Jonathan Hunsaker: Welcome, everyone, to another episode of Empowering You Organically. I'm joined by my co-host, TeriAnn Trevenen.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Hey, everyone.

Jonathan Hunsaker: And today's just TeriAnn and I. We're going to talk about a very important subject that I think gets overlooked a lot of times. We're going to talk about sleep, we're going to talk about the importance of sleep, why it matters. And there's just been so many studies coming out recently that show the importance of sleep.

And being an entrepreneur myself, it was always taught, like sleep less, work 20 hours a day. You don't need a whole lot of sleep; you don't need all of this stuff.

And we're just finding out more and more that it's that much more important to get sleep and that you'll perform a lot better, and it affects every area of your life.

TeriAnn Trevenen: There's a lot of studies out there talking about how little we're sleeping. Overall in the world, people are losing sleep more and more, and they're putting priority on everything else in their life more. And I think it is a huge issue, I think especially in America, and it's different in other cultures, but especially in America, there's this importance placed on doing more, working harder, working longer hours, really grinding it out, hustling, keeping up with the Joneses. So, what do you have to do to keep up with the Joneses? You have to work more.

And it's really impacting the health side of our life. And sleep is just not a priority anymore. So, I know for myself, and you talked about being an entrepreneur, I work quite a bit. I'm a single mom. It's hard to manage a schedule. And sleep was not my number one priority for a long time. And it now has become one of the more important things in my life, because I realize—

And I talked about it on a previous podcast, about my health journey and where I've been through my health journey. One thing I didn't touch on a lot was sleep, but I place a high level of importance in my life now on sleep because, as I was healing my body and getting back to a place where I felt really healthy and strong, I recognized that a huge issue in my life was the lack of sleep. I was probably sleeping like five-six hours a night on a really good night, four to five other nights, because I was staying up late and getting up early.

And I think I wore it as like a badge of honor, like "I work all the time. I'm so busy. I have so much going on." And I think a lot of people wear that badge of honor, like "I had this and this and this and this." Could you imagine if we all ran around, like "I slept for nine hours last night?" Nobody does that.

Jonathan Hunsaker: I mean yeah, we're in a culture of grinding it out, right?

TeriAnn Trevenen: Yeah.

Jonathan Hunsaker: And there is pride. I mean I used to take pride all the time in the fact that "I got four hours of sleep last night and I'm still going."

TeriAnn Trevenen: Yeah.

Jonathan Hunsaker: And like you, I mean learning a lot more about health and things that really matter, sleep is so vital. And it's funny we're doing a podcast on sleep, because I did not sleep well last night.

TeriAnn Trevenen: There you go.

Jonathan Hunsaker: I don't know if it's allergies or what, but I was up half the night with a runny nose. And I feel it, right? Normally, we're doing a podcast, and I'm sharp and I'm ready to go. And right now, I'm like "Oh, um, what? What's going on?"

TeriAnn Trevenen: Yeah.

Jonathan Hunsaker: My body really needs the sleep. And I really cherish the sleep. Now I'm not sleeping 12 hours a day and taking a bunch of naps or anything like that, but I really try hard to get eight hours of sleep.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Yeah. Yeah, and everyone is different. We talk about everyone being extremely unique in their health and in their body. Different levels of sleep are different for different people. You can even have this stuff tested. Like everything we talk about, you can be tested for how much sleep you need and how important that is for you.

But typically, it's recommended that you get 7-8 hours of sleep a night. I can say for myself, before we get into some of the theories and the studies and the research behind sleep, that when I made it a point in my life to sleep 7-8 hours a night, and I'm still not perfect at it, but I really try to do that, on that journey of health and healing and really healing my body, I noticed significant changes.

When I started going to bed earlier, my body naturally woke up on its own, early in the morning. "Time to go! Ready to go!" That was coupled with eating really healthy and sleeping, but my body just naturally was like "Okay, wake up. Time to go. Time to get ready for the day." And I didn't drag in the morning, my emotions were more even-keel. I wasn't like getting halfway through the day and being like "Okay, I

really need a nap, like I'm so tired." And just feeling more energized overall, just through changing that one habit.

