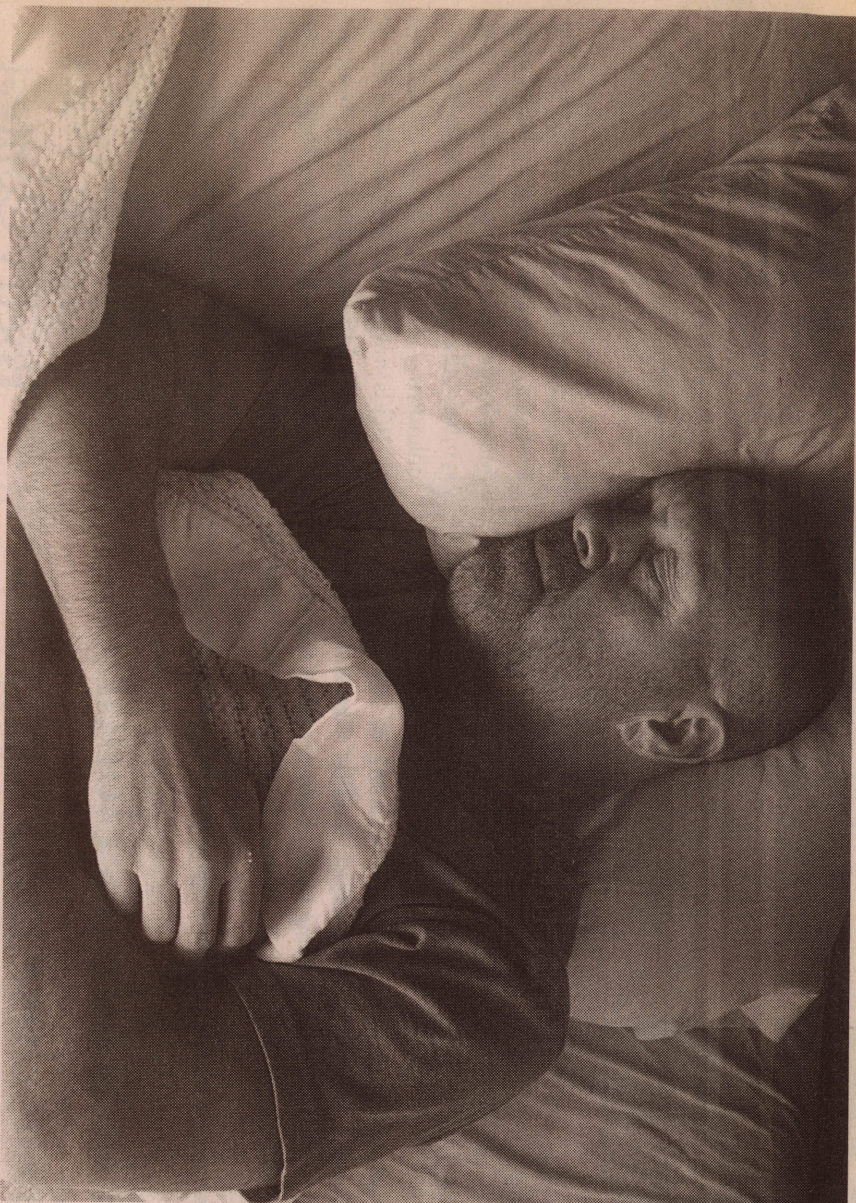


An Apple A Day

By DR. RUDY LUCASSI, Contributing Columnist To The Herald
SLEEP, THE NEW SECRET WEAPON



A patient came into my office sobbing, visibly shaken and incoherent. She'd experienced vivid hallucinations of her deceased husband while out shopping. The abusive man who'd terrorized her throughout their marriage was now doing so from beyond the grave. That same day a young man who'd been terrified by dogs as a child had similar hallucinations of a rabid dog charging him in a local store. It was an alarming reminder of a growing problem few "Havenites" care to address... sleep deprivation.

