

Well-Being **Newsletter**

Third Quarter 2025



Welcome to this quarter's well-being newsletter, where we're diving into the vital connection between sleep and emotional well-being.

Explore how healthy sleep habits, circadian rhythms, and mindful routines can support better mood management and emotional regulation. From building a restful sleep schedule to creating environments that uplift your mood, we'll guide you through practical tips and science-backed insights to help you feel more balanced, energized, and emotionally resilient—just in time for the back-to-school season.

Circadian Rhythm, Sleep Tracking

Sleep, Light, and Emotional Balance: Harnessing Your Circadian Rhythm

Did you know your body has an internal clock? It's called your **circadian rhythm**, and it plays a major role in how you sleep, wake, and even feel throughout the day. When your circadian rhythm is in sync, you're more likely to experience restful sleep, steadier moods, and clearer thinking.



Make the Most out of Summer: Get Outside, Feel Better

Summer isn't over yet, so take advantage of the light and warmth. One of the simplest ways to support your circadian rhythm is **exposure to natural light**, especially in the morning. Just 10-15 minutes of sunlight after waking helps regulate your sleep-wake cycle, boosts serotonin (a mood-enhancing hormone), and helps your body feel more alert during the day—and sleepier at night.

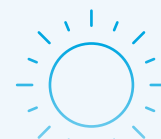
Try:



Taking your coffee or tea break outside



Opening blinds during the day



Walking or exercising outdoors, especially before noon

Track Your Sleep, Discover Patterns

Understanding your sleep habits can reveal key insights into your emotional well-being. Sleep-tracking tools, like **smartwatches, fitness bands, or sleep apps**, can help you recognize patterns and make changes that support better rest.

Popular tools include:



Oura ring: Device worn on your finger that measures heart rate, movement, and temperature to identify the stages of sleep. Provides an easily digestible chart and sleep readiness score each morning, as well as providing patterns and changes.



Sleep Cycle: App that captures breathing through your phone's microphone, allowing for identification of sleep patterns, the effects of sleep duration, stages, consistency, and interruptions.



Pillow: Connects to iPhone, Apple Watch, or iPad. Scientifically backed sleep analysis along with audio recordings and heart rate to give a full sleep analysis.



Fitbit: Tracks sleep stages and their duration through the wrist-worn device, providing insight in sleep patterns and quality.

Helpful Sleep Apps:



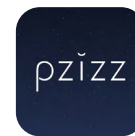
Calm: Offers a wide range of sleep sounds, meditations, and sleep stories to help you fall asleep naturally.



Headspace: Features sleep meditations, sleep health courses, sounds, stories, and overall mental well-being.



Bettersleep: Combines sounds, noises, brainwaves, meditations, SleepTales, and playlists to create a personalized sleep experience.



Pzizz: Uses scientifically-designed soundscapes, including music, narration, and sound effects, to help you fall asleep, stay asleep, and take effective power naps.

Smart Alarm Clocks:



Hatch Restore: Sunrise alarm, soothing sound machine, and guided sleep routines to help unwind and wake up.



Philips SmartSleep Wake-Up Light:

Simulates a sunrise and sunset, paired with natural sounds.



Loftie Alarm Clock:

Designed to help reduce screentime. Includes white noise, bedtime stories, and a gentle alarm.



Amazon Echo Dot with Alexa (smart routines):

Program Alexa to wake you up with music, sunrise light routines (if paired with smart bulb), and sleep sounds.

If you notice you're consistently getting poor-quality sleep or waking up groggy, these tools can help you pinpoint what's getting in the way—whether it's screentime, inconsistent bedtimes, or not enough natural light. Not interested in using an app or device to track sleep? [Click here](#) for a sample sleep diary you can try using with good old pen and paper!

Sleep Well, Feel Well

Sleep isn't just rest—it's essential emotional maintenance. Quality sleep helps regulate mood, process stress, and build emotional resilience. Aligning with your natural rhythm and paying attention to sleep habits can make a big difference in how you show up, both at work and in life.



