



Aspiehelp / The Aspire Trust

October 2020

Hello fellow Aspergian's and others. Yes, I know this newsletter is way overdue. I could make a myriad of excuses, but let's just be grateful, I've done it.

RETIREMENT

Our founder and manager, Leith McMurray, retired in July. Leith was one of the founders of the Aspire Trust, and managed it for over 10 years. I met Leith when I contacted Aspiehelp a few years ago and she helped set me on a path to recognising and accepting that I am aspie, and as a woman her mid 50's this was a real epiphany.

Leith was extremely passionate about 'Aspiehelp', and had obviously put many many hours into making us what we are today.

Thank you Leith, for giving us 'Aspiehelp', and thank you for enlightening my life.

Julie Mc George is now our manager, and is providing consultations.

BBQ's

Post covid our sausage sizzle has resumed at Barrington Mall, outside the butcher shop. There are only 3 sizzles left before the end of the year. Yes Christmas is nearly upon us. The dates are

- 24th October
- 28th November
- 12 December

Our sizzles provide a much valued and appreciated income to us. Thank you so much to Jane and Francis for being so committed to our cause.

ARTICLE

SLEEP - SO CRUCIAL TO GOOD HEALTH.

Sleep is the foundation on which all other aspects of brain health are built.

One night without good sleep and your brain function drops considerably.

Sleep loss results in a decrease in your ability to focus, make good judgements, regulate

your emotions, perform under pressure and be creative. We have all experienced how hard it is to get through the day when you haven't had a good sleep. About sixty percent of the adult population need between seven and nine hours, while any duration between six and ten hours can be appropriate. If the brain is not allowed to rebuild its resources in response to stress, it breaks down and accelerated ageing occurs. Researchers have shown that when people were restricted to four hours or sleep her night for six nights, they had lower glucose tolerance, elevated evening cortisol concentrations and increased sympathetic nervous system activity. The effect of sleep debt mirrors the ageing process.

THE POWER OF SLEEP

The importance of sleep goes far beyond being refreshed and energised. While you sleep your brain is busy consolidating memories, recharging, healing, repairing and strengthening. It is important for memory consolidation. Without sleep, your ability to remember things is impaired. It also allows you to use this information to solve problems and discover new connections between ideas. The "memory centre" of your brain, your hippocampus, is also protected during sleep and good sleep helps regulate the stress hormone, cortisol. When you experience sleep loss, your cortisol levels rise which can kill off neurones in the hippocampus and can be seen in people with dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Sleep may also further protect your brain from damage through an amazing 'self cleaning' function that kicks in to gear when you close your eyes for the night.

During the day while your brain is busy working, a protein builds up. When you sleep, your spinal fluid flushes out these proteins. This 'cleaning up' process is important, as a buildup of proteins in the brain has been linked to the development of dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Whilst asleep the healing is amazing and repair work goes on with the help of growth-releasing hormone (GHRH) healing bruises and fighting off infections. On a micro level, sleep also keeps your neurone firing optimally by producing myelin which is a fatty substance that's essential for the electrical messages to pass quickly from neuron to neuron, ensuring that messages get around your brain and body so you can move, think, feel and react.

WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

Sleep regulates the hormones that drive appetite and cravings. When you are asleep-deprived you experience an increase in ghrelin, a hormone that promotes appetite, and a decrease in leptin, a hormone that curbs appetite. Not only will you feel hungrier when you are tired, but you will also crave unhealthy foods. If you're looking to lose weight or maintain a healthy weight, make sure you are eating a balanced diet, exercising and getting good sleep each night.

PRODUCTIVITY

Sleep is often sacrificed when life gets busy. Staying up late and waking early to get work done is counterproductive. The latest neuroscience shows that an overused and overtired brain

is less effective less efficient and more prone to making mistakes. A recharged brain is better able to focus and think clearly, which in turn increases your productivity.

WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR SLEEP

1. Release stress during the day. i.e. deep breathing, meditation, exercising outside.
2. Set work boundaries. Have a definite change of environment and change into casual clothing.
3. Limit caffeine, alcohol and nicotine. Caffeine can stay in your system for six to nine hours so don't have any after 2.30 in the afternoon unless you need to be away in the evening. Drinking alcohol is not recommended at night or to consume it at least five hours before bed. Nicotine is similar.
4. Free up time.
Perhaps it would be a good idea to plan and cook some meals over the weekend. Create a folder of quick healthy meals you enjoy cooking.
5. Plan Your Day Before Bed.
Don't dwell on the pros and cons of what is going to happen the next day, making you stressed and anxious. Some preparation for the next day as in getting your clothes out, packing your bag, making your lunch and write your to-do list. Having the next day 'sorted' in your mind will help you fall asleep more easily.
6. Switch off from screens.
Sleep is regulated by daylight and darkness. Light suppresses the production of melatonin, a hormone that promotes sleepiness. The blue light emitted while watching TV and using your devices, which in turn stops the production of melatonin. Turn devices off at least two hours before bed and use orange-tinted glasses to block out blue light.
7. Stick to a routine.
Changing the time you wake shifts your internal clock and can make it hard to fall asleep and stay asleep. Make sure the time you wake is regular - within a 30 minute time window. If you do stay up late on the weekend, get up the next day no later than sixty minutes after your normal wake-up time.
8. Create sleep associations
Creating a night-time habit can help signal to your brain that it's time for sleep. Choose calm, relaxing activities are beneficial. Perhaps a shower, light stretching exercises, listen to a meditation or calming music. Read a chapter of a book.

9. Work with professionals.

If getting to sleep and struggling to get good sleep regularly is difficult, some help may be needed through a sleep expert, psychologist or GP will allow ways to improve your sleep and manage any underlying health issues you may be having. Sleep was once thought to be a quiet time for your brain, but it appears this is far from the truth. Sleep is a truly phenomenal process and is your brain's inbuilt answer to increasing your productivity, staying healthy, ageing well and keeping your mind sharp.

This is taken from an article by Jessica Lee, a writer, speaker and business consultant in Australia.

LIBRARY BOOKS

Our books are a great resource for us that help so many people. As a charity we are limited in the number of titles and volume of books we can stock. This means there is a real demand on the books we do have, so, please, when you have finished with our books, please remember to return them ASAP so we can continue to share them with others.

MY THOUGHTS

I am tired of hearing about Covid, and the upcoming election. I'm boycotting the news at the moment.

I've seen a couple movies lately.

Tenet - 2/10

A sci-fi ,very action packed thriller, whose storyline I struggled to follow, and couldn't quite grasp the plot. It was long, about 2 and a half hours, and the only positive thing I can say about the experience, is thank heaven for the comfy recliner seats at the Hoytts Ent-X.

On the Rocks - 2.5/10

A mildly sappy, American drama, about a woman who lets everyone push her around, and thinks her husband is having an affair. Good old (strained relationship) dad, Bill Murray, decides to help her out, and in so doing spend time with her, but takes control and - pushes her around. Good points, it was only about 90 minutes long.

I'm interested in any movies you've seen lately, good, or to be avoided. Let me know.

I hope to get on top of things here and get more regular newsletters out to you all.

Until next time - Spring is sprung and the season IS wonderful.

Andrea

Office Manager

Just a reminder, the BBQ is held fortnightly, on 'The Warehouse' side of Barrington Mall. A big thank you to Jane, Craig and Francis for their work running the sizzle :-)

If you change nothing, nothing will change!

Our Patron is Stephen Mark Shore, PhD.

The Aspire Trust, Inc is a registered Charitable Trust.
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