

Sleep Hygiene Self-Check

Sleep is critical for your health, performance, and well-being. Sleep strategies aren't one-size-fits-all. So, it's important to find what works best for you when it comes to getting the sleep you need to be energized and productive each day. Check out these sleep hygiene tips to see if they might work for you.

1. **I make sleep a priority by choosing it over work, social events, or watching "just one more" TV show.**
 - I already do this.
 - This will not work for me at this time.
 - I want to try this strategy.
2. **I know how much sleep I need to optimize my health and performance by learning how long I naturally sleep uninterrupted and how different lengths of sleep impact my energy and focus.**
 - I already do this.
 - This will not work for me at this time.
 - I want to try this strategy.
3. **I have a consistent wake-up time for most days of the week.**
 - I already do this.
 - This will not work for me at this time.
 - I want to try this strategy.
4. **I have a "going to bed" ritual to signal to my body that it's time to get ready for sleep.**
 - I already do this.
 - This will not work for me at this time.
 - I want to try this strategy.
5. **I keep my bedroom quiet, dark, comfortable, and cool (65°F is optimal for some).**
 - I already do this.
 - This will not work for me at this time.
 - I want to try this strategy.
6. **I only use the bedroom for sleep and sex. I don't watch TV, go on the computer, or do work in my bedroom.**
 - I already do this.
 - This will not work for me at this time.
 - I want to try this strategy.
7. **I have a "2-hour" rule. I turn off all devices at least 2 hours before bedtime and dim the lights.**
 - I already do this.
 - This will not work for me at this time.
 - I want to try this strategy.
8. **I have a regular exercise routine, and I don't work out close to bedtime.**
 - I already do this.
 - This will not work for me at this time.
 - I want to try this strategy.
9. **I stop caffeine at least 6 hours before I go to bed.**
 - I already do this.
 - This will not work for me at this time.
 - I want to try this strategy.
10. **I avoid drinking alcohol or eating large meals before bed.**
 - I already do this.
 - This will not work for me at this time.
 - I want to try this strategy.
11. **When I can't sleep for over 20 minutes, I get out of bed and do something pleasant or relaxing.**
 - I already do this.
 - This will not work for me at this time.
 - I want to try this strategy.
12. **I have a regular gratitude practice.**
 - I already do this.
 - This will not work for me at this time.
 - I want to try this strategy.
13. **I have a relaxation response activity—such as mindfulness, progressive muscle relaxation, or deep breathing—that I practice regularly.**
 - I already do this.
 - This will not work for me at this time.
 - I want to try this strategy.
14. **I avoid naps close to my bedtime.**
 - I already do this.
 - This will not work for me at this time.
 - I want to try this strategy.
15. **I have talked with my doctor or a sleep specialist to help me get better sleep.**
 - I already do this.
 - This will not work for me at this time.
 - I want to try this strategy.



The power of the Quick Coherence Technique comes from positive emotions. When you engage positive feelings, in the moment, you replace depleting emotions with ones that can renew your system. The technique is easy, but each step is important. With practice, the coherence you establish in your system becomes your new reference point making the shift easier and more automatic.

Step 1. Focus your attention in the area of the heart. Imagine your breath is flowing in and out of your heart or chest area, breathing a little slower and deeper than usual. Find an easy rhythm that's comfortable.

Step 2. As you continue heart-focused breathing make a sincere attempt to experience a regenerative feeling such as appreciation or care for someone or something in your life.

Suggestion: Try to re-experience the feeling you have for someone you love, a pet, a special place, an accomplishment, etc., or focus on a feeling of calm and ease.

Use the Quick Coherence steps anytime you want to:

- Gain the benefits of positive emotions.
- Have a quick 30 second emotional adjustment.
- Get an extra energy boost.

