

# MENTAL FITNESS

## A Newsletter of Self-Help Strategies

*Compliments of:*

### **HOW TO DEAL WITH INSOMNIA**

1. Change your attitude. Don't try to fall asleep. Don't struggle. The minute you struggle to fall asleep, you become tense and worry. Tension and worry make insomnia worse.
2. Go to bed when you feel tired and sleepy. Don't go to bed too early. If you find yourself tossing and turning and feeling frustrated, get out of bed and get involved with another activity.
3. Watch out for medical problems. If you have physical symptoms that keep you awake, you should consult your physician. If you are dependent on alcohol or sleeping pills, insomnia is a symptom of drug or alcohol problems and must be dealt with in that context.
4. Say No to stimulants. Soft drinks, coffee, black tea, diet pills, or a lot of sugar can all prevent you from sleeping.
5. Start a regular aerobic program. By inhibiting normal increases and decreases in body temperature, physical inactivity may contribute to insomnia. Regular exercise in the early evening or late afternoon eliminates these problems because it causes your body temperature to rise and fall.
6. Make phone calls and take care of business matters several hours before bedtime so that you can relax and wind down as you approach sleep.
7. Reduce your fluid intake after 9 P.M. to help reduce the chance of having to get up to go the bathroom. A light carbohydrate snack a couple of hours before you go to sleep increases the production of a brain chemical called serotonin which helps you to sleep.
8. Take a second look at your sleeping environment. There should be fresh air and it should be quiet. Your mattress and whatever you sleep on or under should be comfortable.