

Is sleep overrated? The scoop on somnolence

by Brandi Tebo

There is anorexia, and there is insomnia. Then there is Somnolence, a newly coined phrase about which many know nothing.

Somnolence is a term describing one who deprives themselves of sleep. Aside from its seemingly horrid connotations, pretty much everyone experiences a certain degree of somnolence at one time or another. In fact, many teens cope with the "disease" their entire high school career. Surrounded by 24-hour diners, 10:30 movie showings, the Internet and late night television, sleep has clearly been undermined, and commonly deemed unnecessary.

Many enjoy boasting, "I do not need sleep," or "There is far too much in this world to experience to waste crucial time sleeping." Some even go on to say that they do better without it. They suggest that they have evolved such that

sleep is unnecessary. Although coffee, Red Bull, 5-hour Energy and sodas have made these thoughts possible, it is unlikely that any human being rises above the need for sleep. If truth be told, teens actually require the most amount of sleep out of any age group, although they tend to get the least.

"Between after school activities, work, homework, showering and eating, sometimes there just isn't enough time for sleep. I've had to go many days on three or four hours only," says junior Molly Weinberg.

"Who has time for sleep anymore? Some days I barely have time to eat..." said junior Priyanka Parkeh. It seems as though sleep is treated as a luxury that must be sacrificed. However, what teens—and their teachers who assign them the homework that keeps them up until dawn—fail to understand is that sleep is not a thing that can be marginalized.

A body that is deprived of sleep is more likely to forget things, less likely to concentrate and more likely to lose its train of thought and become irritable. Moreover, sleep deprived individuals are more susceptible to infections and diseases and may have stunted growth.

Although no one can quite pinpoint exactly why one sleeps, it is for certain that humans need their REM cycles in order to function. During sleep, the brain refreshes and processes information it has gathered throughout the day, enhances our procedural memory—which enables us to do things that require practice...like ride a bike - and repairs neurons. Teens are hardwired to stay up and sleep in late. Studies have proven that the build-up of sleep-pressure is slower in teens than in any other age group. So although tiredness is not felt during those late night parties or study sessions, when one awakens at 6:00 the next morning, their entire circadian cycle (24-hour clock) is thrown off, and

their bodies undergo turmoil. Yet, by the next night, the fatigue is again forgotten, and the cycle is allowed to repeat itself. Over time, this lack of sleep accumulates, resulting in undeniable consequences.

So although staying up until 2:30 a.m. cramming for that huge history test may seem like the most beneficial thing to do at the time, it is not likely that one will perform well with a depleted memory, attention span and ability to concentrate. Although somnolence seems to be the fad, it—like any other disease—must be stopped before it consumes those it afflicts. Evidently, if school started just a few hours later, students on a whole would be happier, healthier, live longer, perform better and function to their utmost potential. Sadly, the likelihood of this remains slim, despite abundant evidence proving its benefits. In the meanwhile, for those attempting write a newspaper article at 1:42 a.m., it might be best to just ghj oafh;gvbuaf;vafab;vbjzbvbufgviaj/f.....

facebook stalking is a magical thing

by Chelsey Falco

Facebook is a fascinating website; it can tell someone a person's favorite movies, books and quotes without ever meeting them. Relationships are not official until a status is updated on Facebook, and birthday wishes are only real when they are written on a Facebook wall.

Everything can be told through Facebook. The new live-feed continuously updates a person with what their friends are doing at all times. The photo tag option allows someone to view photos of any of their friends. Clicking on a link can direct the page to a list of people with similar interests. There is no need to actually talk to someone if one has a Facebook account. Some may find this despicable, but it is really quite fun.

The only thing more magical than Facebook is Facebook stalking. The Urban Dictionary defines Facebook stalking as monitoring someone's life through Facebook. It used to be seen as creepy and weird, but as time goes by, people have begun to accept it. It is no longer a hobby to keep hidden; it is a profession to be proud of. Facebook Creeper is a title to be worn with pride, not shame.

"I am proud to be a Facebook Creeper," said senior Sarah Moyer. There are basic tips that every beginner

stalker should know. The first tip is that a target is not necessary. Some believe stalking can only be done using one person, but that is an outdated concept. Facebook allows one to follow the actions of multiple people at a time. It



photo courtesy of zazzle.com

Facebook stalking has become somewhat of a joke to most people who use the term loosely.

is no longer necessary to single someone out. Stalking one person on Facebook may actually lead to finding a new target. If one chooses to stalk a friend, they may find someone who frequents that person's wall. From there, they are looking up their friend's friend, and, from there, they may even move on to their friend's friend's friend. It is a complicated circle, but it is

the only way to know what friends are up to. No relationship is private on Facebook.