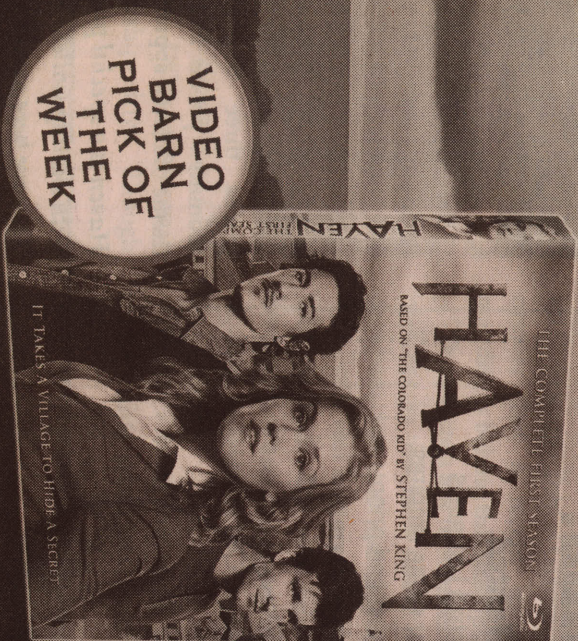
When pressed for answers, both patients reluctantly admitted that they operated on less than four hours' sleep most days. We might associate such stress-inducing sleep loss with a solely urban lifestyle, but

the truth is that modern life makes great demands on our time and energies wherever we live.

So what is an overworked and under-slept Havenite to do? Unfortunately, the answer seems to be to put sleep back on the schedule. Another recent patient came in after hallucinating a "scary clown" at the bus station. Her busy life as a federal law-enforcement agent was clearly impinging on her sleep schedule. I prescribed a new sleep ritual and eight hours reserved for sleep, every night. I'm proud to say it must have solved her problems – I haven't heard from her since. Remember: physical and mental health go hand in hand, so don't be afraid to slap that snooze button a time or two... it's just what the doctor ordered.

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Ask Auntie Em

By EMMA DUNKIRK, Advice Columnist



Q Dear Auntie Em:

Auntie Em

I'm worried about my mother-in-law. She's always enjoyed walks along the beaches, usually early in the morning or around sunset. Lately, she's claimed to see a "mysterious figure" also walking along the beach at times, seemingly searching for something. Normally I wouldn't be concerned – there are plenty of clam diggers and beachcombers out at any time of day.

What concerns me is her insistence that the figure looks like our recently departed Police Chief, Garland Wuornos. She knew him, of course, but they weren't close. Should I be worried about this kind of obsessive behavior?

Yours,
Worried By The Water

A Dear Worried:

Grief is a strange and powerful process – no one likes being reminded of their mortality. Even the passing of a total stranger can sometimes affect us in unexpected ways. If an occasional passing glimpse of someone she mistakes for her lost acquaintance is the extent of her grief, then that doesn't strike me as cause for concern.

You should, of course, monitor her situation, and do seek out professional help if she suddenly goes to pieces.

Always,
Your Auntie Em

Q Dear Auntie Em:

After twenty years of marriage, my husband "Harry" has started behaving oddly. It used to be I could set my watch by Harry, and now he seems as strange as the weather's been around here lately.

Harry is literally afraid of his own shadow, acting like it's out to get him. He's also taken to disappearing during the daytime and only returns well after dark.

Harry licked a substance abuse addiction years ago, and though he swears he hasn't relapsed, that must be the explanation for his bizarre behavior. I'm at the end of my rope, Auntie Em, what should I do?

Sincerely,
Heartbroken In Haven

A Dear Heartbroken:

Just as you said, there are some folks who are as unpredictable as the weather in our dear town – chalk it up to "human nature."

If you know Harry to be a man of his word, then trust him when he tells you he's clean and sober. While you may find tolerating his "shadowy" fears itksome, if indulging him calms the troubled waters in your household... what's the harm?

We may be living in a disposable age, but marriage hardly belongs in that category. When we vow "for better or worse," it's enduring the "worse" that makes us better. So hang in there, "Heartbroken," the "better" will be back around before you know it.

Always,
Your Auntie Em