So, I just can't say enough about how much sleep impacted me on my health journey, and I think it's just something that we're facing as a huge issue overall, especially like I said, in America.

So, sleep is really important physiologically, and the biologically, it's a necessity in our body. It's something that we desperately need to be able to be healthy and function.

There's some theories around sleep, and I could go into a lot of detail, we'll have this in Show Notes, too, but there's the inactivity theory, which one of the earliest theories of sleep, sometimes called the adaptive or evolutionary theory, suggests that inactivity at night is an adaptation that served a survival function by keeping organisms out of harm's way at times when they would be particularly vulnerable.

[0:05:10]

The theory suggests that animals that were able to stay still and quiet during these periods of vulnerability have an advantage over other animals that remained active. These animals did not have accidents during activities in the dark. For example, they were not killed by predators. Through natural selection, this behavioral strategy presumably evolved to become what we now recognize as sleep.

So, it says right there, I mean they were stronger through natural selection and things like that. We evolved into sleep. But those animals that actually got sleep and rested were stronger and able to survive longer.

Jonathan Hunsaker: And I think you're going to find that more and more. If you're somebody that doesn't sleep a lot, I mean part of the challenge, and we're going to get into tips about how to sleep better and all of that but take a two-week challenge of scheduling more time to sleep and find out how much more alert you are.

I mean I've listened to podcasts and read studies where it talks about your chances of injury go up with the less sleep that you get, and all kinds of stuff. So, it all just makes sense here.

There's another theory, it's energy conservation—I'm sorry, energy conservation theory. Research has shown that energy metabolism is significantly reduced during sleep by as much as 10 percent in humans, and even more in other species. For example, both body temperature and caloric demand decrease during sleep, as compared to wakefulness. Such evidence supports the proposition that one of the primary functions of sleep is to help organisms conserve their energy resources. Many scientists consider this theory to be related to and part of the inactivity theory.

Yeah, I mean it's just—I just think—I think we've—and I feel like we're going to keep repeating the same thing, but it's that badge of honor, it's that "We don't need a lot of sleep. We can sleep when we die." Like all of these different things that go into why you should be busier than you need to be, why you should work more, why you shouldn't take naps, and it's detrimental to us.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Well, and there's research behind it. Like this theory isn't just a theory. There's actually research now behind the fact that when we rest and we get adequate sleep, we're conserving energy that we need for other things.

And so, it's super important that we're getting that sleep so that, like even when—in my example, I felt my energy levels increase. There's research to back that your energy levels increase through sleep. And so, rest is so critical to reserving and keeping that energy stored for yourself so that you can make it through your day.

Another theory is restorative theory. Another explanation for why we sleep is based on the long-held belief that sleep is, in some ways, serves to restore what is lost in the body while we are awake. Sleep provides an opportunity for the body to repair and rejuvenate itself. In recent years, these ideas have gained support from empirical evidence collected in human and animal studies.

The most striking of these is that animals deprived entirely of sleep lose all immune function and die in just a matter of weeks. This is further supported by findings that many of the major restorative functions in the body, like muscle growth, tissue repair, protein synthesis, and growth hormone release, occur mostly, or in some cases, only during sleep.

Other rejuvenating aspects of sleep are specific to the brain and cognitive function. For example, while we are awake, neurons in the brain produce adenosine, a byproduct of the cell's activities. The buildup of adenosine in the brain is thought to be one factor that leads to our perception of being tired. Scientists think that this buildup of adenosine during wakefulness may promote the drive to sleep. As long as we are awake, adenosine accumulates and remains high. During sleep, the body has a chance to clear adenosine from the system, and as a result, we feel more alert when we're awake.

So, that theory has a lot covered in it. But one of the things is that sleep and that production of adenosine helps us to feel more alert. When we're awake, we need that, we need that restorative sleep to get that.

