MINDTHEORY
UNDERSTAND MIND. LIVE BETTER.

## Summary Sheet:

# How Sleep Affects Your Next-Day Mood



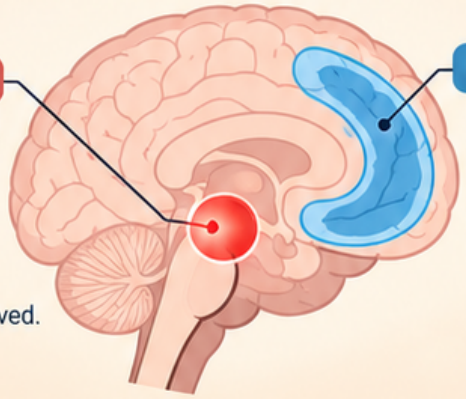
Good sleep helps your brain stay balanced, keep emotions in check, and handle stress better. Poor sleep makes your brain more reactive, which can lead to a lower mood, more irritability and stronger negative emotions the next day.

## 1. The Neurobiology

**Sleep changes how your brain processes emotions.**

**Amygdala**

Detects threats and triggers emotional responses. More active when you are sleep deprived.



**Prefrontal Cortex**

Helps you think clearly, stay calm and regulate emotions. Less active after poor sleep.

### When you don't get enough sleep:

**Amygdala activity increases**
You become more emotionally reactive to even small stressors.

**Prefrontal cortex activity decreases**
It becomes harder to stay calm, think clearly and manage emotions.

**The result**
You are more likely to feel irritated, anxious, overwhelmed or low in mood the next day.

## 2. Key Concepts

**Certain sleep processes directly support a better mood.**

### REM Sleep Helps Process Emotions




- During REM sleep, your brain processes emotional experiences.
- It helps reduce the emotional intensity of difficult events.
- Less REM sleep can leave negative emotions feeling stronger the next day.

### Better Emotional Regulation



- A well-rested brain can balance emotions more effectively.
- You are more patient, less reactive and better able to handle stress.
- You can see problems more clearly and respond instead of just reacting.

### Less Negative Bias



- Sleep deprivation increases attention to negative information.
- You are more likely to notice threats, criticism or potential problems.
- With good sleep, your brain is more balanced and can see the bigger picture.

## 3. Action Plan

**Simple daily habits to support better sleep and a better mood.**

### 1 Get Morning Sunlight



Get natural sunlight within 1 hour of waking up. It helps reset your body clock and supports a healthier mood throughout the day.

### 2 Practice Cognitive Reappraisal



Pause and try to look at challenging situations from a different perspective. This helps you respond more calmly and reduces emotional reactivity.

### 3 Time Your Caffeine



Have caffeine earlier in the day, ideally before 2 PM. Avoid caffeine late afternoon or evening, as it can disrupt your sleep.

### 4 Do an Evening Brain Dump



Spend a few minutes before bed writing down your thoughts, tasks and worries. This helps clear your mind, reduce mental clutter and makes it easier to fall asleep.