

## **Mindful Monday Message #10 – 11 July 2016**

One of the most common issues we hear on the Bush Support Services support line, and in our workshops from health workers, concerns sleep. For some, lack of sleep is an ongoing part of remote health work. Difficulties with sleep not only involve shift work but broken sleep due to the stress of being on-call and general worries of the day.

There are a number of ways that a regular practice of mindfulness can assist with sleep. Accepting that the task at hand is to sleep rather than worry can be helped by practicing a mindfulness exercise just before going to bed. Focus on your breathing and when you notice your mind wandering notice it and then direct your attention back to relaxing deep breathing. Preparing for bed is also important. Make sure you have curtains that can darken your room and draw them at least 1 hour before you intend to sleep. Looking at devices, such as your mobile phone, stimulates your mind rather than relaxes it. Remember going to sleep, like being awake, can be a mindful exercise if you choose it to be so!

*Dr Annmaree Wilson*