

The Impact of Sleep on Holistic Health & Fitness — A Self-Reflection Tool

Sleep is a foundational block of holistic health and fitness (H2F). If you compare your performance on the days you sleep well vs. those you don't, you can probably list at least one difference. Most people notice changes in their level of alertness and their ability to focus. But the impacts of sleep on performance go beyond that. Sleep deprivation can affect your health and performance in negative ways you don't see or might take a long time to notice. But when you get enough sleep, it supports your performance across all areas of H2F.

Poor sleep traps: Surprising ways a lack of sleep can hurt your performance

Use this self-reflection tool to learn how sleep affects your health and performance. Think about how you usually feel when you don't get enough sleep. Then, check each "poor sleep trap" you've experienced. Write down any specific details you remember about each poor sleep trap to help you be more mindful about getting more sleep in the future .



Physical Readiness

- ☐ A lack of sleep accelerates my fatigue and decreases my stamina.
- ☐ A lack of sleep impacts my ability to learn new motor skills.
- ☐ A lack of sleep might have contributed to my past and current injuries.
- ☐ A lack of sleep decreases my coordination, speed, reaction time, endurance, or power.
- ☐ A lack of sleep is impacting my physical fitness goals (e.g., muscle gains).
- ☐ A lack of sleep makes me get sick more often.
- ☐ A lack of sleep increases my sensitivity to pain.
- ☐ A lack of sleep might have contributed to my unwanted weight gain.
- ☐ A lack of sleep makes me more susceptible to illnesses.
- ☐ A lack of sleep might have contributed to my health problems such as diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease.



Mental Readiness

- ☐ A lack of sleep makes it harder for me to regulate my mood.
- ☐ A lack of sleep reduces my ability to control my impulsive behaviors.
- ☐ A lack of sleep increases my stress levels.
- ☐ A lack of sleep makes it harder to cope with stress.
- ☐ A lack of sleep makes it harder for me to focus, think critically, and make decisions.
- ☐ A lack of sleep makes it easier for me to make mistakes.

- ☐ A lack of sleep impairs my attention and alertness.
- ☐ A lack of sleep decreases my motivation.
- ☐ A lack of sleep reduces my ability to learn and remember things.
- ☐ A lack of sleep might have contributed to or worsened my mood disorder(s).



Nutritional Readiness

- ☐ A lack of sleep increases my hunger and cravings.
- ☐ A lack of sleep increases my desire for fatty foods and carbs.
- ☐ A lack of sleep makes me eat fewer fruits and vegetables.
- ☐ A lack of sleep makes me want to eat close to bedtime.
- ☐ A lack of sleep might have contributed to insulin resistance or type 2 diabetes.



Spiritual Readiness

- ☐ A lack of sleep might affect my moral or ethical decision making.
- ☐ A lack of sleep makes it harder for me to live out my values.
- ☐ A lack of sleep increases my aggressive behavior.
- ☐ A lack of sleep decreases my willingness to solve conflicts.
- ☐ A lack of sleep decreases my ability to regulate my emotions during conflict situations.
- ☐ A lack of sleep increases my tendency to blame others for problems.
- ☐ A lack of sleep reduces my desire to connect with others.
- ☐ A lack of sleep reduces my ability to accurately read others' emotions.
- ☐ A lack of sleep reduces my ability to feel and show empathy.
- ☐ A lack of sleep reduces my willingness to engage in prosocial behavior.

Reflection, Part 1:

Now, take a moment to reflect and identify any core values or meaningful goals you have and might be negatively impacted by poor sleep.

Examples: When I don't sleep well, my one-rep max for bench press and other exercises decreases.

When I'm sleep deprived, I don't have energy for relationships and often ignore my child.

Sleep deprivation is causing me to drift away from my spouse.

Sleep as a Performance H2F tool:
Performance-enhancing benefits of sleep

Reflect on a time when you got amazing sleep and felt fully rested and energized for the day. Use this table to evaluate your readiness on those days for each H2F domain.

This activity will help you to be mindful of how sleep can be a performance- and well-being enhancer.

			Physical Readiness	Nutritional Readiness	Mental Readiness	Spiritual Readiness
1	Recovery	Debilitated, depleted, ill, injured, broken, or disconnected				
2	Restoration	In the process of addressing injury, illness, or difficulty				
3	Maintenance	Sustaining baseline health and performance				
4	Enhancement	Proactively preventing injury and difficulties or actively growing				
5	Optimization	Thriving, energized, connected, and approaching peak performance				

Reflection, Part 2:

List 1–3 insights about the importance of sleep that will increase your motivation to prioritize sleep in the future.