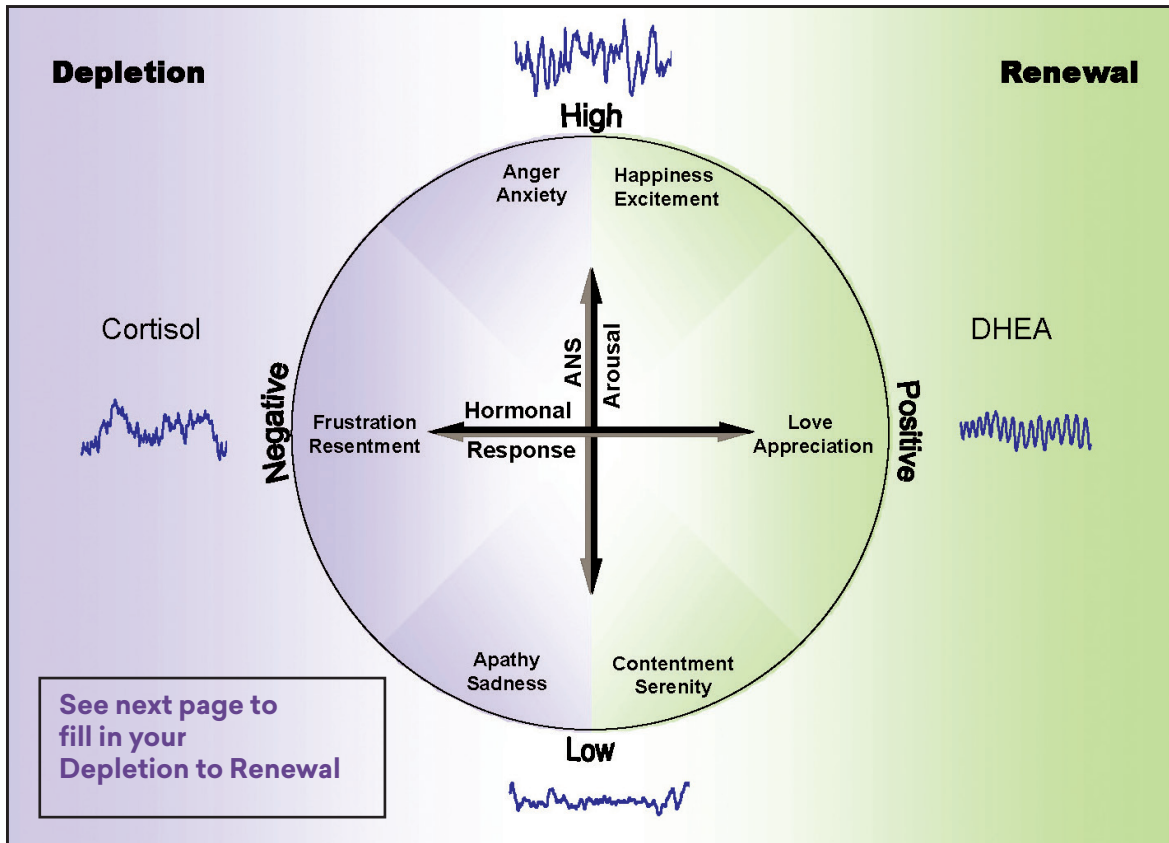
Once you have become familiar with these three steps, use the quick steps:

- **Heart-Focused Breathing**
- **Activate a positive or renewing feeling**

List some everyday depleting situations and how you can benefit from applying the Quick Coherence Technique.

SITUATION	DEPLETING RESPONSE	HOW QUICK COHERENCE CAN HELP

Specific applications.



Step 1
What do you hope to accomplish?

Step 5
What emotions and behaviors typically get in the way of accomplishing your goal?

Step 2
Consider all the emotions you have been experiencing over the last few days and write them in the appropriate quadrant.

Step 6
What thoughts, attitudes, behaviors or emotions will help you achieve your goal?

Step 3
Write the word 'Now' where you spend most of your time.

Step 4
Write the word 'Goal' where you would like to spend more time.

Rx



What is stress?

Stress is a term used to describe the wear and tear the body experiences in reaction to everyday tensions and pressures. Change, illness, injury or career and lifestyle changes are common causes of stress. It's how we respond, however, to the emotional pressure and tension we feel from the little everyday hassles—rush-hour traffic, waiting in line and too many e-mails—that do the most damage.

How does stress affect health?

Stress affects people physically, mentally and emotionally. According to the American Institute of Stress, up to 90% of all health problems are related to stress. Too much stress can contribute to and agitate many health problems, including heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, depression and sleep disorders.

How stressed are you?

Everyone responds to stress differently. Take this quick test to see if you are experiencing stress. The items you check will reveal how much stress is affecting your life.

- I feel overly tired or fatigued.
- I often am nervous, anxious or depressed.
- I have sleep problems.
- I have repeated headaches or minor aches and pains.
- I worry about my job, finances, relationships.

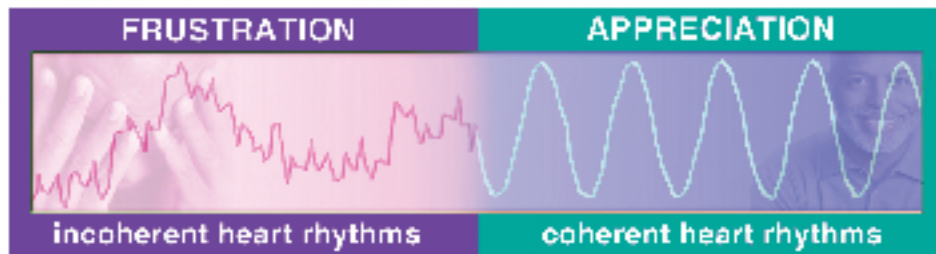
What can I do about it?

