience Directorate*

If you want to have an immediate positive impact on your performance or improve your physical or mental well-being, the very first thing you should consider changing is the amount and quality of your sleep.

Sleep is a biological necessity that impacts every area of human functioning. Without sufficient sleep everything suffers from your cognitive functioning, your emotional well-being, basic biological functions like your immune system, to every performance metric you can think of. Unfortunately, two thirds of adults are chronically sleep deprived (getting less than the recommended 7-8 hours of sleep per night).

According to research, these are just some of the disastrous effects getting less than eight hours a night can have on us. One of the most interesting ones is the “accuracy of performance self-appraisal.” Essentially, when you are chronically sleep deprived, you are unable to accurately judge the quality of your own performance. Which means that you may think you have adapted to the lack of sleep, but you actually haven’t.

### **What can you do about it?**

1. Examine your own beliefs and values concerning sleep. What beliefs/values do you have that get in the way of prioritizing your sleep? What beliefs/values can you leverage to prioritize sleep better?
2. Take a hard look at your schedule. What are the realistic barriers that you face when it comes to getting eight hours of sleep every night? What are the things that you do at night that are non-essential and cause you to procrastinate going to sleep? Try to eliminate the non-essential activities and plan to mitigate obstacles.
3. Regularity and routine. Pick and stick to a standard bedtime and “wake time” for every day of the week. This helps program your brain and body systems to start “shutting down” and “waking up” at the appropriate times. This type of routine is shown to both improve the amount of sleep (avoiding procrastination of going to bed) and the quality of your sleep (promotes restorative REM sleep).
4. Practice good sleep hygiene habits—keep it dark, keep it cool, keep it quiet.

### **Additional Resources**

[ARD Importance of Sleep—Video](#)

[ARD Importance of Sleep—Infographic](#)

**Books:**

- “Why We Sleep: Unlocking the Power of Sleep and Dreams,” by Matthew Walker, PhD

**Mobile App:**

- [Performance Triad Mobile App – Sleep sections](#)

**Fact Sheets:**

- [WRAIR's Investigator's Dispatch, Sleep Dispatch](#)