The other thing that's super important, it's funny, because I was just with my trainer yesterday, and he's like "Don't forget to sleep. Drink lots of water and eat the right foods for your recovery. Because if you don't, you can't gain your strength, your muscle, your tone, all those things." We had that conversation

about sleep. We were talking about how important sleep is and that not—people aren't getting enough sleep.

Well, it's not just because we—people say, "You need to sleep." There are things that actually happen, and this theory talks about it here, when we sleep that won't happen at any other time.

And so, it talks here about it's important for the body to repair and rejuvenate itself. I loved what it said in this theory that the most striking of these is that the animals deprived entirely of sleep lose all immune function.

So, I just did a Facebook Live a couple weeks ago, talking about the gut and immune system, and talking about—it actually talked about sleep, and talking about how, when we don't get enough sleep, our immune system is significantly decreased in its ability to help keep us healthy and strong.

[0:10:02]

And so, restoring our body in that way, helping our immune system to stay strong. And then things like I was talking about, like with my trainer, muscle growth, tissue repair, protein synthesis. If you're working out, if you're doing physical activity, and we should all be taking part in physical activity every day – walking, not sitting so much, all those things – but if you're into training, if you're working out every day, really, you're damaging your body if you're not getting enough sleep because it cannot properly repair.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Well, I mean the damage is happening to your body when you lift. I used to power lift a decade plus ago, and all of your gains come when you're not lifting, right? So, when you're in there lifting and you're tearing the muscles and you're breaking things down, you're gain—and if you do that seven days a week, you're not going to see near the gains as if you take time off, if you rest the body. You need that sleep so that you can repair the muscle, rebuild the muscle, and that's what makes the muscle bigger, and yeah, just has you healthier overall.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Yep.

Jonathan Hunsaker: I know we have a lot to cover here. So, let's go one more theory. The brain plasticity theory. One of the most recent and compelling explanations for why we sleep is based on findings that sleep is correlated to changes in the structure and organization of the brain. This phenomenon, known as brain plasticity, is not entirely understood, but its connection to sleep has several critical implications.

It's becoming clear, for example, that sleep plays a critical role in brain development in infants and young children. Infants spend about 13-14 hours per day sleeping, and about half of that time is spent in REM sleep, the stage in which most dreams occur.

A link between sleep and brain plasticity is becoming clear in adults as well. This is seen in the effect that sleep and sleep deprivation have on people's ability to learn and perform a variety of tasks.

It's interesting that they're talking about kids, and I have two little girls, 2 and 4 years old. And one of the things that I really pushed on was going to bed a lot earlier. What was interesting is, if my girls went to bed later, then they woke up earlier, and they'd have less sleep, and then they were a lot more on edge that whole next day, and it made a big difference. When I put them to bed earlier, they actually slept longer, and it seemed like they were in a better mood. When I get more sleep, I'm in a better mood.

But it's just interesting, I mean everything they're talking about here, that you need that sleep for your brain to develop, I don't think it stops when you're an infant. I think all the time, we have, and I forget what the number is, 25,000 thoughts an hour or something, 50,000 thoughts an hour that go through our brain. It's that time when we sleep that allows us to organize these thoughts, allows us to organize these memories, it allows us to file things away. Just it gives you that time for your brain to get organized, to defragment, if you're into computers and understand that concept.

So, it's just amazing, the different theories and the different studies that are coming out around sleep.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Well, and we don't have, I don't have any research on this specifically, for this show, but it's interesting, too, because we're now starting to understand more and more about Alzheimer's and dementia, and knowing that sleep impacts our brain plasticity, it supports our brain health, I'm sure there's research out there, I don't currently have it, but it's interesting to think how does the connection of lack of sleep impact your overall long-term health in your brain? There's no doubt that there's a correlation there between lack of sleep and brain function, and how we remember things cognitively, and our brain health overall.

And again, we're just starting to understand more and more about Alzheimer's and dementia in ways that we haven't before, and it says right here, with brain plasticity, sleep is so important. It's so important.

