

continued from page 1

Mind Matters: To Sleep, Perchance to Dream

For some, however, serious sleep disorders are more difficult to overcome. You or a family member could suffer from undiagnosed insomnia or another sleep disorder such as sleep apnea, restless leg syndrome or narcolepsy. The NSF has designated six possible symptoms of such disorders:

- Dozing off while engaged in an activity such as reading, watching TV, sitting in meetings, or sitting in traffic
- Slowed thinking and reacting
- Difficulty listening to what is said or understanding directions
- Frequent errors or mistakes
- Depression or negative mood
- Impatience or being quick to anger.

If any of these symptoms apply to you, discuss them with your physician.

At the same time, relaxation techniques can assist most of us in getting deep sleep.

Clinicians are taking a close look at yoga, meditation, massage, acupuncture and other integrative medical approaches. New studies are revealing

surprising information about such techniques. In one recent example, researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital Division of Sleep Medicine in Boston began a study on yoga practitioners to see if this ancient practice could be a mainstream medical treatment for insomnia. The stretching postures and deep breathing in yoga may help patients settle into a deep relaxation that promotes better sleep.

While lack of sleep can contribute to physical, mental and emotional problems, a good night's sleep can have the opposite effect. People who are well-rested generally report increased levels of energy and optimism. The well-rested person also seems to feel less "time urgency."

So in answer to the Coors beer refrain, "Who needs sleep?" Everyone. Sleep isn't for the weak. It's for the strong and healthy.

Take a nap. Turn out the lights early. Rest your weary mind.

Your body will thank you.

James L. Hall Jr.
CENTER FOR MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT

The **James L. Hall Jr. Center for Mind, Body and Spirit** is a not-for-profit educational organization committed to improving health by increasing awareness of the healing power of the connection between mind, body and spirit. The center, associated with INTEGRIS Health, is intended as a community resource. For more information, please call (405) 943-3921, or write:

4900 N. Portland, Suite 102
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

R. Murali Krishna, M.D.
President and COO

William Hawley, M.D.
Chairman, Advisory Board

Charlotte Lankard, M.Ed., LMFT
Director

Kerry Ann Richards
Administrative Assistant

James L. Hall Jr.
CENTER FOR MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT
4900 N. Portland, Suite 102
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

U.S. Postage
PAID
OKla. City, OK
Permit No. 1286

HARMONY

News from the James L. Hall Jr. Center for Mind, Body and Spirit

APRIL 2003

Mind Matters: To Sleep, Perchance to Dream

By R. Murali Krishna, M.D.

In a scene from the movie "Thirteen Days" (a film about the Cuban missile crisis), President John F. Kennedy convenes his cabinet for a tense briefing. It's early in the morning, and the secretary of defense strides into the room, somewhat bleary-eyed after being abruptly awakened. The president apologizes for waking everyone. The secretary of defense leans forward and utters an astounding line of dialogue: "Sleep is for the weak, Mr. President."

In a recent Coors beer ad, a simple refrain is used repeatedly: "Who needs sleep?"

Across American pop culture, too much of what children and adults see on TV or at the movies encourages us to regard sleep as a liability, rather than as a positive health habit, and as a basic requirement for a sound body, mind and spirit.

Our current president, George W. Bush, has set a positive example for the nation by attempting to get the right amount of sleep (even in the midst of a War on Terror). But his predecessor, Bill Clinton, liked to boast about how little sleep it took for him to function in his role as chief executive.

Most people probably took little note of the scene in "Thirteen Days" or of the recent Coors television commercial. That's because we have become a "round the clock" society addicted to too many stimulants in too many forms. We like to tank up on caffeine at the local Starbucks,

watch several hundred hours of television each year and surf the Internet late at night. All of it keeps us from hitting the sack at a decent hour.

According to cutting-edge research and demographics, "sleepless in America" is having major consequences. Our health and safety are declining, and lack of sleep is one of the biggest culprits.

Each day, we literally bathe our bodies in a stew of harmful stress hormones and "free radicals," molecules that roam the body to do damage. Deep, delta stage sleep produces growth hormone that repairs the body. If you aren't resting, this doesn't happen. Similarly, during REM sleep the brain seems to carry out an inner self-therapy through dreams, working out emotions and healing us from a psychological perspective. If you're staring into the dark at 3 a.m., worrying about tomorrow's meeting with the boss or the endless to-do list facing you, your brain isn't getting the vacation it needs.

Take a close look at your co-workers, friends and family members. Do they look at peace, rested, relaxed? Probably not.

According to the latest data from the National Sleep Foundation, most of us do not get the amount of sleep (7 to 9 hours) each night that sleep experts recommend. A poll by the NSF found nearly one-quarter adults in the U.S. don't get even the minimum amount of sleep they



R. Murali Krishna, M.D.

need. We're facing an epidemic of sleepiness as a result.

Even a small "sleep debt" can add up after a period of time.

The NSF estimates the cost of our sleepless epidemic to the U.S. economy is at least \$18 billion a year in lost work productivity. That's not to mention car accidents, workplace injuries and weakened immune systems (sleep deprivation, in fact, can cause bodily changes that mimic the effects of aging).

The good news for most people is how easy it is to make a few simple lifestyle changes in order to get a good night's sleep. Take stock of your own sleep habits. When do you normally go to bed? How much TV do you watch in the evening? Is your bedroom quiet and free from distractions (such as television or page-turner novels)? Just asking such basic questions can often demonstrate how easy it is to turn in earlier.

continued on page 4

Type 2 Diabetes Helped By Complementary Therapies

Nutritionist Carol Guber has written a book titled *Carol Guber's Type 2 Diabetes Life Plan*. Guber says you can use your diagnosis as an opportunity to wake up the needs of your body, as well as your mind and spirit.

