**Jeffrey:** Welcome to the Chalene Show. Chalene is the New York Times best-selling author, celebrity fitness trainer and obsessed with helping you live your dream life.

**Chalene Johnson:** What’s up? I’m so glad you’re here. I love that people are totally digging on this fit tip episodes. I guess it’s because they’re short and they’re to the point and every single minute is designed to educate you, motivate you and inspire you to take better care of yourself.

Today, we’re going to talk all about sleep. You’ll learn how many hours is optimal, how certain sleep patterns will actually make you gain body fat. Also, you’ll hear tips to help you fall asleep fast, techniques that will help you stay asleep and the latest scientific research that will convince you to put down your phone, turn off Christly Knows Best or Pawnshop or whatever it is you’re watching, make the room really dark, fluff that pillow and get some Z’s.

I’m joined today by my good friend, Keith Harris. He’s lost over a hundred and twenty-five pounds. He’s the man. And if you listen to my last episode about how to use your voice to command power, I’m sure you’ll agree that Keith, he totally has one of those voices.

**[START OF PODCAST]**

**Chalene**: All right, I got to keep this short, so here we go. What’s up Keith?

**Keith:** What’s going on?

**Chalene:** Just kicking it with you.

**Keith:** Just kicking it with Keith?

**Chalene:** That’s right.

**Keith:** All right. So today, we’re talking about sleep in the context of weight loss.

**Chalene:** Yeah.

**Keith:** And how important it is. I for one just take this for granted but it is a part of the process. Most people don’t think about sleep right along with the nutrition and working out. So, yeah, I just like to have that conversation with you.

**Chalene:** Which is kind of interesting that people don’t because I mean, nobody really wants to go on a diet or exercise more. I mean maybe they do, but I think most people would love to find a way where they can reduce their body fat and have to just drastically change their lives and sleep is one of the ways you can do that. But I think most people under value sleep.

**Keith:** Yeah, so, I’d like to know or get some of the stats behind it, like how drastically does it affect, I mean, I have known some people. I’m usually pretty good with around six, maybe seven hours and then i have some friends, they can get three or four hours but how drastically does it affect towards, just like a person to person basis.

So how drastically does it affect a person’s ability to lose weight?

**Chalene:** Yeah, that’s really an interesting question. I mean it seems like there’s these people who can function on four hours of sleep and then all of us knows someone is like, “I need ten hours every night”. So does it vary from person to person and I thought that it did, and I guess in part because I used to make that excuse for myself, like, I would say, “I do best on five hours of sleep”. It’s a lie. When you look at the science, like the people as they say have no dog in the fight. They just really want to know how does this affect people.

In general, with the exception of age, so children, children and teenagers, small children need ten hours or more.

**Keith:** Wow.

**Chalene:** Of sleep, interesting. And what’s also interesting is as we get older, we need less but we still need about seven and a half like that’s really cute. Ideally, eight to eight and a half is perfect when we’re talking about body fat and focus which are two pretty important things.

Now, a lot of the study show that people once who are over 65 can really do pretty well on six hours of sleep. But to me I’m like, “that’s weird” because the people who I know who are 70 plus tend to sleep longer I thought, but maybe I’m wrong.

So this is research that’s recently come out of Brigham Young university where they found, it’s not just the number of hours of sleep do we get but it’s the consistency over time that affects our body fat. So if you think you’re pulling the fast one by going sleep deprived for two or three days, and then by making it up the other couple of days per week, that it all works out, what they found was that in particular, women who have an inconsistent sleep pattern have a much higher body fat percentage even if we change nothing else.

**Keith:** Interesting.

**Chalene:** Right.

**Keith:** Wow.

**Chalene:** Like you can exercise the same, you can eat the same but if you’re not sleeping consistently each night, you’re body fat goes up.

**Keith:** Very interesting. I wonder if - I also had friends who get two hours here, an hour there, I wonder if it’s accumulative sleep the amount of time that you, like you have to be asleep…

**Chalene:** Like add up, right.

**Keith:** Right.

**Chalene:** What kind of calories, well if i eat all of them in one meal or spread them out throughout the day, does it matter. And what we do know is it’s really critical and in terms of our restoration, our brain processing and our body’s ability to consume, either produce cortisol which tells the body just store fat or to metabolize fat that we need two hours of REM sleep and REM sleep doesn’t even happen until you’ve been asleep for about ninety minutes.

So, to think well I can pull a cat nap here and there, and catch up is actually a fallacy. I mean, you do need consistent hours of sleep because it’s the REM sleeping that makes the difference. And it happens in burst, about two hours a night, usually beginning about sixty to ninety minutes after you’ve fallen asleep and it’s that sleep that really restores us. You don’t get strong while you’re in the gym, you get strong during rest and the body really resets and gets strong while we sleep.

