

# Sleep deprived? I think we've just forgotten how to sleep

Maybe it's the weather, my age or too many commitments, but I've felt like a zombie all week.

Right now, penning this column at my computer is a struggle - I find my head nodding.

It's a challenge, with the force of gravity working on my eyelids.

Some time ago, I watched one of those science programs about sleep deprivation. Amazingly, I managed to stay awake through it.

The program brought up some interesting facts about how we're deprived of sleep.

Apparently, since the invention of the light bulb, we've gone from an average of 10 hours a night to somewhere around the six or seven-hour mark.

And that isn't enough.

Some age groups in our population are more sleep deprived than others, with students leading the pack, particularly those in post-secondary education.

The 40- to 55-year-old group is a close second for being perpetually tired, and then the 65-plus - the category in which I belong.

The gist of the program was that if we catch ourselves nodding at work or can't concentrate, chances are we are sleep deprived. There are various reasons: insomnia brought on by too much stress, caffeine, taking on too many commitments or just not being disciplined enough to say "it's time for bed."

And I'm guilty on all counts.



**TED BROWN**  
A Ted Bit

The research suggested some remedies conducive to getting more sleep, like going to bed at the same time every night, every day of the week. It was suggested we not have a television in the bedroom, even though people say it puts them to sleep. Apparently, TV stimulates the mind, and the resulting sleep is not restful or productive.

Having a warm bath before bed was suggested, and little tricks like turning the dial of the clock radio away from you so you can't see the time if you wake in the dead of night.

Another strategy suggested writing down our concerns or putting them on a voice recorder beside the bed so that in our mind we've dealt with them before going to sleep, putting our minds at ease.

That does work, to a point. I have awoken in the middle of the night and written down a good column idea, then gone back to sleep - otherwise, I couldn't remember the idea in the morning!

All the points made in the program sounded feasible and are based on sound research, but I

have my own theories on sleep deprivation, particularly the insomnia thing.

Think back: when we were teens, we were up half the night, every night, as we spent all our spare time out on the town with our friends.

Geez, back then, we'd make it through a weekend with a total of four hours of sleep.

We "matured" and got married, and as newlyweds were awake half the night for other reasons.

And, as a result of living that lifestyle, we eventually became parents, which caused us more sleepless nights, with sleep interruptions like 2 a.m. feedings, teething, colic, and the usual "boogie man" bedroom invasions.

The next step? Our kids got to that age where they needed less sleep than us, and as a result we were awake half the night waiting for them to go to sleep.

Our kids started going out socializing, so we stayed awake waiting for the call to pick them up from their friends.

They started driving, which causes every parent to spend hours staring at the ceiling waiting for the family car to come home - more sleep loss.

Finally, we hit that time in our life when our kids became adults with their own kids keeping them awake, and we have no viable reason to suffer from insomnia.

But we're still awake. Know why?

Simple - we've just forgotten how.



Contributed by Carol Kerr

An antique hay bailer sits on the front lawn of the home at the corner of Winston Churchill and Steeles Avenue in southeast Halton Hills.

## End of an era at Whaley's Corners

Whaley's Corners at Winston Churchill Boulevard and Steeles Avenue may be just another busy country corner, but to five generations of the Whaley family, it was home.

In 1819, William Coulson Whaley, an Irish immigrant, came up from Delaware and settled there, having received the Crown deed from Queen Victoria.

All four corners were owned, at one time, by

Whaleys.

In 1844, William opened Whaley's Inn on the Esquering corner.

Five generations have lived on Lot 1, Concession 11, until now.

A blacksmith shop and weigh scales for farmers were added.

Lena and Gordon Whaley raised a family of seven in the small hamlet in the 20th century.

Lena sold the farm in 1976 after she designated

lots to sons Ray, Ken and Lorne.

Ken and Ann Whaley built their house on their lot and are the last family residing on the farm.

But after over 50 years, they have sold it, so this is the end of a nearly 200-year era.

A place of happy family gatherings, many cherished memories and a long history that all the Whaleys sadly must say goodbye to.

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