Type 2 diabetes, also known as adult-onset diabetes, afflicts 16 million to 20 million people in the U.S. Serious as the disease is, it can be controlled with insulin injections or oral medications, and if it is caught early, with proper diet and exercise.

Guber was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes four years ago. It is a condition that requires much self-care and self-management. Guber says, "The very nature of living well with diabetes, encourages you to look anew at the most elemental activities in

life: eating, exercising, communicating and looking after yourself."

Guber's book provides valuable information on the nature of the disease and its complications. It outlines dietary and exercise plans and shows readers how to monitor their medications and insulin levels.

In addition, it explores complementary therapies, among them acupuncture, yoga, biofeedback and massage. At least for some patients, these therapies can be particularly useful in controlling diabetes by lowering blood pressure, improving circulation and reducing the heart rate.

This book is available in the Crowe-Dunlevy Library in the James L. Hall Jr. Center for Mind, Body and Spirit, located at 4900 N. Portland.

Upcoming Events

Tim McGuire: Spirituality in the Workplace

Tuesday, May 6



Tim McGuire

"Work is the last place most people think about spirituality," says Tim McGuire, columnist for United Media's More Than Work. The former editor of the Minneapolis Star Tribune and president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors mixes work and spirituality all the time, even though he knows many people think it is heresy. Still the nationally known journalist is convinced stressed-out professionals must find some way to stop ignoring the holes in their souls.

Join the James L. Hall Jr. Center for Mind, Body and Spirit for a memorable evening as McGuire shares his beliefs that if we can bring our souls to work, then we can transform our work. That is when our work can begin to transform us. The free public presentation will be held at 7 p.m. in the James L. Henry Auditorium at INTEGRIS Baptist Medical Center.

For reservations, please call the INTEGRIS HealthLine at (405) 951-2277.

"Schlag Bytes"

Carl A. Hammerschlag, M.D., is a distinguished psychiatrist, author, storyteller and healer, and the most recent speaker for the James L. Hall Jr. Center for Mind, Body and Spirit.

Log on to <http://www.HealingDoc.com> for a weekly dose of Schlag Bytes, Dr. Hammerschlag's opinions about things that interest him, perhaps things he's read in the newspaper, seen on TV or

reviewed in journals. They may amuse or infuriate you, but rest assured they will reflect his unique perspective on life and the world.

Hammerschlag's website also includes helpful health resources, articles, order forms for his books and tapes, and a listing of his presentations and speaking topics.

Handbook for the Heart

So what we seek in living from the heart, is a rhythm in life that includes time for renewal in nature: time to walk for no purpose at all; time to sit still; time to listen to the sounds of life around us; time to listen to our bodies; time to listen to our hearts. Meditation can teach us this art with the simple grace of following our breath in and out until we feel the life rhythm that always moves in our bodies.

— Jack Kornfield

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Food For Thought

By Charlotte Lankard, LMFT, director, James L. Hall Jr. Center for Mind, Body and Spirit



Caroline Myss is one of the most widely known and respected pioneers in the human potential movement. She is brilliant in making you think outside the box of your comfort zone, discovering your human energy range and how to gauge its effects on

your health. Caroline has a way of teaching that we are not victims in our lives, but rather are in the driver's seat by virtue of the choices we make.

I receive a weekly e-mail newsletter from her and recently one of them focused on the necessity of having something in our lives that is nonsensical, encourages postponement of everything that is driving you crazy, and gives you permission to DO nothing. Something with NO purpose whatsoever except to fill the space with pure enjoyment of loving friends and the precious electricity of humor.

Myss says we have all been so intent upon finding meaning and purpose everywhere and in everything and yet, she asks, "Why should we have to struggle so hard to find meaning?" Perhaps, she muses, in some way we have made the quest far more difficult than it was ever meant to be.

What makes you laugh? What makes you forget the time? Or, as Myss asks, "Why do we have to wait until we are semi-conscious with exhaustion to just kick back and enjoy nothingness?"

Spirit Winds

By Rev. Karrie A. Oertli, MA, M.Div., director of Pastoral Care at INTEGRIS Baptist Medical Center

"Let all mortal flesh keep silence" is the first line of an ancient Christian hymn, inviting the human to come quietly into God's presence. This month, I invite you to consider quietness.

Many years ago, I read an article about a woman who took herself to a distant cabin in Arizona. For the first week, she reported that her ears rang continuously. After the ringing went away, she experienced the quiet that enveloped her. She reported that when she returned "to civilization," she heard daily life as exceedingly loud.

I know this is true for me. Our lives are loud, not only from physical noises in the humming and grinding of life, but also in the emotional and

spiritual clatter in our information-rich, 24/7 world.

Perhaps, then, it is especially important for us to "let our flesh (and our spirits) keep silence." As we mindfully meditate, pray, or contemplate, we can let the noises and clatter fall silent.

How do we shut off the clamor that is a part of our everyday living? We know ways to leave most physical noises behind; quieting spiritual and emotional noises are more difficult. Here's one way to practice this, as solace in these cacophonous days. Find a quiet place – as few external noises as possible invading the area – and close your eyes. You might want to pray for a bit to help to quiet your heart and



mind, and then focus on one thought or idea. Sometimes, I use a bit of scripture or even a meaningful word, such as "peace," as my focus. When other thoughts come to my mind, I simply imagine myself closing my eyes to them and returning to my focus.

Try silence this month. May gentle winds be with you this day.