

# Secrets of Successful Sleep

How to fall asleep easily, stay asleep  
through the night and wake up  
feeling energized.

 eBook



by Avinoam Lerner

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## Chapter 1: Who's This Book For?

Insomnia, or trouble sleeping, is a common problem for people facing cancer. It affects different people in different ways, from having difficulty falling asleep to waking up several times during the night or early morning awakenings with the inability to get back to sleep.

Have you ever wondered how some people can sleep through the night? How they can stay asleep regardless of discomfort, disturbance or outside noise? Or how they can wake up feeling refreshed and energized?

Regardless of your challenge, know that you can learn how to find sleep easily and naturally and the information in this e-Book will show you how.

This book is for you if you:

- ❖ Feel sleep deprived and look forward to a restful night sleep
- ❖ Wish to wake up bursting with energy, motivation and drive
- ❖ Do not wish to continue a pattern of sleep deprivation and sleepless nights
- ❖ Want to improve your overall health, strengthen your immune system and allow your body to heal.

The purpose of this book is to reveal powerful, effective yet simple natural solutions to the most common sleeping issues we face. While it may feel lonely as you lay in bed at night counting sheep and failing to fall asleep, you are certainly not alone.

Several recent studies have reported an incidence of 30 to 50% in this group, compared to 15% in the general population. In addition, symptoms of insomnia were found in 23 to 44% of patients 2 to 5 years after treatment for cancer.

Despite this prevalence, one study found that only 16% of patients with insomnia informed their healthcare provider about the problem, and many practitioners failed to ask about sleep. This likely occurs for one of several reasons: insomnia may be viewed as a normal reaction to the cancer diagnosis and treatment, insomnia may be viewed as a lesser priority than the cancer treatment, and practitioners may lack the knowledge to diagnose and treat this problem.

My hope is that by providing practical and simple tools for successful sleep, we might be able to change those statistics in some way.

The best part about this book is that all the secrets you are about to discover are based in a mind-body approach. What does that mean? No drugs, no sleeping pills, no outside intervention whatsoever.

**We all carry within us the power and ability to**

**change, even our sleep. All we need is the willingness and desire to do so.**

### **What is this book NOT about?**

This book is a self-help book, intended for your own personal development and sleep improvement. This book is written by a non-medical person and cannot and will not replace medical care. If you have any medical or psychological concerns caused by sleep issues, you are advised to consult with your primary care physician.

If you are looking for hard-core data, and statistics you will not find them here. I do not aim to provide an insight into the activity of brain waves or any other technical explanation into the mechanics of sleep. I leave that to medical experts who dedicated themselves to study the brain and the body in the sleep laboratories. Besides, if you have been struggling with sleep for a while, you probably have already read all the guides and explanations on the mechanics of sleep.

Furthermore, your level of improvement in attaining the desired results as described in this e-book depends on the time you devote to practicing these techniques. Since these factors differ according to individuals, no guarantee is being made. Please be patient with your progress and remember to be kind to yourself. As you'll soon discover, your state of mind is a key factor in your journey toward better sleep.

## How important is sleep?

As you begin to sift through the incredible amount of data about sleep and sleep deprivation you come across different schools of thought. Some state the importance of long restful sleep while others will advocate a shorter and deeper kind of sleep. Some will talk about the importance of sleep cycles, while others will focus on one particular cycle and brain activity. Regardless of their differences, they all agree that what determines how you wake up in the morning is the quality of your sleep.

The Harvard Women's Health Watch offered the following reasons to get enough sleep:

*([Harvard Health Publications](#), January 2006)*

**Disease:** sleep deprivation alters immune function, including the activity of the body's killer cells. Keeping up with sleep may also help fight cancer

**Cardiovascular health:** seriously sleep disorder have been linked to hypertension, increased stress hormone level, and irregular heartbeat.

**Mood:** sleep loss may result in your disability, impatience, inability to concentrate, and moodiness. Too little sleep can also leave you tired to do the things you like to do.

**Safety:** sleep debt tributes to a greater tendency to fall asleep during the daytime. This may cause faults and mistakes such as medical errors, air traffic mishaps, and road accidents.

**Learning and memory:** sleep helps the brain commit new information to memory through a process called memory consolidation. In studies, people who slept after learning the task did better on test later.

