

Do It For Yourself

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

According to the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, almost all volunteers said the reason they volunteered was to help a cause they believe in. About 8 out of 10 volunteers wanted to put their skills and experience to use. For more information, visit www.volunteer.ca

Be a friendly visitor

Male and female volunteers in Georgetown are needed by the VON to visit and/or take a VON client out. Info: Volunteer program, 1-800-387-7127, ext. 2310.

Cancer Society needs help

The Acton branch of the Canadian Cancer Society is in great need of drivers for trips to London, Toronto and Hamilton. A mileage allowance is provided. Info: 519-853-8972. Anyone wishing to donate a few hours to help canvass for the April campaign can call Liz Bailey, 519-853-0585.

The Brampton/Caledon/Georgetown/Dufferin County Unit (Georgetown) Canadian Cancer Society is recruiting volunteers to help during the April Daffodil campaign to sell daffodils in malls or store fronts or to canvass 20-30 homes. The unit is also in need of volunteer drivers to drive patients from the Georgetown area to treatments either locally or to Toronto. For info: 905-451-4460, ext. 23 or 26.

Promote organ donation

Are you interested in promoting organ donation in Halton/Peel region? Contact 905-846-3092 (local volunteer) or Organ Donation Ontario, 1-800-263-2833.

Check out Halton's volunteer Web site

Halton Social Planning Council & Volunteer Centre has a volunteer opportunities Web site. It also includes a special section for teen volunteers. Check it out at www.haltonvolunteer.org.

Lying down may be one of the best exercises to do

Without question, the pace of our lifestyles has picked up dramatically over the last several decades. From kids to seniors, we're accomplishing more, entertaining ourselves more and generally "living life to its fullest." There's only one area where we've seriously cut back, and it may be doing us a great deal of harm: sleep.

Luckily, we're beginning to wake up to this problem, thanks in part to the research and awareness campaigns by the National Sleep Foundation (NSF). The Foundation's 2001 Sleep in America poll of 1,004 adults pulled the covers off our sleep habits, and found that as a whole, our society has some serious shut-eye problems.

According to the poll, a vast majority of adults (63%) do not get the recommended eight hours of sleep per day. Nearly one-third (31%) stated that they slept less than seven hours per night, and a whopping seven in 10 (69%) reported having frequent sleep problems.

Why the lack of sleep? Work is cited as the main culprit, with nearly half stating they work longer hours than they did five years ago.

North Americans may be working

more, but their lack of quality sleep has them working less efficiently. Half of the workforce reports that being sleepy on the job affects the amount of work they do, while two-thirds say it makes concentrating and handling job-related stress more difficult.

It's not just the adults that are suffering, either. Previous NSF polls showed that well over half of students under the age of 18 reported being tired during the day in the past school year, and 15% said they had actually dozed off during class. Recent studies have shown that kids, and even teens, need a minimum of eight hours of sleep.

With all that the NSF discovered, it's obvious that we either need to get to bed earlier, or need to fall asleep faster and more soundly. The following are some good tips on how to get to sleep quickly and wake up refreshed:

- Cut down on stimulation at least an hour before bedtime. This means stop planning work for the next day, exercising, writing e-mails, etc.



- Begin relaxing an hour before bedtime. Whether it's a hot bath, relaxing

music, reading to your kids...get in the mood for sleep ahead of time.

- Drink less fluids, and avoid heavy meals before bedtime.

- Consume less or no caffeine, and avoid alcohol before bedtime.

- Establish a regular bedtime, and a regular time for waking up.

- Once you're in bed, clear your mind of the day and don't think of tomorrow. Focus on a pleasant time of your life or a dream. When you find one that works, stay with it.

And if all else fails there's always those sheep.

—By Daniel Aspell
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