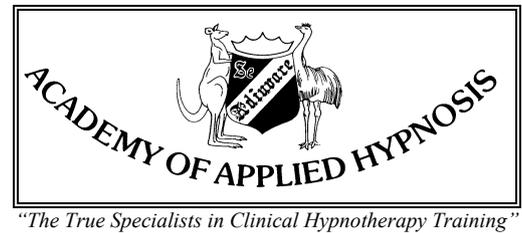


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Hypnotherapy and Insomnia

An Irish proverb says “A good laugh and a long sleep are the best cures in the doctor's book”. Many would agree because the lack of either causes distress. Perlstrom (Perlstrom and Wickramasekera 1998, pp. 437-440.) quotes Morin who states “insomnia is second only to pain in terms of the frequency of health complaints”. A lack of sleep results in a myriad of issues which lead to ongoing consultations and can precipitate an ever changing pharmaceutical regime.

Can hypnotherapy help? Stanton (Stanton 1989, pp. 64-8.) compared a hypnotic relaxation technique to stimulus control and placebo conditions as a means of reducing sleep onset latency. His results suggested that hypnotic relaxation treatment was effective in helping subjects go to sleep more quickly. “Neither stimulus control nor placebo groups recorded similar improvement” Becker (Becker 1993, pp. 98-105.) also reports hypnotherapy as beneficial for insomnia.

It appears many insomniacs reflect Charlotte Brontë’s comment: “A ruffled mind makes a restless pillow.” This being the case, hypnosis and its by product of intense relaxation provides either an adjunct to pharmaceutical intervention or a good non pharmaceutical alternative.

The client would initially respond to the hypnotherapist’s suggestions and would then be taught to use self hypnotic techniques for self management.

The ongoing self discipline of using self hypnosis is a separate issue. If self hypnosis practice diminishes and insomnia reoccurs the patient usually realises they can regain their desired sleeping patterns by reinitiating their self hypnosis techniques

For more information on how hypnotherapy can help your patients a copy of ‘What is Hypnosis?’ is available from admin@aah.edu.au or ring the Hypnosis Advisory Line on 9415 6500. The Hypnosis Advisory Line is also offered as a free service to the general public.

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