And so, we don't have to touch on that again, because we actually have done podcasts in the past on Alzheimer's and dementia and how much it's impacting our society, but there's no doubt in my mind that sleep is a huge factor when it comes to that.

Really quickly, we're just going to touch on this very, very briefly, but there's different sleep stages, and I'm just going to talk about them, I'm just going to run through them really quickly.

There's REM sleep and non-REM sleep. So, you cycle through all stages of non-REM and REM sleep several times during a typical night, and they're each important.

Stage 1 is non-REM sleep. It's the changeover from wakefulness to sleep. During this short period of relatively light sleep, your heartbeat, breathing, and eye movements slow, and your muscles relax, with occasional twitches.

Stage 2, non-REM sleep, is a period of light sleep before you enter deep sleep. Your heartbeat and breathing slow, and muscles relax even further. Your body temperature drops, and eye movement stops. And we talked about that earlier, how important that it when it comes to sleep, your body doing that slowing down, pausing and taking a break.

Stage 3, non-REM sleep, is the period of deep sleep that you need to feel refreshed in the morning. It occurs in longer periods during the first half of the night. Your heartbeat and breathing slow to their lowest levels during sleep, talking about that temperature and the heartbeat slowing down is really important in being refreshed and rejuvenating your body. Your muscles are relaxed, and it may be difficult to awaken.

[0:15:08]

REM sleep first occurs about 90 minutes after falling asleep. Your eyes move more rapidly, mixed-frequency brainwave activity becomes closer to that seen in wakefulness, your breathing becomes faster and irregular, and your heart rate and blood pressure increase to near waking levels.

Most of your dreaming occurs during REM sleep, although some can also occur in non-REM sleep. As you age, you sleep less of your time in REM sleep.

Jonathan Hunsaker: So, what's really interesting, and I started tracking my sleep about a year ago, and I want to be more diligent in making better efforts to even sleep better. But one of the things is we can really track our different stages of sleep now. There's apps that you can get. You can get watches that help, if they're monitoring your heart rate.

I wear a Garmin watch. I don't think the sleep tracking on it is nearly as accurate as another device I use, it's called an Oura Ring. I think it's OURA.com, but just Google Oura Ring. You can wear it on any finger. It charges up. But it will track your sleep better than anything else that I've found.

And what was really interesting, when I first started tracking my sleep, how I was getting like 10 minutes of deep sleep, 11 minutes of deep sleep, and I may get an hour or two of REM sleep. And as I was changing things up, which we're going to talk about tips here, but as I was making the room colder, as I was doing different things to sleep better, eliminating the blue light before I went to bed and all of that, I would see my deep sleep going up to 30 minutes, even 40 minutes.

But even still, I mean I really wanted to push to get past an hour of deep sleep, because the difference that I feel the next day when I have those longer deep sleep moments is night and day difference.

So, I highly encourage you, I mean if you're interested in really optimizing your health and optimizing your days, get something to help track your sleep. I mean we don't know, right? We fall asleep at night and wake up and go to the bathroom in the middle of the night, then you wake up in the morning. You have no idea how restful your sleep actually was other than "Do you feel better or not in the morning?" So, definitely check out something like an Oura Ring and really monitor how you're sleeping.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Yeah, and I monitored my sleep for a while. I don't anymore, because I don't feel like I have issues with sleeping and getting into deep sleep, but I did monitor mine for a while when I first started doing it. I'd wear a watch that monitored, and I wasn't getting really great deep sleep. But figuring out some ways, like reading before I go to bed, really calming down, resting, relaxing, getting rid of the blue light before bed. We're going to talk about some of these, but you can definitely improve your sleep through different efforts that we're going to talk about.

Before we get into that, Matthew Walker, an expert in sleep at UC Berkley, and author of the bestselling book, *Why We Sleep*, said, "The decimation of sleep throughout industrialized nations is having a catastrophic impact on our health, our wellness, even the safety and education of our children. It's a silent sleep loss epidemic. It's fast becoming one of the greatest challenges we face in the 21st Century."

