

Unit 2 ARIANNA HUFFINGTON

How to Succeed? Get More Sleep

Part 1

My big idea is a very, very small idea that can unlock billions of big ideas that are at the moment dormant inside us. And my little idea that will do that is sleep.

This is a room of type-A women. This is a room of sleep-deprived women. And I **learned the hard way**¹ the value of sleep. Two-and-a-half years ago, I fainted from exhaustion. I hit my head on my desk. I broke my cheekbone. I got five stitches on my right eye. And I began **the journey of rediscovering**² the value of sleep. And **in the course of**³ that, I studied, I met with medical doctors, scientists, and I'm here to tell you that the way to a more productive, more inspired, more joyful life is getting enough sleep.

Part 2

And we women are going to lead the way in this new revolution, this new feminist issue. We are literally going to **sleep our way to the top**,⁴ literally.

Because unfortunately for men, sleep deprivation has become a **virility symbol**.⁵ I was recently having dinner with a guy who bragged that he had only gotten four hours' sleep the night before. And I felt like saying to him—but I didn't say it—I felt like saying, "You know what? If you had gotten five, this dinner would have been a lot more interesting."

There is now a kind of sleep deprivation **one-upmanship**.⁶ Especially here in Washington, if you try to make a **breakfast date**,⁷ and you say, "How about eight o'clock?" They're likely to tell you, "Eight o'clock is too late for me, but that's OK, you know, I can get a game of tennis in and do a few **conference calls**"⁸ and meet you at eight." And they think that means that they are so incredibly busy and productive, but the truth is they're not, because we, at the moment, have had brilliant leaders in business, in finance, in politics, making terrible decisions. So a high I.Q. does not mean that you're a good leader, because the essence of leadership is being able to see the iceberg before it hits the *Titanic*. And we've had far too many icebergs hitting our *Titanics*.

¹ To "learn (something) the hard way" means that something negative was experienced before coming to a new realization.

² A "journey of rediscovering" (or rediscovery) refers to setting out to relearn something that you once knew, but have forgotten or moved away from.

³ A synonym for "in the course of" is "during."

⁴ To "sleep your way to the top" refers to having sex with superiors at work in order to get promotions. Huffington is making a joke here by using this to explain that sleeping more will contribute to our success at work.

⁵ The noun *virility* actually refers to a man's ability to procreate, or his sex drive. However, it is often used as a metaphor to talk about masculinity and power, which is why a "virility symbol" is something that is supposed to make a man seem more masculine and powerful.

⁶ "One-upmanship" refers to a competitiveness between people in which one person tries to make themselves sound better than another. For example, if someone says they slept four hours, another person brags that they only slept three.

⁷ In this case, a "breakfast date" likely refers to a meeting in the morning over breakfast, not a romantic date.

⁸ A "conference call" is a work meeting done over the phone, usually with participants calling in from multiple locations.

In fact, I have a feeling that if Lehman Brothers was Lehman Brothers and Sisters, they might still be around. While all the brothers were busy just being **hyper-connected 24/7**,⁹ maybe a sister would have noticed the iceberg, because she would have woken up from a seven-and-a-half- or eight-hour sleep and have been able to **see the big picture**.¹⁰

So as we are facing all the multiple crises in our world at the moment, what is good for us **on a personal level**,¹¹ what's

going to bring more joy, gratitude, effectiveness in our lives and be the best for our own careers is also what is best for the world. So **I urge you**¹² to shut your eyes and discover the great ideas that lie inside us, to **shut your engines**¹³ and discover the power of sleep.

Thank you.

⁹ The term “hyper-connected 24/7” means to be online and accessible twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

¹⁰ When someone can “see the big picture,” they have a larger perspective on a given situation or issue.

¹¹ Something that is “on a personal level” is about our individual lives, experiences, and emotions.

¹² The phrase “I urge you” is a call to action. A speaker uses this phrase to strongly suggest that others follow a suggestion.

¹³ Huffington uses the figurative expression “shut your engines” to tell us to go to sleep.