The Study Sessions [1]

Week of:
May 01, 2015

Can't study during the day.... [2]

Hey Alice,

I am a junior in college. I am pre-med which means I study all the time. However, I can really only focus when I study at night. When I study during the day, it seems that I cannot recall as much information as opposed to studying late at night. How come I can't stay focused during the day? What should I do to help me concentrate during the day?

? Night Owl

Read more [2]

Noisy dorms ? help, I can't sleep! [3]

Hi Alice,

I cannot sleep in my dorm room. It is always loud. I have read many articles about sleep hygiene, but no matter how healthy and relaxed I am before trying to sleep, I will wake up whenever there is noise.

I sleep with earplugs, but they do not block out the noise well enough. I wake up exhausted every day and it is seriously interfering with my ability to study, participate in activities, and otherwise enjoy life. I was very happy at Columbia until I had to move into this noisy room. Columbia Health diagnosed my insomnia as "situational" (due to the room) and recommended that I sleep in a quiet location, but that is not an option as I cannot prevent the noise.

I was not experiencing much stress at all in life until I moved into the room where I could no longer sleep. When I am stressed, I am always able to sleep fine as long as it is quiet; if it is noisy, I cannot sleep no matter how relaxed I am.

Read more [3]

Burning the candle at both ends ? using stimulant drugs to study
Dear Alice,

I have a large amount of course work, which is combined with a job and extra-curriculars, and while I want to succeed in all of them, I find that I simply don't have enough time, even though I currently sleep only 4 or 5 hours a night. I mentioned this to a group of my friends here at school, and it turns out they all take stimulants to help them manage jam-packed undergraduate life. The pills are called ADDERALL and PROVIGIL. I have acquired some for myself, but before I take them, could you tell me if either has serious health risks? I do not have any other health problems or take any other medications. A few of my friends tell me that they sometimes stay awake for as long as 3 or 4 days. If it is reasonably safe, that would be great! Thank you.

Sincerely,
No time for sleep

(2)
Dear Alice,

Given the fact that this is a top-notch school, it's total hoo-ha that you haven't included any info on all the non-hard core, but still illegal, "study stimulants." Is all this ADDERALL gonna do me permanent damage or what?

awaiting your response,
awake

Read more [4]

Can't study late at night? [5]

Dear Alice,

My problem is this: whenever I have to study late at night, or do anything late at night, I usually have trouble (a lot of trouble) concentrating on whatever it is that I have to do. I'm not going to try anything like No-Doz, but when I drink coffee or anything with caffeine, it just knocks me out even faster. I can't believe it ? it's like caffeine's some kind of sleeping potion for me. Some of my friends say eating while you work can help you stay up. I tried that, too. Didn't work. Any suggestions? Or am I just better off sleeping and leaving the work 'till the next day?

?Sleepy

Read more [5]

All night, done right: Getting the most out of an all-nighter [6]
Hi Alice,

Some roommates of mine and I have been thinking about sleeping lately. Usually we're all told to get eight to nine hours of sleep, and a lot of the time we do! The problem is, once in a while, when there's an essay to write or exam to study for, I or my friends may end up having no choice but to be up until 6 in the morning. No one's really explained what the best thing is to do if you have to be up.

What would you suggest? Should we eat? Take a quick nap before class, sleep during the afternoon or wait until evening? Any suggestions you have would be great.

Read more [6]