Some of the things that he talks about in his book when it comes to why it's so catastrophic to our health, our cognitive function, we become more forgetful and unable to learn new things, we're more vulnerable to dementia, which I just touched on.

Jonathan Hunsaker: We've got to read the notes as it's written here, right? The first bullet says, "It makes you dumber."

TeriAnn Trevenen: From the book. "It makes you dumber." Yeah, I loved that. Cognitive function, more forgetful, unable to learn new things. I forgot to add that in, so thank you for telling everyone.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Absolutely.

TeriAnn Trevenen: "It makes you dumber." More vulnerable to dementia, which I just touched on earlier. More likely to die of a heart attack, less able to fend off sickness with a strong immune system, more likely to get cancer. Makes your body literally hurt more, which is interesting, because we talk about your body rejuvenating itself and restoring, and that's why sleep is so important, helping your body to feel healthy and strong.

Lack of sleep distorts your genes and increases your risk of death generally, disrupts the creation of sex hormones, like estrogen and testosterone, and leads to premature aging.

Which I think it disrupts the creation of sex hormones, like estrogen and testosterone, I don't even know that people fully understand how important the production of those are to your body. It's what keeps you more youthful, young, and helps you—it helps with so many different functions of your body, and sleep is related to those sex hormones and production, and healthy levels of those productions.

I've actually read that before, too. It's really critical. It's almost like you're aging yourself faster not getting sleep, because you're not producing those. I read a really interesting article on that. If I can find the link, I'll make sure it gets into the Show Notes.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Yeah, I think a lot of times, when we think about sleep and did we get a good night's sleep, it's mental, right? So, we wake up, and "Do I feel groggy?" And "Is my mind clear?" Or you wake up and you're like "Alright, I got a good night's sleep because my head's clear." But there's so much more that's going on when you're sleeping, and you can't just measure it that way, because listen, if we measured it that way, I had many, many years of very difficult time falling asleep, because my mind would always be racing, thinking about different ideas, business, all that kind of stuff.

[0:20:07]

And then, I could wake up in the middle of the night and my mind would be racing, and I could wake up in the morning and my mind would be racing. If I measured it based off of my mental capacity on that aspect, then I always feel like I was getting great sleep.

TeriAnn Trevenen: It's only one aspect of it, though.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Yeah, but that was actually—and I don't know if it's gotten better. Since I've slept more, it's slowed my mind down, right? My mind racing wasn't necessarily healthy. But I definitely felt alert and felt good. But I feel so much better across every aspect of my life when I have a lot more sleep, not just the mental, the physical, the aches, the pains, all of it.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Yeah, I remember reading, too, an article that said—it had done some research around sleep and saying that you cannot get your sleep back. You cannot correct for missing sleep. And so, it's basically like your body's just trying to play catch-up, catch-up, catch-up. Like sleep is so important to our health, but you're never going to get that sleep back, and what your body does to repair and rejuvenate.

And you think about one of the things he talks about in his book is it leads to premature aging. So, aging is more than just not looking good, it's how your body ages from a health perspective, and your internal clock. If you're lacking sleep, you're not going to make it up.

And so, think about the impact long-term, of your health overall, if you're not getting sleep. And when he talks about it being catastrophic, the impact on our health, it really is true.

So, that takes us to we're going to talk about 10 tips for improving your sleep hygiene, and we're just going to go through these really, really quickly. We're not going to go too far in depth on all of them.

The first one is try to keep the same sleep schedule on weeknights and weekends. Limit the difference to no more than about an hour. Staying up late and sleeping in late on weekends can disrupt your body's clock and sleep-wake rhythm, which is going to impact your pattern of being able to fall asleep.

For children, have a set bedtime and a bedtime routine. Don't use the child's bedroom for time-outs of punishments, which I find very interesting, relating that punishment to where they sleep.

Jonathan Hunsaker: That is interesting.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Mm-hmm, for sure.

