**Sleep Tips:**

**Do’s**

* Start a relaxing routine one hour before bed
* Try light stretching w/ soft music
* Read a book (not a stimulating murder mystery)
* Dim your lights an hour before bed
* Decrease the volume on TV or music
* Keep your bedroom 5 to 10 degrees lower than day time settings
* Keep the room dark, unplug and charging devices that emit a red light
* If you wake up in the middle of the night and are awake for more than 20 minutes, get out of bed. Return when you are sleepy. (We need the mind to associate the bed with sleep; not tossing and turning.)
* Use earplugs or a white noise machine if you are a light sleeper (or if your partner snores)
* Keep the bed reserved for two things: sleep and intimacy. The brain needs to associate the bed with restful sleep, not balancing your budget or working on your laptop.
* Watch TV in another room, not in your bed. The same goes for reading.
* If you tend to fear oversleeping, set two alarms and keep them on the other side of the room (facing the other direction!) Go to bed certain that you will wake-up on time.

***Remember, Keep the Room Cool, Dark and Quiet!***

**Don’ts:**

* If you are not ‘on-call’, put the phone on airplane mode or “do not disturb”. If you are tempted to check emails/internet while in bed, do not keep the phone on the nightstand.
* No stimulating exercise (running) within 3 hours of bedtime (if you have insomnia)
* No heavy meals within 3 hours of bedtime
* Avoid sugary snacks right before bed
* Do not watch stimulating or negative shows on TV (nightly news/ Criminal Minds)
* The news is usually centered on tragedies; not recommended right before bed.
* TV and Lap Tops--The bright lights of screens can hinder the development of melatonin. Close the laptop and turn off the TV approximately one hour before bed.
* Careful how much fluid you consume before bed (or you wake-up to use the bathroom).
* A hot bath may be relaxing …but not too close to bed or your body temperature becomes too warm to get sleepy (body temperature drops during the night).
* Minimize caffeine consumption and not have any after noon.
* Alcohol- one drink early evening may relax you, but two or more prevents deeper stages of sleep (alcohol chemically changes from depressant to stimulant).
* Do not fall asleep on the couch and then have to move to the bedroom.

**If You Wake-Up in the Middle of the Night**

* If you wake-up in the middle of the night, tell yourself “it is normal, everyone wakes-up during the night”. It is not something that only occurs in people with insomnia
* When you awake, if you begin to have negative thoughts, such as “now I’ll be up all night” or “tomorrow is going to be awful”, shift your thinking to something positive (see techniques to redirect negative thoughts). When the mind begins to engage in stressful thoughts, it wakes the body up even more!
* If you are awake for more than 20 minutes, get out of bed and do something relaxing, such as read a book or magazine. Return to bed when you are sleepy.

**Techniques to Redirect Negative Thoughts:**

* Before going to bed or if you wake up in the middle of the night, think of three things you were grateful for that day (in detail). Each time you do this exercise, they must be three new things. This occupies the brain and makes you activate positive thoughts/emotions. This also causes your mind to scan your daily routine for things that went well instead of what went wrong.
* If you tend to wake-up thinking of things you have to do the following day, write a to-do list in the early evening. Write everything down and leave the list some place convenient, like the kitchen counter, so you can jot down any thought that comes to mind. It gets the ‘worry’ out of your head and onto the paper!
  + If you wake –up in the middle of the night thinking of those things (big or small), tell yourself “it’s on the list, I won’t forget”. Also, remind yourself that it is not practical to try and resolve this in the middle of the night.
* For larger items such as: grief, job transition, separation of family, or financial distress, try this:
  + Set aside a 30 minute window (not right before bed) that you will sit down and write whatever thoughts or emotions come to mind on that topic. (You are giving the mind what it is asking for.) When your 30 minutes are almost up, write one small/simple task related to the topic that you will do the next day: open a USA jobs account, google a financial advisor, email your family, go for a 15 minute walk. Keep the task small and simple.
  + When the worry starts in the middle of the night, tell yourself “I got it, I already thought about that today.”