

## The Trojan Horse of Human Performance

**Create good sleep habits.**

**A**fter a fruitless 10-year siege, the Greeks constructed a huge wooden horse to hide a band of soldiers. The Greeks pretended to sail away, and the Trojans pulled the horse into their city as a victory trophy. That night the Greek soldiers crept out of the horse and opened the gates for the rest of the Greek army to sack Troy and end the Trojan War. A Trojan Horse has come to mean a trick to enter a securely protected place.

Sleep is the securely protected place of human performance. Does exercise matter? Of course. Turn off the TV and take a walk. Nutrition? Yes, more green and less grease. Purchase organic vegetables and fruits stacked on the outside of the grocery store. Stay away from the middle of the store so you aren't tempted to buy processed foods.

Just know this. Sleep has a greater impact on human performance than exercise and diet. In fact, sleep deprivation can deteriorate performance more than being drunk. If we are exhausted, it is difficult to move more and eat less.

Good sleep habits are the Trojan Horse of human performance. We can hack into better performance by developing habits that result in 7 to 9 hours of good rest. Here's how:

- 1) Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day.
- 2) Avoid alcohol and caffeine six hours before bed.
- 3) Escort all screens out of your bedroom one hour before you go to bed.
- 4) Sleep in a dark and cool room.
- 5) Avoid eating a large meal before going to bed.
- 6) Limit exposure to bright light one hour before you go to bed.

