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"Good Sleepin' Weather"

My career path in publishing has led me through some obvious places—New York, Chicago—and some surprising ones, too: Emmaus, PA, and Knoxville, TN. I moved to the latter southern outpost to take a job working for a movie magazine, of all things, for a publisher of single-advertiser vehicles. The advertiser for *Moviegoeer Magazine* was R.J. Reynolds.

That's right, the editor of *Men's Health* used to be a shill for the cigarette industry.

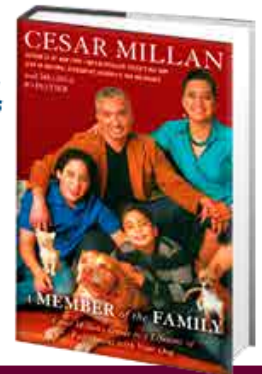
Hey, you have your embarrassing career moments, and I have mine. But probably yours weren't fully explored in a terrific movie starring Russel Crowe and Al Pacino. *The Insider* demonstrated how in the 1980s, the cigarette barons became aware that their product was literally killing off the people who were ignorant enough to develop an addiction for it. The only answer: Build a younger customer base, to replace the ones whose lives were flickering out. Out of that came the Joe Camel ad campaigns, and the pursuit of young people through their cultural interests—like going to the movies. And there was my magazine, given away for free in movie theaters.

My apologies to everybody. I was just a dumb kid, you know?

But even as I edited a magazine that brought cigarette advertising to the youthful masses, I was still a healthy guy. I had a membership at the downtown YMCA in Knoxville, and I'd go there most days to change for a run with my workmates. There was a guy named Ray who had a locker near mine, and when I'd talk with him before or after my run, I'd try to adopt his East Tennessee accent, so nobody would know exactly how much of a Connecticut Yankee I really was.

One of the annual conversations I would have with Ray came when the air would turn crisp in the fall, relieving the damp heat of the Knoxville summer. "It's good sleepin' weather," Ray would tell me. The connection between high pressure systems wafting in from the north, and the results on the mattress, seemed obscure to me at first, but it turns out that Ray was a bit of a sleeping savant. In fact, sleep scientists were able to tease out a connection between sleep, body temperature, and room temperature. Turns out that if your bedroom is a little cool, it will signal your body that it's time to drop off. (In an article about sleep Joe Kita wrote for *Men's Health*, he noted wryly that a slightly cool bedroom would be very familiar to men who'd been married for more than ten

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MH Life

Peter Moore
MH Editor

Peter Moore is editor of *Men's Health*, and a guy with a reputation for having tried nearly every tip, strategy, and recipe that has ever run in the magazine. After 11 years on the staff here, that's a lot of tips. So there is almost not a moment of the day when he isn't consciously or subconsciously following the magazine's advice. When he deals with his kids...when he answers his wife's "am I fat"-type questions...when he starts his workout...when he finishes his workout...when he talks to the boss ... *Men's Health* is always there. Creepy, huh? But here's the bottom line: He's never been fitter, happier or healthier than he is right now. Maybe that's the *Men's Health* life.

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years.)

There are other keys, as well: Especially in the dark days of December, the amount of exposure you have to sunshine in early morning has a huge effect on your synthesis of melatonin, a hormone that guides your sleep-wake cycle. If you go from a dark bedroom to a dark car to a dark office, your melatonin jets never really shut off, so you live in a kind of drowsy fog the whole damn day. And the whole damn winter, for that matter. Of such things are [Seasonal Affective Disorder](#) made. One solution; plug in a light box at your office. Glowing on my desk right now is my [Litebook](#), which helps a lot when I'm sitting in the early morning murk of my office. (Yes, please alert my boss—David Zinczenko—that I begin work before DAWN.) And my wife and I will soon embark on a mattress-testing experiment (no, I'm not kidding) for *Men's Health*, testing out five different sleep surfaces to see which one produces the most restful sleep for the two of us.

Given that short sleep cuts women's [sexual response](#), a better mattress could counter any cooling trends that hit our bedroom. I wrote about all of the above in my article about sleep—"Good Night, and Good Luck"—a couple of years back; check it out for everything you needed to know about sleep, but were too groggy to ask.

To see how your city or region scores on our Metrogrades list of the most sleep-deprived cities, look [here](#). Knoxville wasn't a big enough town to make the list, but here's hoping that my old pal Ray is still looking forward to those cool nights. His long-term physical, psychological, and sexual health pretty much depend on it.

December 08, 2008 | [Permalink](#)

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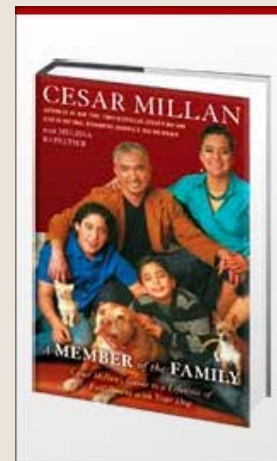
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