The What

The Mood-Sleep Connection

If you've ever tossed and turned after a stressful day—or felt off emotionally after a poor night's sleep—you've experienced the powerful connection between mood and rest. The good news? Small shifts in your daily habits can help you feel more grounded, energized, and emotionally balanced. Let's explore three simple (and proven) ways to support your mood and, in turn, improve your sleep.

So What?

How Sleep Affects Mood:

- Sleep deprivation = emotional instability
- Lack of sleep reduces activity in the brain's **prefrontal cortex**—the part that helps us stay calm, focused, and positive.
- **Increased anxiety and irritability:** Poor sleep raises cortisol (stress hormone) and lowers mood-regulating chemicals like serotonin and dopamine.
- **Lower resilience to stress:** Without restorative sleep, even small challenges can feel overwhelming.
- **Mood disorders can worsen:** Chronic insomnia is a risk factor for anxiety and depression and can make mood management strategies (like mindfulness or therapy) less effective.

How Mood Affects Sleep:

- **Anxiety = trouble falling asleep:** Racing thoughts or overthinking keep the brain in a hyper-alert state.
- **Depression disrupts sleep cycles:** People may experience either insomnia or hypersomnia, throwing off the body's natural rhythms.
- **Mood dysregulation = fragmented sleep:** Elevated stress can lead to frequent nighttime waking or lighter, less restorative rest.

Now What?

Try this, depending on your schedule:



Working a 9-5?

Build a winddown window 30-60 minutes before bed. Dim lights, power down screens, and swap scrolling for journaling or gentle stretching.



Working late or shifts?

Use visual cues like dim lighting and calming scents to signal "sleep mode" even during the day.



Always on the go?

Take a personalized energy audit of your current daily routine. What's one thing you can remove, reduce, or reframe to support and replenish your energy?

Nourish Your Gut, Nourish Your Mood and Sleep

Your gut and brain are in constant communication, and what you eat can influence how you feel *and* how well you sleep. This is known as the gut-brain axis, and it's a powerful player in your emotional well-being.

- About 90 percent of serotonin (a mood-boosting neurotransmitter) is produced in the gut.
- A diet high in fiber, fermented foods, fruits, and vegetables supports a diverse gut microbiome and is linked to better mood and more stable sleep cycles.
- Heavy, sugary, or processed foods close to bedtime can interfere with digestion and reduce sleep quality.

Tips:



For at least one meal a day, add a **gut-friendly food**: yogurt, kimchi, bananas, leafy greens, oats, or berries.



Stay hydrated: dehydration can cause brain fog, low energy, and mood dips.

Try this short mindfulness practice:

5 Senses Exercise

Notice...

5 things
you can
see



4 things
you can
feel



3 things
you can
hear



2 things
you can
smell



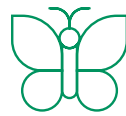
1 thing
you can
taste



Walk Your Mood into Balance: Movement as Emotional Medicine

Movement helps regulate stress hormones, boosts mood, and even supports better sleep later on. Mindful walking combines activity with present-moment awareness, grounding your body and your mind.

Quick ways to bring mindful walking into your day:



Office setting:

Take a five-minute loop around your building between meetings and bring words or phrases to your steps. Use a calming phrase with your breath, like inhale: *I am calm...* exhale: *I am at peace*



Working from home?

Schedule an "inbox intermission" before diving into your emails. Take a moment to stretch or to walk away from your workspace to help you approach your communication with more clarity and less stress.



In the field or traveling?

Look for the beauty around you, such as sunlight, shadows, trees, buildings, people. Let gratitude be your guide. Try noting one positive thing: something beautiful, funny, or an act of kindness.



At home:

Choose pick-up over delivery and opt to pick up food or run errands yourself instead of getting delivery—it adds movement to your day and provides a mindful break from sitting.

Green Up Your Mood: Energize Your Environment

Your surroundings play a powerful role in how you feel. Stressful, chaotic environments can make it harder to relax, focus, or sleep. A few small changes can go a long way.