Number two, create a quiet, comfortable sleep environment. Set your bedroom thermostat at a comfortable temperature, turn off the TV and other things that may disrupt sleep. If your pet wakes you up, keep them outside the bedroom. Your bedroom should be dark. Turn off bright lights and have a comfortable mattress.

That makes a big difference for me, for sure. I have—like I tell my kids, like my bedroom is sacred. I say that all the time. It's my space, it's like my haven, it's where I get to go, it's where I read, it's where I relax. And I make sure I have a lot of different things in my space that allow me to sleep better, and it makes a huge difference.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Absolutely. And this is the biggest one for me, it's for myself, it's for my girls, is really, what is your environment like? So, the mattress that I use is called Essentia. It's like essential

without the L, so Essentia. And it is a foam mattress that's 100 percent all-natural. They have all kinds of different firmness, I guess you could say, how soft it is, how squishy it is. But check out their website. It's a phenomenal mattress that I know a lot of people are really focused on getting good sleep use.

The other thing, and this is big for me, is the light. I mean it's also big for my daughters as well, because I put them to bed early, and right now, it's summertime, and so, the sun is staying up until past 8:00. But they're in bed at 7:00. And with that light coming in, it's very hard to go to sleep. There's this black, it's not a sticker, but it's a black film that you can put on your windows that just blacks it out completely. Makes it easier for them to take naps, makes it easier for them to go to bed at night, and they sleep a little bit longer in the morning.

So, if you have an issue with light, that's another thing that you can do.

The white noise is essential. I use, I wish I had it right in front of me, but I just use a little white fan, a little white noise fan, both in their room and in my room every single night. Makes a world of difference.

And then keeping your room cool. The colder it is, the better you're going to sleep. And we all know how good it feels to cuddle up under a blanket, but that temperature decrease just has you get into a much deeper sleep.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Yeah, for sure. Number three, an hour before bedtime, this kind of goes along with what we talked about, dim the lights and turn off all screens. So, really getting the lights in a place, like not having a lot of light and a lot of things that are going to keep you awake, but also, turning off all the screens, there is a lot of research behind the lights that are coming out of our screens that we're using and how that impacts our ability for our brain to calm down, relax, our body to relax, and actually get good sleep.

So, it's—a lot of people, I think, and I struggle with this sometimes, too, are sitting on their phone, using their phone, and there's things that you can do to keep the blue light from getting in your eyes and things that you can do from dimming that down on your phone, but it's really important that that's not a huge factor and something that you're doing often before you go to sleep.

[0:25:02]

Jonathan Hunsaker: Yeah, I think the blue light's a big deal. A lot of people watch TV before bed, and it just gets your brain amped up. I mean while it might feel relaxing, I mean it is, talk about the lights, the flashing, everything that's going on. I mean your brain is at high alert when you're watching TV, depending on the kind of shows. And then the blue light does that.

Then you're right, the phones. And I have an iPhone, and I know there's a nighttime setting, which turns off the blue light. That can help. But I think you touched on it earlier, one of the best things to do is just read before bed, and just give yourself that time away from all of the connectivity that we have all day.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Yeah. Number four, if you can't sleep, get out of bed and do something quiet and relaxing until the urge to sleep returns. Then, go back to bed. It's hard sometimes. I think we wake up and we let our minds race, and we get stressed. But it's almost a time, like when that happens, like go into meditation mode, take some deep breaths and don't go down the rabbit hole of stress and chaos, because that's one of the big reasons I think people wake up. And I think you have to really fight not to do that.

Number five, never go to bed tipsy. This one was interesting for me. Alcohol is a sedative, and sedation is not sleep. It also blocks your REM dream sleep, that's what I found interesting, an important part of the sleep cycle.

