

Mindfulness Monday Message #57 – 26 June 2017

One of the highest risk factors to safety for remote health workers, is a lack of sleep. Being on call, working shift work and just being a caring health professional, can all contribute to the vicious cycle of worry, that keeps you awake at night. A lack of sleep affects cognitive skills such as decision-making and problem solving. It can contribute to anxiety and depression. It has physical consequences.

Mindfulness helps you control your thinking at night. A regular mindful practice teaches you to discern what to focus on in the present moment. For example, worrying about an argument you had with a friend in the middle of the night, is not helpful and will keep you awake. Mindfulness will let those thoughts float in and float out of your mind.

Over the next few weeks in Mindfulness Monday we will look at some strategies to improve sleep hygiene. For this week, the simplest strategy is to focus on your breath. This will immediately shift your attention away from unhelpful thoughts. Focus your attention on breathing slowly and steadily, and when your mind wanders, just gently bring it back to your breath.

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