

## *The 6 Drugless Steps To A Better Nights Sleep*

### **Step #1: Avoid Potential Stimulants**

- ☒ Avoid all caffeine containing drinks or foods (i.e. chocolate) for at least 6 hours before going to bed
- ☒ Avoid alcohol for at least 4 hours before going to bed (alcohol may help)
- ☒ Avoid decongestant cold medicines at night
- ☒ Avoid large meals or spicy foods for at least 3 hours before bedtime
- ☒ Avoid nicotine completely, or at least before going to bed

### **Step #2: Avoid Potential Nighttime Tension & Anxiety**

- ☒ Avoid reading or watching the news before going to bed
- ☒ Avoid paying bills, checking financial reports etc. before going to bed
- ☒ Avoid arguments before going to bed

### **Step #3: Plan Your Sleep**

- ☒ Try to go to sleep and wake up at the same time each day in order to train your biological clock
- ☒ If you don't fall asleep within 30 minutes, get up and do something quiet and non stimulating. When tired, try going back to bed again.
- ☒ Don't "force your self" to fall asleep, the anxiety is counter-productive!
- ☒ Avoid afternoon naps

### **Step #4: Take away Potential Distractions**

- ☒ Try using earplugs and eyeshades to block out all noise and light
- ☒ Move the alarm clock away from the bed (It can be a distraction!)
- ☒ Do not watch TV, read or write in bed. Let your mind and body identify bed with sleeping. (Okay, only one other activity in bed is allowed!!)

### **Step #5: Get yourself Physically Tired...Not Just Mentally Tired!**

- ☒ Regular exercise (aerobic, walking, weight training, cycling, Yoga, Tai Chi, swimming, etc...in fact anything!) any time in the day may help deepen sleep. (Suggestion is at least 45 minutes 3-5X/week)

### **Step #6: Relax & Breathe**

- ☒ Listen to a relaxation CD that teaches progressive physical and mental relaxation along with deep focused diaphragmatic breathing.