Mood-boosting environment tips:



At work:

Add a plant, soften your lighting, or bring in a calming photo.



At home:

Create a “mood corner” with a candle or essential oils, a favorite object, or a natural element.



On the go:

Use calming phone wallpapers or a favorite scent to ground you.



For anywhere:

Take a moment to tidy one small area. It creates emotional space, not just physical space.

Mood-Supporting Bonus Habits:



Breathe to reset:

Try box breathing. Inhale 4 seconds, hold 4, exhale 4, hold 4. Do this before bed or before big conversations.



Fuel your mood:

Eat regularly, stay hydrated, and notice how certain foods affect your emotions.



Stay connected:

A quick text or chat with someone supportive can brighten your mood in minutes. Don't underestimate the power of human connection.



ComPsych Huddles:

Visit [GuidanceResources Online](#) for online group support around breathing techniques!

Rise & Shine: A Smart Start with Sleep

A Back-to-School Guide for Families Building Better Sleep Routines



Why Sleep Matters

Bedtime in the summer for kids tends to be fluid and unstructured for both caregivers and kids alike, which can be challenging when back-to-school time comes around. Sleep is important in many functions of the human body, including cellular regeneration, memory, mental well-being, mood, and stress management. Read this guide to build better sleep routines for the whole family just in time for the first day of school!

Quality sleep helps students:



Stay focused in class



Improve memory and learning



Manage stress and emotions



Grow physically and mentally

Recommended Nightly Sleep by Age

6-12 years:



9-12 hours

13-18 years:



8-10 hours

Adults

(including caregivers):



7-9 hours

Build a Sleep Routine for Your Child

For students and parents, building a bedtime routine is important for overall well-being. Sticking to this routine helps maintain the body's natural sleep/wake cycle (circadian rhythm). Start by setting a consistent bedtime and wake time. Yes, this even applies to weekends, too.

Create a relaxing wind-down routine with the 5 Bs:



Boogie: Release any pent-up playful energy by having a 10-minute dance-party or engage in another high-energy activity.



Bath: Take a warm bath to unwind.



Book: Read a favorite bedtime book.



Beethoven: Listen to calm, non-stimulating music like classical or lo-fi.



Bed: Create a dedicated, calming sleep space and only head to bed for sleep.



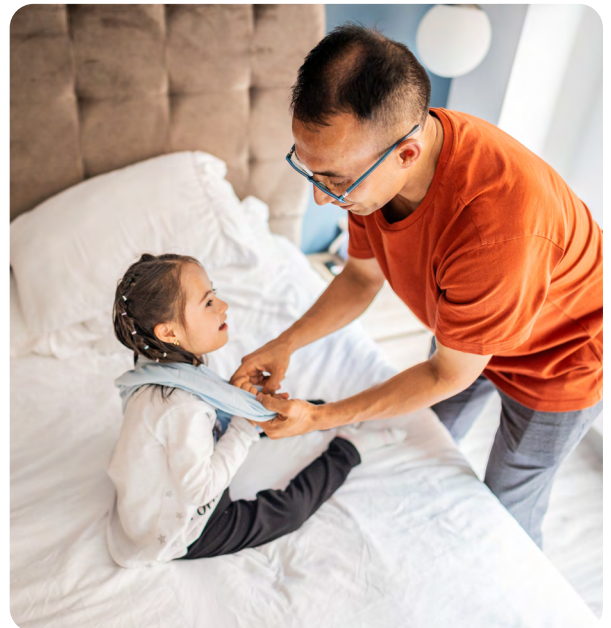
Best Practices to Boost Your Success

- ✓ Start the transition to your back-to-school sleep routine at least **one to two weeks before the first day** of school. Gradually shift bedtime/wake-up time by 15-30 minutes each day.
- ✓ Power down electronics one hour before bed.
- ✓ Use mornings to get sunlight. It helps reset the body clock. A short walk or even opening the blinds helps **reset your internal clock**.
- ✓ Keep bedrooms cool, quiet, and dark.
- ✓ Avoid caffeine after noon.

