

What Has Dr. Shook Been Reading?

*Restful Sleep*

By Deepak Chopra, M.D.

To me, a good night's sleep is a wonderful and refreshing experience. However for millions of people restful slumber is elusive and difficult to obtain. Could it be that anxieties, frustrations, responsibilities and worries dance about their minds? Is it caffeine, nicotine or some other (possibly unmentionable) vice coursing through their veins? Maybe it's the lights and sounds of this busy world intruding and overloading the senses. Whatever the reason, the lack of restful sleep, otherwise known as insomnia, is a common complaint for many people and a big money maker for the drug manufacturing industry.

In his discussions of sleep, dreams and the natural rhythms of the body, Dr. Chopra draws upon the knowledge of Ayurvedic medicine and the concept that health is closely linked to nature. Translated from Sanskrit, Ayurveda means "the science of life." It has been practiced in India for over 5000 years, making it according to Chopra, "the oldest tradition of knowledge having to do with health." "...Ayurveda says it's not that we actually lose our connection with nature; rather, it's more like we forget it. We stop recognizing a reality that is always there."

Dr. Chopra emphasized the importance of achieving harmony with the cycles of nature and creating a healthy balanced daily routine. He suggests that sleep and dreams are part of a natural rhythm, not unlike the turning of the seasons, the migration of birds or the cycles of the moon. He suggests that the modern world filled with busyness, electric lights and continual sensory stimulation has drawn us away from this natural rhythm. For people sensitive to these rhythms, this disruption will be reflected into the cycles of, dreams and restorative sleep.

*Restful Sleep* discusses circadian rhythms, dreams, nightmares, exercise and diet. It suggests remedies such as warm spiced milk, massage, regulating bedtime, calming herbs, meditation, yoga, establishing inner-personal harmony and finding satisfaction with daily activities.

I myself do not have difficulty sleeping. I enjoy my night's rest and will eagerly draw upon the suggestions found within *Restful Sleep* to further improve the quality of my slumber. For people who experience exceptional levels of disharmony, these suggestions may seem difficult, requiring great effort. I feel the effort would be well worth the reward for anyone suffering from the disharmony of restless sleep.

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