**Keith:** So truly is a part of the process. I mean, ride along with nutrition and exercise, you have to get your sleep.

**Chalene:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Chalene:** Did you ever see that movie, now I’m forgetting the name of it. Million Dollar Baby?

**Keith:** Million Dollar Baby.

**Chalene:** Yeah, Hillary Swank?

**Keith:** Hillary Swank.

**Chalene:** Yeah. Did you ever see that movie? So, what was interesting about that is she had to put on an incredible amount of muscle. In fact, she gained nineteen pounds of muscle, how crazy is that?

**Keith:** Crazy.

**Chalene:** But her body was amazing. She looked phenomenal, they had her working out and eating like it was her job. I mean she was eating a very scheduled diet of high in protein obviously and she had have carb, everything was predetermined for her, but the one thing that they said made the huge difference in allowing her to put on that kind of muscle mass in such a short period of time was nine hours of sleep.

**Keith:** Wow.

**Chalene:** Yup. That her trainer just said, your body is going to really need to restore because if we’re going to do heavy lifting, this heaviness that they had to do is train really heavy to get the mass that they needed, so she didn’t look like a red carpet Hollywood actress who they are always so like waify-looking, I’m sorry. But they need to have some muscle and some shape and had to do that fast. So it really required her sleeping nine hours a night.

**Keith:** Wow, that’s pretty incredible.

**Chalene:** Pretty cool.

**Keith:** Pretty incredible. And in the end, I don’t even know that I can, I don’t know, I mean on occasion, I can get nine hours of sleep.

**Chalene:** Well, that’s okay because they do say, for the average person getting more than 8.5 on average, it’s like everyone’s different but on average, most people they get more than eight and half hours, they don’t feel their best.

So it is the consistency of it and of the quality of the sleep is really important too. I mean, all of us have spent the night where we’ve been in bed for nine hours but we’re tossing and turning and waking up and that’s not the same as quality sleep.

**Keith:** Yeah, it’s very good. So what are some tips for going to bed early?

**Chalene:** We interrupt this broadcast because I have to share with you this really cool message from one of our lifers. This is Trez and if you’d like to leave me a message, you can do that by going to Chalenejohnson.com/podcast and you’ll see this little widget on my website. It’s called, I think it’s speak piper, speaker pipe, either one, you’ll see it and it’ll just say leave a voice message here after each episode. I log in to hear what you’ve thought about that particular episode.

I’ve been getting some great feedback but this one is just a brilliant idea, so let me have Trez explain it to you.

**Trez:** Hi Chalene, this is Trez. I just finished listening to your podcast, the end and I wanted to let you know that I’m very happy and grateful that you are going to continue recording the Chalene Show.

And then my next thought was, “I wonder if Dionne knows about this”. So after I heard Overcome Overwhelmed, I emailed Dionne, I was like, “Hey, are you listening to the Chalene Show? I think you might like this”. And so, we had a phone call where I helped her get set up to listen to your podcast and then we set an appointment every Sunday evening to talk about the most recent podcast that we listen to and make a plan for what it is that we’re going to do based on what we have heard from your podcast.

And that’s what we still do and so, it’s been helpful for both of us in terms of hearing you say things that are right on point for what it is that we’re dealing within our lives and helping us make a plan for how we are going to make the changes to make our lives what they need to be. So, thank you so much.

**Chalene** Thank you so much Trez. This is a great idea. In other words, what she’s doing is using the podcast like a book club. She and Dionne have a standing Sunday night appointment where they get on the phone and they discuss their plans, what they are going to implement from that week’s shows. So this Sunday night, they would be talking about these week’s episodes.

How do they have a more powerful voice? How easy it is to build your brand and your business by using Pinterest and how to improve your overall fitness by getting more sleep.

Now, this doesn’t have to be something that’s huge, just even a couple of steps. Pick one thing from each episode that you are going to try to use to improve your life because that’s what the Chalene Show is all about. I really believe that there are people in our lives who are just as interested as we are in growth and being better. So why not foster those relationships, keep each other accountable and have someone you can check in with each week.

Now if you don’t have somebody like that in your life, I’ve also started a new Facebook page called the Chalene Show. There you can post your comments, your feedback and interact and treat it like an online book club.

Anyways, every morning after I’ve released an episode, I wait a couple of hours and then I log in to Speak Pipe, that’s where you are able you leave me a message and I listen to what you thought about that last episode. So I just want to let you know, I’m listening to every single message and as many of them as I can, I send you a reply.

