

Insomnia

(A Step by Step Script)

Guided imagery and hypnosis are also useful for chronic behavioral problems such as insomnia. The following example is an intake and script demonstrating an appropriate outline to modify a patient's behavior:

1. Establish the time and the pattern of sleep during the night.
2. Induce a short self-hypnosis to examine the patient's stress and worries in his/her life and find the cause for restlessness.
3. Give patient homework to practice self-hypnosis, preferably twice a day. During the morning session give patient following suggestions: As I take off my robe, I let go of all my worries of the day. As I proceed brushing my teeth I myself get more tired. As I fluff my pillows all my worries are gone and as I close my lights I feel so tired and ready to fall asleep. As I am going to go to sleep I will create a good night's sleep.
4. For the afternoon self-hypnotic session give patient following suggestions: I will direct all my energy in building a mental relaxation spot. Visualizing how it feels to build this wonderful resort in this beautiful spot. Imagining the colors, the design, the rooms, the mountains surrounding the resort, the beaches with its waves and how relaxing it feels to hear waves coming and going. As I enjoy my days of waking hours, I know that I can fall asleep whenever I give myself such command. I have complete control over my waking hours and my sleeping hours and all I need to do is give myself the permission to sleep. During my waking hours, there are many times I can finish a project without any interruption. The same way I complete my functions without any interruption during the day, the same way I can find the time to fall asleep and stay asleep without any interruption until morning time. Just as I accomplish all my daily routines uninterrupted, the same I can do during my sleeping time. I will create the same pattern of uninterrupted sleep during my sleeping hours.
5. Integrate a short brisk afternoon walk, or any other exercise he/she truly enjoys. During this time allow all emotions to come forth and feel them and let them go. Enjoy the exercise and allow to see how good it feels to your body. Visualize how the body burns off all calories and visualize the body getting slimmer and slimmer.
6. Give patient a tape to listen to, containing soothing music, self-hypnotic suggestions and cues helping him/her to fall asleep. Visualizing how tired he/she is, noting the more he/she wants to be awake, the more tired he/she feels. The eyelids are so heavy that it is hard keep them open. More he/she tries to keep them open the more they want to be closed. The patient imagines him/herself to fall asleep and sees him/herself sleep, completely, peacefully and sound asleep.
7. Have patient keep a journal of all the improvements and congratulate him/her for every success, even if it is a tiny one. Every night is a night of a wonderful, uninterrupted sleep. Feeling completely restful.