

# HYPNO-GRAM<sup>®</sup>

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## Alleviating Insomnia Through Hypnosis

by Debbie Papadakis, BCH, CI, OB

### *What is Insomnia?*

Insomnia is the most common form of sleep disorder, and can have significant physical and psychological consequences. Insomnia is the inability to obtain an adequate amount or quality of sleep, and may take any or all of three forms: difficulty falling asleep (sleep onset insomnia), frequent nocturnal awakening (maintenance insomnia) and early morning awakening with inability to return to sleep. (Karacan & Williams 1971). Insomnia occurs frequently among adults as well as in children.

There are currently over 80 different types of sleep disorders listed in the International Classification of Sleep Disorders (or ICSD 2005). However, we as Consulting Hypnotists focus on the behavior and emotional aspects underlining insomnia. Insomnia can be the "cause and effect" of a number of issues. There are many memories, emotions, thoughts, and habits that interfere with sleep, that are embedded in our subconscious mind.

### *What are the physical and psychological causes of insomnia?*

Insomnia is often associated with physical and/or psychological issues.

The physical causes can be environmental and includes improper hygiene, food intake, chronic pain, negative habits, or substance abuse. The psychological causes can be excessive anxiety, stress, worry, fear, anger, or depression. However, in most cases insomnia is triggered by past traumatic events, and memories which are repressed in our subconscious. Unless we clear these debilitating events which our subconscious perceives as disturbing, frightening and threatening, insomnia may persist as either an intermittent or a fully blown occurrence. Hypnosis is one of the fastest, least intrusive and most effective ways to access the subconscious. Through this work we can clear whatever perceived

past traumas may be getting in the way of a restful sleep.

### *What are the symptoms and effects of insomnia?*

The National Institutes of Health (2005) estimates that 50 percent of patients under clinical care display symptoms of insomnia. For instance, even normal children experience the effects of insomnia. Daytime somnolence in children may cause attention, memory and cognitive deficits, resulting in an overall impairment of school performance (Glaze, 2004).

Insomnia may increase the risk of cardiovascular disorders, in particular, hypertension (Vgontzas, Liao, Bixler, Chrousos, Vela-Bueno, 2009); it has also been associated with adverse immune and endocrine effects (Hirschowitz, Rose, Sharafkhan, 2009). Impaired job performance and an increased risk of accidents have been reported in cases with chronic insomnia (Katz & McHorney 2002; Kessler, R C, Berglund, P. A., Coulouvrat, C. Hajak, G. Roth, T. Shahly V. Shillington, A. C. Stephenson, J. J. Walsh, J K 2011).

### *How The Technique Was Developed:*

More than 15 years ago, a client consulted me regarding her nightly unconscious nocturnal eating habits. She reported that she awoke each morning to find her kitchen table a mess and food missing from her refrigerator. Since she lived alone she realized she must have eaten the food, but had no memory of ever doing this.

Originally, I did not know how to approach this problem, but I knew the subconscious never sleeps. It knows exactly what is happening at any time of the day, and night. I decided to ask her subconscious to tell me what was happening during the night and how and when she was consuming this food. I started asking her to describe her sleeping pattern and how she felt during her sleep.

When hypnotized, she was asked to imagine herself in bed, and then asked what is happening every half hour from 11:00 p.m. onward. At 3:00 a.m. she said, "I am getting up." I then asked "what happens next?" She proceeded to tell me that she is walking towards the kitchen...she is taking the chicken out of the fridge...she is eating the chicken...then she runs back to her room and continues to sleep. Then I asked her to go back 5 minutes prior to 3:00 a.m. When asked what she was feeling when getting up she stated "anxiety", and when this was traced by questioning to the root cause, she was 5 years old and feeling deprived of food. She stated that her mother would often warn her not to eat too much lest she gain weight. She felt sad and anxious, and subconsciously made a decision to eat in secret; on the conscious level she was totally unaware of this decision. Because she felt she was not allowed to eat she found a way to eat surreptitiously in the middle of the night. This way no one would know or judge, even herself.

Using the affect bridge-regression technique, I took her back to the root cause of her feelings which went back to her early childhood. We spent more than an hour reframing these feelings and making her see the situation with an objective perspective, without magnifying the feelings, so that she could clear the emotional connection between her mother and herself. Once the true association was made and the emotional issues were cleared, she felt peaceful. We again went back to 11:00 p.m. and then went forward in the half-hour pattern to 3:00 a.m. This time she was sleeping peacefully. Months later, she called and was very thankful for the help in overcoming a series of disturbing behaviors. This suggested that if we can help someone stop eating in the middle of the night by communicating with the subconscious, then





we can ask the subconscious for details about the underlying emotional issues which come up during the night and may disrupt peaceful sleep. We have subsequently used this technique with several hundred clients, and we know that these issues can be cleared and so restore peace in their lives.

#### *How do we resolve insomnia?*

We use repeated regressions during one hypnosis session, in order to identify and resolve the underlying core issues which are responsible for the debilitating sleep disturbances. Once we isolate the emotion that causes the sleep disturbance through regression, we trace the emotion to the root cause. Then we reframe, delete, and change the perception of this event with its particular memory association and experience. We also discharge the negative emotions, thoughts and limiting beliefs associated to the event by using a variety of techniques such as NLP, Decording™, inner dialoguing, inner child work, focusing and other appropriate methodologies.

During our daily activities, the conscious mind keeps us occupied and suppresses unresolved subconscious issues. During the night, the conscious mind is non-active, while the subconscious mind brings these issues to the surface while trying to resolve them. These emotions can be debilitating and will usually awaken the person.

Through hypnosis we can communicate with the subconscious and find what these issues are and transform them. In reality we are not only helping the person to sleep better we are also helping them to resolve their major troublesome issues which enhances their life.

Hypnosis, as cognitive therapy to induce relaxation and facilitate sleep hygiene has been shown to improve insomnia (Stanton, 1989; Becker, 1993), and self-hypnosis for relaxation has been found superior to benzodiazepines and placebos (Anderson, Dalton, Basker 1979).

Pharmacological treatment of insomnia is appropriate in the short term, but can

have a variety of untoward effects and may aggravate sleep disturbances in the long term (Glass, Lancot, Herrmann, Sproule, Busto, 2005). Hypnosis works with the perceived stressful emotions which lie under the surface of awareness without disturbing the sleep process which chemicals may do by altering brain function. ▼

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NFH Local 104 secretary Sharon Morris can be reached at [nfh@ngh.net](mailto:nfh@ngh.net) or (603) 429-9438. Sharon will also be happy to give you more information and sign you up to be a Union Hypnotist. You can receive all the extra benefits, such as \$2000 accidental life insurance, Identity Theft Protection, Emergency Road Services, Prescription/Pharmacy Discounts and more. This is also an opportunity to expand and reach many more prospective clients for your services in your area because union members do business with union businesses.

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