**Weigh management and metabolism:** chronic sleep deprivation may cause weight gain by affecting the way our bodies process and store carbohydrates, and by altering level hormones that affect our appetite.

We don't have to be told how important sleep is for our state of mind and well-being; we know that sleep is important and beneficial both for our mind as well as our body. We know that if our mind did not rest, our body did not rest and therefore we will feel lethargic and exhausted.

The consensus is that sleep is a vital component to our health, much like nutrition and physical activity. When we sleep at night, we heal and recuperate from the wear and tear of our day.

There are some indications that sleep deprivation is a contributing factor in many lifestyle – related illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension and obesity. If so, taking charge in addressing our

sleep issues might serve the best defense strategy toward healing these conditions.

At the end of the day, proper good night sleep recharge and replenish our resources. When we are well rested we...

- ❖ Make better parents, colleagues and companions
- ❖ Meet life's challenges with more clarity & energy
- ❖ Can better manage our emotions and
- ❖ Are less prone to use drugs, alcohol or other mood numbing/enhancing substances.

## Chapter 2: The Causes of Sleeplessness

Before we go into what causes sleeplessness, I feel it's important to define what sleeplessness is. In most cases when we talk about the inability to sleep or sleep disorders in a general way will be talking about the most common sleep disorder which is insomnia.

Generally speaking, insomnia is described as a sleep disorder in which a person experiences poor sleep or has trouble sleeping. From a clinical perspective there are different major destinations of insomnia, but they may all range from having difficulty falling asleep, to difficulty staying asleep or waking up through the night, waking up too early in the morning, and even not feeling refreshed after a long night sleep.

Experiencing any of the above and it's likely you wake up tired the next day or feel as if you didn't sleep enough. We already know that if we don't get enough sleep it may affect our moods or motivation level; it may decrease our attention span and affect our concentration.

I believe that we are all prone to experience sleepless nights every now and then. However, there is an indication that in terms of gender, women are more likely to experience insomnia. There is also an indication that people taking medication are more prone to insomnia and those who do not take medication...

### Chapter 3: Quiet the Mind and Fall Asleep Blissfully

Any source of information that you will look at in an attempt to improve your sleep will make clear suggestions in terms of physical preparation you can take for a great night sleep.

Suggestions like make your room very quiet, very dark, and even lower the temperature in an attempt to get you to hibernate through the night. Other suggestions you may find address your intake of caffeine, alcohol, nicotine and sugar.

There is certainly value in all of these suggestions, but you will find people that can sleep in broad daylight, having just drunk a cup of coffee, eaten two donuts and then rinsed them down with an alcoholic beverage.

Some websites I visited talked about avoiding afternoon naps, and I wonder if people who have trouble sleeping have the time to take a nap during the busy work week?

***The bottom line is your internal dialogue, which is loud and ever present.***

Let me tell you my personal story. I was a tank commander in the military for three years. What I learned in the armed forces is that I can sleep anywhere and anytime, sometimes right beneath a roaring engine.

Years later I had the fortune to go on a retreat in a Buddhist monastery in the Far East. This was a 10

day silent retreats. The rules were that there was no speaking, no reading, and no exercise. Obviously, no smoking, and I was a heavy smoker at that time.

If you never spent few days in silence, it's pretty remarkable what goes on in your heads. I was surprised to find all that noise in my head despite of this peaceful surrounding.

There was certainly a battle within me, I battle that I didn't even know about until I have the opportunity to let everything else fade away and listen. The battle went on for four intense days until my mind quieted down. It was a real revelation for me to experience a calm mind, especially because I already thought but I was a calm person.

***I learned that it's not the outer noise that will allow or disallow for you to fall asleep but the internal noise that is ongoing. That is the major factor and the only factor at play.***

I believe you will find it very interesting to tune in and listen to your internal dialogue, and the first thing that you need to do is you listen in is to honestly acknowledge the type of conversation you have with yourself. Ask yourself the following:

- ❖ Is the conversation that you have with yourself negative in nature or positive in nature?
- ❖ Do you support yourself or put yourself down?
- ❖ Do you second guess every move you make?
- ❖ Do you feel worthy of feeling restful and peaceful?

It is likely that if you find it difficult to fall asleep, your mind is participating in what is called negative self-talk. I do not suggest, by any means that your entire conversation is negative, but if you find your mind focused on something it cannot let go of it is more often than not but the negative nature.