"I will be looking at my friend's Facebook, and then I all of a sudden find myself checking out their brother's girlfriend's sister's profile," said senior

Emily Edwards.

Another important tip is to not be discouraged by a profile set to private. Privacy settings are a simple roadblock that can easily be overcome.

One can just look on the page of a mutual friend.

That friend's profile may feature interesting wall postings or photos of the person one originally wanted to stalk. No person is completely untraceable on Facebook so there is no reason to view a private profile as a setback. One just needs to be creative in their searching in order to get to the truly juicy information.

There is only one more tip appropriate for amateurs, as all other methods of

stalking are only for the pros. The last amateur tip is to absorb information. What is read on Facebook can eventually become an interesting conversation topic. The personal information, such as favorites and the ever popular "About Me," are filled with valuable facts. A person writes those things down because they want everyone to know about them. They are not just profile decoration, they are a sign screaming, "Stalk me, stalk me!" If someone states that *Harry Potter* is their favorite book, that means they want a friend or acquaintance to bring *Harry Potter* up in conversation. Music is an especially important fact to memorize. A person's favorite band can give important insight to their personality, so before becoming friends with someone it is paramount that one checks out their musical taste.

"What a person writes on their profile is there for the public to see, and their information tells me a lot about their personality," said Moyer.

Facebook Stalking is a valuable tool. It can give insight on a future significant other or college roommate, and it can also introduce someone to their future best friend. And once someone becomes pro, Facebook Stalking can allow students to find anyone, including their teachers, on Facebook. Facebook stalking is a necessary skill for high school students.

The rise of organic foods has increased significantly

by Rachel Holly

"Go green" is a slogan that is so common today it is a standby in American pop culture. Everyone seems to search for a greener option of whatever it is that they are looking for, but one of the most popular venues of green theology is organic food.

In order to be certified organic by the United States Department of Agriculture, the food must be grown without the use of chemicals, pesticides or growth hormones and use only natural methods of fertilization. There are three different levels of certification of organic foods in America, each with a different percentage of organic ingredients. Products made entirely of organic ingredients can bear the label of "100% organic," products that have at least 95% organic ingredients can include the word "organic" in their product title and products that contain at least 70% organic materials can use the slogan "contains organic ingredients." The organic movement comes on the

back of the recent truths of the "green movement," a collection of studies showing the effects that prolonged usage and exposure to modern chemicals and pesticides through farming has on humans. These harmful effects caused an uproar in the health world, causing for a more natural way to farm and harvest produce.

Many of the "public-enemy" pesticides used regularly are benzene (causing liver sarcomas), arsenic (causing skin and lung cancer) and vinyl chloride (causing leukemia.) Their intent is to ward off insects from consuming the crops

by killing any who tried; however, many fruits and vegetables allow for these chemicals to seep in through the outer skin and remain in the produce upon consumption. According to the USDA, per product (i.e. a single fruit or vegetable), there are approximately 300 different pesticides used, not counting

the other 500 separate preservatives, additives and growth hormones (GMOs).

"Since when did pesticides become a perfectly edible thing?" said sophomore Hanna Lafferty.

America is not the only country to jump on the organic bandwagon. In 2005, the Italian government mandated that all school lunches must be prepared using only 100% organic certified ingredients.

In America, the organic food section is the fastest growing sector in the US food industry, citing an 18% growth since just last year. If those numbers show anything, one does not need hormones or chemicals for massive growth!

Going organic is becoming much more accessible to those in the Lehigh Valley. Freshman Taylor Kinneburgh said, "Eating healthy should be easy,

no matter where you live." Organic food sections are finding their way into major retailers, not simply small health food stores and the section in Wegmans.

The Trumpet spoke with representative Gina Medvedz from Health Habits in Schnecksville, a local organic food retailer, to get a local take on why going organic is better for everyone. "The number one reason to go organic is to avoid the pesticides and chemicals. The genes of these plants are altered so that they will be better able to resist certain diseases or pests. While this is a bonus for production, our bodies do not recognize these modified substances. We are especially at risk [for exposure to harmful chemicals] here in Pennsylvania because almost half of our land is used for farming. Organic farming eliminates this risk and protects the environment."

It is clear that going green is here to stay and is growing long-term roots in the diets of people across the globe, from Parkland to Paris, Allentown to all across America.