

GENUINE SELF-CARE

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NOTES FROM THE SELF-CARE COACH

Welcome to Genuine Self-Care. This month I'd like to introduce you to Lorraine Belitsky, Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine. Lorraine is a graduate of the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, and is a general practitioner of natural medicine trained to identify the underlying causes of disease and to use natural methods to help the body heal itself.

She and I are working together to provide physical & emotional support, as well as helpful cognitive reframing, strategies and accountability to people who are quitting smoking.

So if you know someone who is SERIOUS about quitting, they can get in touch with me for more information.

I recently celebrated FOUR YEARS free from my own addiction to nicotine and yet I remember those first few weeks of my "quit" like it was yesterday. I have a huge passion for helping others to get free of one of the most addictive substances in the world.

This month's article fits into the "L" (lifestyle habits) area of the Genuine Self-Care Model (for more information about the model see the sidebar or below). SLEEP - are you getting it? Are you getting enough? Read on for my thoughts on sleep, as well as some tips and strategies that I have found useful.

Enjoy the article, keep in touch and be well!

SLEEP - ARE YOU GETTING ENOUGH?

For some people, enough is four to six hours. Other people just don't feel right with less than eight hours. People need more or less sleep at different phases in

Contents

Notes from the Self-Care Coach
Sleep -are you getting enough?
Contact
Subscription Information
The Genuine Self-Care Model
Resources
Pass it on
Reader Feedback

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THE GENUINE SELF-CARE MODEL

S = Surroundings and Structures
E = Emotions & Thoughts
L = Lifestyle habits
F = Friends, family and peers

To read more about
the Genuine Self-Care
Model click here.

QUALITY REFERRALS

Are you looking for a professional or trade service? Ask me before you hit the Yellow Pages. I have an extensive network of quality professionals - and isn't it nicer to hire someone who has been referred to you personally?

To tap into my network email
linda@genuinecoaching.com

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their life. Women may need more or less sleep at different phases of the month.

The simplest way to tell if you're getting enough is by checking in every morning - do you feel rested? Do you ever wake up without an alarm clock and feel ready to get right out of bed and start your day?

Not getting enough sleep is one of the most direct ways that we self-sabotage our success and well-being. When we are better rested we not only feel better, but are calmer, smarter, more rational, nicer to be around and we look better. Why wouldn't we choose to have that every day??

MY FAVOURITE SLEEP AIDS

MUSIC - Try turning off the computer and television at least one hour before you'd like to fall asleep, and turn on some music that you find relaxing.

Be even more specific with the music you choose to play in the bedroom (I like Debbie Danbrook's recordings of the shakuhachi flute - see "Resources"). Some tips for sleeptime music:

- Music without words - words can provoke and direct your thoughts more than instrumental music or pure vocal sounds.
- Music with natural "breaths" - music where the soloist takes natural pauses to breathe can help you to slow down your own breath - try flute, other wind instruments or voice (either with no words or words in a language you don't understand).
- Test what your stereo system will do when the recording is finished - I once played a tape of beautiful soothing piano music and when the tape ended there was a loud SNAP which actually woke me up again. My CD player makes a very soft "wrrrr" noise (though I honestly can't remember the last time I was still awake when the CD was over).

THE POTATO - This comes from the author of the book "Potatoes not Prozac", who I introduced you to in last month's newsletter. Here's the basics (see "Resources" for a link to potato FAQ's on the Radiant Recovery website):

- Include a moderate amount of protein in your evening meal.
- 2-3 hours after dinner, eat a small serving of potatoes, WITH THE SKIN ON.
- With your potato, you can have salsa, margarine/butter, herbs & spices - as long as you have **no protein** with it.
- Expect to have more vivid dreams - if this bothers you, then try a smaller serving. If you're not getting any effects, try a larger serving.
- The potato works by creating a hit of insulin, which puts certain amino acids to work, leaving one called tryptophan behind where it can enter the brain without competition. Tryptophan is necessary for the production of serotonin

(which can create a nice mellow sleep, and also helps with impulse control the next day).

- The potato effect works best when it's used in the context of the 7-step Radiant Recovery plan (dietary solutions for sugar addiction and mood problems), and it can also be used on it's own as a sleep aid.

A GOOD BOOK - For bedtime reading, try to stay away from material that gets you thinking about things you deal with during the day. Magazines or stories that distract you from your own life may help you to drift into sleep.

IMAGERY - If you find that your mind is racing when you are trying to sleep, picture a viewpoint where you're traveling down a road. See your thoughts as signposts that you're passing. Concentrate on letting them pass right by.

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION - Imagine that a ball of light is traveling along your body, beginning at the top of your head, going down to the tips of your toes, and then coming up again. As it passes your muscles, they fill with light and relax.

A NAP - If your sleep has been interrupted or there've been unavoidable late nights, an afternoon nap can help you catch up. Experts advise that naps should be taken earlier in the afternoon, rather than later, and that we should keep them to 30 minutes or less. This will avoid disrupting your sleep at night.

NATURAL SOLUTIONS, FROM DR. LORRAINE BELITSKY:

- Lavender Bath - Take a hot bath and add a couple of drops of lavender oil. Lavender has naturally occurring relaxing properties.
- Chamomile Tea - Calms the nervous system and helps to promote restful sleep.
- Take 500 mg Calcium with 250 mg Magnesium at bedtime - The calcium has a calming effect, and the magnesium works along with it.

The advice and information in this article is not meant to replace medical advice. If you suspect you have a serious sleeping problem such as sleep apnea, or if you experience insomnia or extreme fatigue, please consult a healthcare professional.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

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RESOURCES

On the Web:

For a great list of sleep tips visit: <http://www.sleepnet.com/tips.html>

For more information about the potato effect click:
http://www.radiantrecovery.com/potato_qna.html

To order soothing music by Debbie Danbrook click:
<http://www.healingmusic.com>

From your bookstore or library:

Choose a book that will help you "escape" into sleep. The Toronto Public Library lets you browse and reserve books online. Have your library card handy and click on
<http://www.tpl.toronto.on.ca/>

People who can help:

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READER FEEDBACK

I'd love to hear from you – did you enjoy this month's article? Did you apply any of the tips? What worked for you? What would you like to see in future issues? Do you have questions about self-care that I could answer in this section? Email me at
linda@genuinecoaching.com.

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