**Various forms of negative self-talk include worrying about the future, guilt about the past, anger and the present and fear of the unknown.**

## Techniques to quiet the mind

Is it possible to quiet the mind that is ongoing? Yes indeed. But notice I refer to it as quieting the mind, not silencing it. Perhaps it will help if you think of it as a skill in need of acquiring and improving rather than a destination.

Some people choose to quiet the mind by downloading thoughts on a piece of paper, some by meditation and contemplation, and some by visualizing magnificent scenes in their minds eye.

***These are very effective ways to shift your point of focus from thoughts that aggravate the mind to thoughts that calm the mind.***

It is common for someone who has trouble falling asleep to feel anxious about even getting to bed. That anxious thought process may feed itself into a physical response of shorter breathes and sweaty palms, which will lead to even greater anxiety about one's ability to fall asleep. Hence goes on the vicious cycle.

There are certain things that you can do only in your private environment, and by that I mean taking a long relaxing bath or listening to your favorite music and there are some things that you can do by acquiring a service, for example, having a massage, reflexology, all those things will work well when a available.

But the one thing that you can always do, no matter where you are, no matter who's around is ...

## Chapter 4: Waking Up In the Middle of the Night

One of the most common questions that I get has to do with getting back to sleep once you have woken-up. It will certainly be beneficial to do all of the things suggested in the previous chapters.

Doing your progressive relaxation again will likely work well, changing your self-talk from negative and demanding to positive and soothing, or simply focusing your mind on a particular positive event that happened to you during the day.

If you still unable to fall asleep, you may find it beneficial to .....

**When waking up in the middle of the night, do not get up and start doing things! Nothing!**

And whatever you do, do not watch television!

## A Word about Television

I know that many people find it calming to fall asleep in front of the TV. It is not. Watching television before bedtime is a really bad idea, especially the type of violent shows that deal with death, rape and the lot (which refers to the bulk of programming these days). But even lighter shows are not the way to drift into sleep.

Television is a very engaging medium that tends to entice the senses. We may feel physically relaxed on the couch or in bed, but our mind work extra time to absorb the rapid interaction on screen.

Television is disruptive to your sleep and your state of mind. Get it out of your bedroom.

Add to this the new data surfacing from studies such as the one conducted in Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. It suggest that basking in the blue glow of iPads, smartphones and other electronic devices before bedtime could be messing up our sleep patterns more profoundly than we realize. It may even be affecting our long-term health. According to Anne-Marie Chang, a professor at Penn State University and a co-author of the study "It may be having a greater impact than we

previously thought".

## How Much Sleep Do I Need?

When researching what is the right amount of sleep, how many hours we should spend in bed and sleep there is all kind of perspectives. Some research indicates that eight hours is absolute necessity, while another research suggests that only four hours is sufficient.

The purpose of sleep, as already mentioned, is not only to recharge our batteries so to speak, but it's to allow the body to heal the wear and tear of the day and allow our mind to process memory and information, restore balance to all systems on all levels.

It makes sense that since we are all different you may need less, or more sleep than I do. I really do believe that your body knows what's right for you, better than anyone else and you can tell when you feel rested and refreshed or when you feel exhausted and drained. You are responsible to listen to your body's signals, and not ignore them, if you want to be healthy.

The theory of sleeping less while feeling more energy reminds me of a great story about the farmer and his horse. This was a strong horse that worked very hard every day.

One day, the farmer had only a little bit of to give his horse, less than his usual amount. He simply ran out of food on that day, so he fed the horse that smaller

portion.

But the farmer was surprised to see the horse able to work just as hard as it did the previous day, on his larger meal. The farmer rejoiced because he realized that he found an easy and practical way to save money.

So in the next few days, the farmer kept feeding his horse smaller portions than the previous days, and each day the horse would still need to carry the load of work in the farm. Since the horse never complained, the farmer did not increase his portions.

Not long after this particular regiment of smaller portions began, the farmer woke up one morning to find his horse as dead. He was indeed surprised again because the horse never complained of hunger.

You can understand that by depriving our body of its needed replenishment, it will eventually fail to operate properly. Perhaps we can get away with it here and there, maybe a few days in a row. But once our deprivation is part of our routine, we may forget how it feels to be well and replenished....

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