If you’d like to leave me your own voicemail, you can do so at Chalenejohnson.com/podcast. Now let’s go kick it with Keith.

**Keith:** What are some tips for going to bed early?

**Chalene:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Or earlier?

**Chalene:** Yup. For me, I know I’ve got to put my phone down, I can’t look at any emails or text messages or social media period. If I do, my brain won’t relax. I also find that if I just shut off the TV and I always say, “It helps me fall asleep,” but also help me stay awake.

**Keith:** Right.

**Chalene:** You have really consistent hours of sleep but for the average person, some things that you can do to help you fall asleep are the following:

Number one: body temperature. Our brain has a wake-sleep cycle that’s very closely linked to our body temperature and that’s why during the summer, you can feel like restless, like you can’t sleep well and it’s because the body flow mechanism that transfers our core body heat to the skin, right? And that really works best when we’re cold. So when people say, “I need the room cold to fall asleep,” that is legit. So ideally, you want to turn the temperature down.

Number two is darkness. You need a really dark room to help you fall asleep. And even studies have shown that even just the red lights on our digital clock like those little tiny luminous rays from like a clock or the buttons on your cable TV, those in fact can disrupt sleep cycles. Even though you are not fully awake, it doesn’t completely wake you up, it might not allow you to fully go into REM sleep or you have to switch the brain off.

So another really important thing that you can do and to help yourself fall asleep and stay asleep and I know this seems like super obvious, but think about it, if you’re not good at staying asleep all night and you happen to be one of those people who says, “Oh, caffeine doesn’t bother me. I can have a cup of coffee at lunch.” They think that but they are also suffering from interrupted sleep patterns. So you really should not do any caffeine what so ever afternoon.

**Keith:** Interesting. So I mean you talked about sleep deprivation, how do you know if you are sleep deprived?

**Chalene:** Yeah, I mean, the obvious is feeling tired but sometimes you can, I don’t know about you Keith but, there’s been nights like I get my normal eight hours and I’m like, “Why am I tired?”

So it’s not just feeling tired. If you feel like, “Why am I having a hard time focusing, or what did you just say?” And you are having a difficult time remembering short term information; like you’ll have a conversation and then five minutes later you can’t remember what you are supposed to do. That’s a really big sign that you are sleep-deprived.

Here’s a really good one. If it takes you more than fifteen minutes to fall asleep, you’re probably sleep-deprived which is weird because you would think, “I’m super tired, so I should fall asleep fast.” If you are falling asleep within the first couple of minutes, you are also likely sleep-deprived.

This sounds strange but if it takes you a really long time, or you can fall asleep as soon as you close your eyes, both of those are signs you’re sleep-deprived.

In general, it should take you about ten minutes of relaxing, shutting your brain down to fall asleep and if it takes a lot longer than that or if it takes a lot less than that, it’s likely you are sleep-deprived.

We’re talking about body fat and I think that motivates people but you wouldn’t drive your car drunk, I’m hoping.

**Keith**: Right.

**Chalene:** But they say that driving sleep deprived is the equivalent of having enough alcohol to make you legally intoxicated.

**Keith:** Wow.

**Chalene:** And one out of six fatal car crashes is the result of sleep deprivation.

**Keith:** Wow, that’s dangerous.

**Chalene:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Wow.

**Chalene:** Like I got an accident on my own driveway, that’s like two years ago, it’s backing out to go teach my 5:30 AM class. And it was on a day that I probably should have got a sub because I did not get enough sleep, I was super sleep deprived and I really felt like I was half asleep getting in my car and I was backing up my drive way and you’ve been in my house lots of times.

You know how like the driveway is kind of steep and I was backing up the driveway to pull up the driveway. This is not even funny, but I crashed into my own gates.

Not a little bit.A couple of thousand dollarsfor the damage to my car.

**Keith:** No way.

**Chalene:** Yeah. I was like, “Oh my gosh.” And for me, that’s kind of what sparked my, I guess just, I had to get a cold hard look at the fact that this is big deal. I didn’t feel right driving. And I started looking into it a little bit more and realizing, yeah. It’s not just something I have to suck like suck it up buttercup, you’re tired, go. It’s not very responsible. I realized on my behalf and the responsibility that I have to other drivers in particular, if I’m going to make it a habit teaching at five thirty A.M. I have to be responsible and get enough sleep.

