

Insomnia

Insomnia affects millions of people each year. Insomnia is simply defined as having difficulty sleeping, whether it is non-refreshing sleep, difficulty falling asleep, or difficulty staying asleep (waking in the middle of the night).

There are many causes of insomnia. It can be the result of many disorders, of behavioral, psychological, or of a medical nature. Some psychological disorders are responsible for insomnia, including depression, anxiety, substance abuse (including caffeine), job stress, and relationship dissatisfaction. In addition, a host of medical problems, from heart and lung disease to thyroid disorders and physical pain can cause insomnia. The list goes on.

Getting the right amount of sleep is an important part of your health and it should be given priority. We live in a fast-paced world and it is easy to convince ourselves that we can skip a few hours here and a few hours there and still function with a few extra cups of coffee. This only contributes to the continuing cycle.

There are several treatments available for insomnia. Treatment can be provided by different types of providers. Your doctor can prescribe medication to assist with sleep. Talking with your doctor is very important; they can rule out other physical illnesses or factors contributing to insomnia.

Psychotherapy can also assist to evaluate your stress level and/or other psychological factors that are getting in the way of healthy sleep. Cognitive-behavioral psychotherapy is very effective with the treatment of insomnia. This process assists with changing unhealthy or irrational thought patterns (about sleep) and replace them with healthy thoughts and belief systems, resulting in healthy sleep.

Alternative therapies such as herbal supplements as well as acupuncture are also widely used for treatment of sleep problems. Consult an alternative healthcare provider if you are interested in the exploration of alternative therapies.

Whatever the cause of sleep problems you may be experiencing, know that proper sleep is important to your good health. Each person's body is different and so each person needs a different amount of sleep.

Talk to your doctor or healthcare provider today if you are experiencing insomnia. When you feel happier, more productive and refreshed, you will be glad you did!

GARY BREUER, MA, LPC



My private practice is located in North Scottsdale, within the offices of PsychArizona. I work with children (ages 6 and older), pre-teens, adolescents and adults. I work with individuals, couples and families with issues of anxiety, depression, trauma, grief and loss, career, academic and workplace issues, relationship issues, LGBT concerns, personal growth and spirituality.

I use various therapeutic approaches depending on the needs of the client. These approaches include developmental, humanistic, cognitive-behavioral, existential, family-systems, mindfulness-based, transpersonal, and EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing). EMDR is a model used for the treatment of trauma, and has also been found to be successful in the treatment of various other disorders as well.

I have experience providing professional counseling in clinical, business, and school settings.

Apart from my private practice, I am also a Reiki Master and have a great appreciation and respect for alternative as well as conventional treatment approaches.

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