For Parents/Caregivers:

Reminder: Well-rested kids are more likely to succeed academically and emotionally.

- ✓ Model healthy sleep habits to reinforce their importance and your family's dedication to well-being.
- ✓ Talk with your child about how sleep supports their learning and boosts memory.
- ✓ Allow your child to have a voice in creating their calming sleep space.
- ✓ Be patient when implementing this new routine—consistency is key!
- ✓ Check in with your child's teachers to gauge if sleep affects school behavior or focus.



Yoga Pose of the Quarter

Butterfly Pose, also known as Bound Angle Pose, Cobbler's Pose, or **Baddha Konasana** in Sanskrit, is a seated pose suitable for all levels. This calming pose helps release tension stored in the hips and inner thighs, making it a great way to relax and unwind before bedtime and ease into sleep.



Butterfly Pose



How to Practice Butterfly Pose:

1. Begin in a seated position.
2. Gently bend your knees and press the soles of your feet together, letting your knees fall open to the sides.
3. Interlace your fingers around the pinkie-toe side of your feet or place your hands on your ankles or shins.
4. Lengthen your spine and lift through and across your chest.
5. Draw your shoulders down and back.
6. Stay in this position for up to 5 minutes, breathing deeply and evenly.
7. To release, extend your legs forward and lean back on your hands.

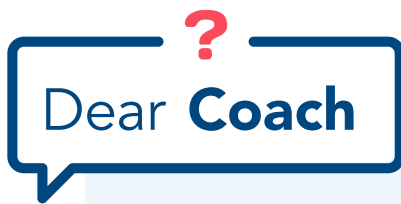
Benefits:

- Supports pelvic health and flexibility
- Encourages mindfulness and awareness
- Reduces stress and promotes relaxation

Tips for Comfort and Support:

- Sit on the edge of a cushion or folded blanket, as this can increase comfort and make it easier to sit up straight.
- To increase the intensity of the stretch, position your feet closer to your hips.
- For more comfort, place cushions or blocks under your thighs or knees.
- Sit against a wall for spinal support.





Question: *How do I stay on track with my goals? Lately, I've been feeling overwhelmed. I haven't seen any progress, and my consistency has been low.*

Coach Bella's answer: You're not alone. This is a common feeling, especially around the mid-year mark. The energy of the new year has long worn off, summer may have disrupted your usual routines, and yet your goals are still waiting for your attention.

First, let's take a breath and reset. Lack of visible progress doesn't mean failure. It often means it's time to pause, reassess, and reset with intention. Here are a few things to consider:

- 1 Revisit your "why"
- 2 Practice both kindness and gratitude
- 3 Focus on consistency over perfection
- 4 Reflect on what's working, and what's not
- 5 Remember: Progress isn't always visible

Go back to the original reason behind your goals. What inspired you? Does that motivation still resonate? If not, it might be time to revise the goal or reframe it to better align with your current values and lifestyle.

Consider implementing a simple gratitude practice, which, over time, may enhance your peace of mind and quiet, help reframe unwanted, limiting beliefs, and build resilience. Carve out 5-10 minutes at a convenient time in your day to reflect on or log what you are grateful for, or what you are learning from this experience.

Progress doesn't require perfect days. It requires repeated effort. Think small, manageable steps. Instead of restarting everything at once, pick one habit you can show up for this week. Let that build momentum.

What barriers keep showing up? Lack of time, low energy, unclear steps? Identify them without judgment, then brainstorm solutions or ask for support. Sometimes a small tweak makes a big difference.

Change is happening even when it's not showing up on the scale, calendar, or to-do list. You might be building resilience, mental clarity, or self-awareness, all essential to long-term success.

A midyear reset is the perfect time to recalibrate, not to give up. You don't need to overhaul your life to get back on track. Just recommit, one small action at a time. **You've got this.**



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