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Sleep Deprivation Is the Enemy of a Healthy and Wealthy Life

In “Our Sleep Problem and What to Do About it,” Betsy Isaacson argues that despite the ongoing efforts to ward off sleepiness, having sufficient sleep is nonetheless essential to the modern individuals because deprivation of it endangers both health conditions and cognitive functions in the long term. To begin with, Isaacson comments that modern people are increasingly reducing sleeping hours at an alarming rate. She suggests that the direct interruptions of the technological devices are rather unessential, but the new information transmitted through the networks plays a significant role in intoxicating people today with instant gratification. In spite of the fact that the desire for the pleasure of the moment can be regulated through willpower, without enough sleep the increasing urge for the instant pleasure becomes greater. Therefore, people’s modern lifestyles have stimulated researchers to find ways to win the war against sleep aside from the classical way of gorging on caffeine from coffee, tea, or foods. These include taking medicines that treat sleep disorders or using powerful stimulant originally utilized for military use to rub the sleep out of modern people’s eyes. Along with the various efforts to reduce sleep, Isaacson lists another approach, which is called the “Uberman” method, endeavors to improve efficiency by securing sufficient sleep. This method takes advantage of neither medicine nor military technology to shorten the sleep duration because the advocates of “Uberman” method assume that REM sleep is solely sufficient for human beings to survive even though there can be suspected loss in physical power. Along with the persistent attempts to reduce sleep, the fundamental premise of the modern sleep deficit is unveiled as Isaacson quotes writer

Douglas Haddow's theory. Haddow notes that since a large number of people tend to associate waking hours with the money or productivity they tend to speculate that sleep is wasteful and inefficient because sleeping discontinues both consumption and production of economic wealth. Isaacson states the reason for this causality as she cites a salient remark by Douglas Haddow, who says: "Time isn't money. Time awake is money" (qtd. in Isaacson). Also, Isaacson continues to claim that the linkage between time awake and economic productivity has been deeply rooted in the perception. Sleep was deprived by capitalists in the early industrial era who derived profits from incessantly awake workers working overtime drinking complimentary coffee and tea but continues to be rubbed from individuals in modern American society. Recently, modern Americans sleep less than before with unprecedented record and they sleep less than they should due to steadily increasing working hours crammed with part time jobs. Excessive and irregular working hours consequently led to poor health and even higher risks of dementia. Isaacson observes that the problem is more serious with the millennial generation because they have the bad habit of sleeplessness, which put them into a state of torpor and numbness caused by their irregular work shifts. Thus, in the long term, Isaacson explains that the irregular working pattern of this generation seriously threatening their well-being. Specifically, Isaacson addresses that the various fatal consequences of sleep deprivation could be harmful to the body function of regulating stress levels or recovering the immune system, not to mention causing cognitive disorders and failure of memory. Chronic sleep deficit can even contribute to higher mortality. Moreover, Isaacson criticizes "smart drugs" that enhance cognitive ability while a person is awake in that the use of drugs provokes excessive doses over long periods of time and results in the widening gap between the rich and the poor even though these drugs do not require decreased sleep duration. Like the limited accessibility to the drugs deepens the wealth gap, drugs overdose deteriorates the principle functions of the brain in the long term. In the end, Isaacson

asserts that altering the work environment is the one lasting solution. Some companies have therefore initiated efforts to regulate working hours or providing nap time in order to secure sufficient sleep. These measures are showing effects such as increased productivity and efficiency.