The first step is to understand how stress works. It's not the events or situations that do the harm, but rather how you respond to those events. More precisely, it's how you feel about them that determines whether you are stressed.

Emotions, or feelings have a powerful impact on the human body. Positive emotions like appreciation, care and love not only feel good, they are good for you. They help your body's systems synchronize and work better, as a well-tuned car. Research at the Institute of HeartMath has shown that when you intentionally shift to a positive emotion, heart rhythms immediately change. This shift in heart rhythms creates a favorable cascade of neural, hormonal and biochemical events that benefit the entire body. The effects are both immediate and long lasting.

How does it work?

When you're stressed, your body is out of sync. Negative/depleting emotions we feel when stressed such as anger, frustration, anxiety and worry lead to increased disorder in heart rhythms and the nervous system. In contrast, positive/renewing emotions like joy, appreciation, care and kindness create harmony in heart rhythms and the nervous system. Other bodily systems sync up to this rhythm, a process scientists call coherence. Because coherence leads to more mental clarity, creativity and better problem-solving abilities, it's easier to find solutions and better ways of handling stressful situations.



How can I create and practice physiological coherence?

The HeartMath® System introduces you to a powerful tool to help you increase physiological coherence. Use the Quick Coherence® Technique in your daily life to reduce the effects of stress and the emWave® technology to enhance your coherence practice.

The Quick Coherence® Technique

The Quick Coherence Technique is an easy way to interrupt the stress response and quickly bring your system into coherence. Practice this tool four or five times a day, every day for a minimum of three weeks. Use it as a quick stress manager prior to or during challenging events or situations. Good times to practice the Quick Coherence steps are first thing in the morning, before going to sleep at night and break time in the middle of the day, but you can use it anytime you want to rebalance or get an energy boost.

The Steps

Step 1. Focus your attention in the area of the heart. Imagine your breath is flowing in and out of your heart or chest area, breathing a little slower and deeper than usual. Find an easy rhythm that's comfortable.

Step 2. As you continue heart-focused breathing make a sincere attempt to experience a regenerative feeling such as appreciation or care for someone or something in your life.

Suggestion: Try to re-experience the feeling you have for someone you love, a pet, a special place, an accomplishment, etc., or focus on a feeling of calm and ease.

Quick Steps:

1. Heart-Focused breathing
2. Activate a positive or renewing feeling

The Do's and Don'ts of Good Sleep Hygiene



DO:

- Go to bed and wake up and get out of bed at the same time each day.
- Get regular exercise each day. Regular exercise improves restful sleep.
- Spend time in the sun or bright lights, especially in the morning.
- Keep the temperature in your bedroom comfortable.
- Keep your bedroom quiet when sleeping.
- Keep your bedroom dark enough that you can fall asleep.
- Use your bed for only sleep and intimacy.
- Take a warm bath or shower before bed.
- Keep your feet and hands warm. Wear warm socks and gloves to bed if needed.
- Go to a different part of the house and engage in a quiet activity if you find yourself lying awake for more than 30 minutes. Return to bed when you feel sleepy. Repeat this until you fall asleep.



DON'T:

- Exercise or engage in stimulating activity right before going to bed.
- Expose yourself to bright lights or screens before bed.
- Have caffeine six hours before bed. Caffeine can stay in your body for more than 24 hours, so even a morning coffee may cause trouble sleeping.
- Read, watch TV or use electronic devices in bed.
- Use alcohol to help you sleep. Alcohol before bed causes disturbances later in the night.
- Go to bed too hungry, as this can cause insomnia, or too full, as this can cause acid reflux.
- Drink too much water before bed, so you don't wake up often to use the bathroom.
- Take unprescribed, over-the-counter sleeping pills. Diphenhydramine, an ingredient commonly found in over-the-counter sleep medicine, can cause morning grogginess and occasionally sleep walking, a common reason for administrative separation from service.
- Take naps if you have problems falling or staying asleep at bedtime.
- Try to force yourself to go to sleep. This can cause performance anxiety and lead to further wakefulness.
- Frequently look at your watch or alarm clock.

For more information and tips on sleep visit the P3 website:
<https://p3.amedd.army.mil/performance-learning-center/sleep>