**Keith:** That’s very true. I’ve had a couple of situations like that, just like I have a long commute.

**Chalene:** Yeah.

**Keith:** And if I don’t givepurposely, I can really feel myself like it really does, I’ve never driven drunk. I don’t know what that really feels like. But I can imagine that it feels somewhat like I feel when I’m starting to get sleepy on a long commute**.**

**Chalene:** Yeah.

**Keith:** So yeah. That’s pretty dangerous.

**Chalene:** Back to food. When we were kids, we use to take this long commute up to where our lake in Northern Michigan, it was like a four hour drive. And everybody would fall asleep and my dad would pull over every twenty or thirty minutes into a gas station, buy crappy food. And he would say he was doing it to keep himself awake. You know, what we know about sleep deprivation its that it makes you crave comfort foods. It makes you crave for carbohydrates. It makes you crave high fats.

And when we’re sleep-deprived, we tend to over eat. And people who are sleep-deprived always have a higher body fat percent. Like your body fats are going to go up just if you are not getting enough sleep. And it’s not just because of the cortisol levels that are produced because your body’s under stress but you combine that with your body’s natural need to be comforted, like I’m tired, I want comforts. I’m going to eat or I’m going to eat to keep myself awake. I mean, and I’ve done it like I’ve had a long project or a blog post or something and thought, I just can’t stay awake. I’m going to grab something to snack on while I’m typingthis.

**Keith:** Okay. Hold the presses. Just so I can get this straight. Right? So when you’re sleep-deprived you crave carby foods?

**Chalene:** Uh-huh.

**Keith:** Wow.

**Chalene:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Wow.

**Chalene:** Yeah.

**Keith:** So in addition to just having this as a part of your normal schedule, if you don’t get enough sleep, you would then have a tendency to go for carby foods which will assist you in gaining weight.

**Chalene:** Of course. Yeah. I mean you’re responding to a need and a study from the University of Colorado, sleep. And this is what they study at their sleep laboratories. How people are affected by sleep patterns and wake patterns. And number one, we find that your cortisol levels go up but people feel this, reported feeling this insatiable need to eat things they normally don’t crave. And they almost didn’t feel like, you know how sometimes when you’re starving, you make these food choices that you feel like, this isn’t even going to matter. I’m so hungry. I’m so hungry right now that this burger is going to have zero calories**.**

**Keith:** Right.

**Chalene:** Because I need it. And what happens when people are super sleep-deprived is they feel that way about certain foods. Like my body needs this.

**Keith:** That’s really, really interesting. That’s an eye-opener because I’ve been there. I’ve been there.

**Chalene:** Yeah.

**Keith:** And you’re super, super sleepy or super tired and you’re like, I deserve this.

**Chalene:** Yeah.

**Keith:** And my body needs this.

**Chalene:** Yeah

**Keith:** Wow and so it’s not just really helping you if you’re on a track to lose weight or get fitter.

**Chalene:** That’s right. Exactly, Keith. Yeah. And I think you know, people are always looking for kind of an easier fix than just getting the right amount of sleep. That’s pretty simple. It should be.

**Keith**: That makes we want to go home and sleep.

**Chalene:** All right. Stay awake and drive.

**Keith**: Right. Exactly. That’s some incredible information.

**Chalene:** Thanks for asking, Keith**.**

**Keith:** Thank you for that.

**[END OF PODCAST]**

**Chalene:** Thanks for joining us today. Thanks for kicking it with Chalene and Keith. And thanks for taking action all about implementing. People who implement are the people who change, the people whose lives get better every single day. And that’s what the Chalene Show is all about.

So your homework assignment is to find a buddy, someone who will commit, ping up with the podcast. Set a date once a week when you jump on the phone and you just basically talk about your thoughts on this week’s episodes. Come up with just one simple action plan that you will implement from each show or at least each episode that applies to your life. And then check in.

Let me know how this is going. Leave me a message by going to my website. You can leave me a voicemail personally by going to chalenejohnson.com/podcast. Or you can connect with our community by going to our new Facebook page. It’s facebook.com/thechaleneshow, all one word with no spaces in between.

Thank you so much for stealing your friend’s phone, ripping it out of their hand, cracking the codes so you can log in on their behalf. Downloading the podcast app if they don’t already have it showing them which podcast they should listen to. Of course which will include the Chalene show, making sure they subscribe and maybe even writing a review on their behalf.

Did I just say that, oh no she did? Oh yes, she did. It matters. It really matters and a big shout out. Big thank you to buzz feed who featured me as one of the top seven female podcasters this week. I love it. It’s so cool. I’m just glad I stuck with this because it’s really fun.

All right, that’s all for now guys. Until we get a chance to spend some time together again, I just want you to know, I love you. I mean it.

**[END OF RECORDING]**