So, I think occasionally, if you're having alcohol before you go to bed, and you go to sleep after you've had—been out with friends and had a few drinks, that's fine. But if you're repetitively drinking alcohol before you go to bed, we talked about REM sleep being so important, where your body really relaxes, the temperature in your body goes down, your heart rate goes down, you're really getting into deep dream sleep, and all of those things that are so important for the restorative aspect of your health and your body and your mind. You're not—it blocks your REM dream sleep if you're drinking alcohol and then going and falling asleep.

Jonathan Hunsaker: It's amazing. I mean I've done a lot of tracking around this, we'll call it scientific research, when I was wearing an Oura Ring.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Your own scientific research.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Exactly. But it'd be amazing to look at the data after having some drinks, and then going to bed. Your heart rate doesn't get low enough, so you're not getting that restorative sleep, you're not able to really slow things down. I mean my normal sleeping heart rate is in the mid-40s, whereas if I have had some drinks, my sleeping heart rate might be the mid-70s, even 80s, which is not a relaxed state.

Like right now, just as I'm sitting here doing the podcast, I'm probably at 70s-80s. So, consider that while I'm sleeping, I'm not even getting low enough than what I am when I am awake. So, there is no restoration that's going on there.

You might feel like you're sleeping, you might have your eyes closed all night, but your body's processing all this alcohol, you're not—your brain is not able to do what it needs to do to recover.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Yeah, I would think most people think—yeah, and it's so important, I think most people would probably think like, "I'm just going to have a drink before I go to bed, it's going to relax me, I'll be able to sleep." No, that's the wrong way of thinking. It actually doesn't help you sleep better; it actually takes away from your really restorative sleep. So, something to think about.

Number six, avoid heavy and/or large meals within a couple hours of bedtime. Having a light snack is okay. And think about it, like you eat food, and then your body has to process it, or it just sits there, it's trying to process, like your body is trying to do things that it's not supposed to be doing while you're sleeping.

So, not eating before bed. I know a lot of people say, like "Don't eat after 7:00 or 8:00." There's different things for different people, so I'm not going to say what you should do, but just something you should probably test if you're not sleeping well.

I think a lot of people, and we haven't even touched on this, but I think a lot of people turn to like prescription medication to sleep better, they turn to all these different things. Well, maybe try not drinking before you go to bed, maybe try testing what time you're eating before you go to bed.

And what are you eating close to when you go to bed? There are foods that really make our body just amped up more and aren't able to relax and calm down.

So, there's a lot of different things. But eating really heavy meals before you go to bed is not going to allow your body to relax and get the sleep that it needs.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Well, I mean the reality is it takes so much of our energy to digest food, right? And most of our energy, I think they say 80 percent of it, goes to digesting food. Well, if you eat right before bed, your body is going to spend all that time digesting that food—I'm sorry, all that energy digesting the food rather than all that energy restoring your body.

And so, yeah, I know a lot of people talk about it, "Well, if you want to lose weight, you'll put on weight." Forget any of the weight issue of it, let's just talk about the reality that how much energy it takes to digest food, and the less food is in your system when you go to bed, the more that energy can be spent on restoring your body and healing your body.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Number seven, avoid nicotine and caffeine. Nicotine and caffeine are stimulants, and both substances can interfere with sleep. The effects of caffeine can last as long as eight hours. So, a cup of coffee in the late afternoon can make it hard for you to fall asleep at night.

So, that's a big one. It goes back to food and alcohol. There's just things you shouldn't be putting in your body. I mean with nicotine and caffeine, it's like long before you go to bed, but other things, a little bit—you can have them a little bit later. But just things to be thinking about if you're not sleeping well, maybe some patterns and habits to change.

[0:30:07]

Number eight, spend time outside every day when possible. Be physically active. Exercise before 2:00 pm every day. Exercise promotes continuous sleep. Avoid rigorous exercise before bedtime. Rigorous exercise circulates endorphins into the body, which may cause difficulty initiating sleep.

Number nine, if you're a clock watcher, remove it from the line of sight. So, set your alarm somewhere over here, and don't look at the clock.

And I do think, like I know for me, I don't have a clock in my bedroom that I can see when the lights are off at night. Like I have a clock on my wall, but I can't tell what time it is when the lights are off and it's nighttime, and I never have a clock where I can see what time it is because I am one of those people who will check, "What time is it?" if I wake up, and then I'm like "Oh, it's that time." Like I really try not to look at night at all.

Number ten, have a comfortable pre-bedtime routine. A warm bath, meditation, there's a lot of quiet time. Like I said, I read a lot before I go to bed. I used to be on my phone a lot. I really tried to change that habit. I would even read on my phone, on my Kindle, on my Kindle app. I've tried to not do that anymore, and actually, just read off of a book. And it's made a huge difference in just relaxing and calming down.

So, I think there's a lot of things you can do to calm down just your entire body before you get into sleep.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Yeah, I think one of the things, and it didn't quite make it on the list, it kind of does on number ten, where we're talking about meditation or quiet time. And then actually, going up to number four, it says if you can't sleep, get out of bed and do something. I actually think to stay in bed and focus on your breathing for a little while before you get up out of bed.

I think that's a big—like if you really focus on some deep breathing and deep breathing routines, and counting your breaths, from your inhale, and then you're holding it, how long you're exhaling, if you really get into something like that, it can calm your body down so much to where you just naturally fall asleep, you don't even realize it, where you're just focused on your breath work.

I think that's a big one as well.

Really quickly, a couple notes on naps. Napping during the day may provide a boost in alertness and performance. However, if you have trouble falling asleep at night, limit naps or take them earlier in the afternoon. Adults should nap for no more than 20 minutes. Napping in preschool-age children is normal and promotes healthy growth and development.

I love naps, I just never get them. I wish I did. But I agree 100 percent, and I've seen some studies around how long your naps should be, and it's the 20-minute power nap that really rejuvenates you the most and has you wake up and being alert, whereas the 30-40-minute nap can almost get you into that deep sleep again, and then you wake up out of that and you're more groggy, and you're not—your body's confused. It's not sure if it should be going into deep sleep or not.

TeriAnn Trevenen: I never take naps, and like if I ever do, it's like I just fall asleep sitting, or fall asleep in the car driving. But when I take long, hour-long naps during the day, I wake up and I can't catch back up with myself. Like I'm tired the rest of the day. And then when I go to bed, then I'm like "I'm not tired now." But I was tired all afternoon because I took this hour-long nap, and now I can't fall asleep.

Just I'm not big on naps. I know for kids it's super important, but for adults, like it really, really can—it can really impact you being able to fall asleep later.

And I know for me, this is just my own personal experience, that hour-long nap, I drag the rest of the day.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Sure. And that's why, I'm not going to s*** on anybody, but it shouldn't be an hour-long nap. A 20-minute nap, it can make a big difference.

So, there's a lot more that we could talk about on sleep. In an effort to keep our podcasts a little bit shorter, so they're easier to consume, we're going to wrap it up here.

But we have a ton of resources from everything that we talked about on here, from the *Why Do We Sleep?* Books, to all the different research that we did. So, go to EmpoweringYouOrganically.com. You can get all of the Show Notes, you'll see all of the resources, you can watch the video.

Absolutely, subscribe. So, if you're listening to this in iTunes, make sure you subscribe. We have new podcasts coming out every week, sometimes two a week. Fascinating information. We have some really exciting podcasts that are coming up. So, if you're not subscribed, make sure you subscribe on iTunes. That way, it doesn't matter if you get our emails, it doesn't matter what happens, you get notified directly through iTunes that a new podcast has been released.

Do you have any final words on sleeping? Any final advice that you want to give?

TeriAnn Trevenen: Get more sleep.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Get more sleep.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Best thing you could do.

Jonathan Hunsaker: I agree 100 percent. TeriAnn, thank you so much for joining me.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Thank you.

Jonathan Hunsaker: Thank you everybody, for listening. Again, EmpoweringYouOrganically.com. and we'll see you on the next show.

TeriAnn Trevenen: Thanks everyone.