



This is a transcript of the video “AFC Connection Blog 08”
from Alec at in8.uk.com

See: <https://www.in8.uk.com/2019/10/why-is-sleep-so-important-for-our-mental-health/>

Why is sleep so vitally important to our mental health?

Hello again. In this video, I’m going to talk about how vitally important sleep is to our mental health.

Now, this is the eighth video in the short series in which I’m taking particular episodes from my own life and using them to illustrate what I’ve learned on why I feel abundant in terms of emotional health and wellbeing and why I feel qualified to help other people who are struggling. And in each video I pick one of the anxiety freedom cards to illustrate my point. And the reason I’m doing this is so that you too can lead a life that’s relatively free from stress and anxiety.

Now, in the previous two posts, you may have read about the things that I learned from when my marriage failed. This is going back 20 years in time, and that failure at the time took me to a very dark place where I became depressed and eventually later on, after I came out of depression, what I learned about depression inspired me to retrain as a psychotherapist so that I could help other people.

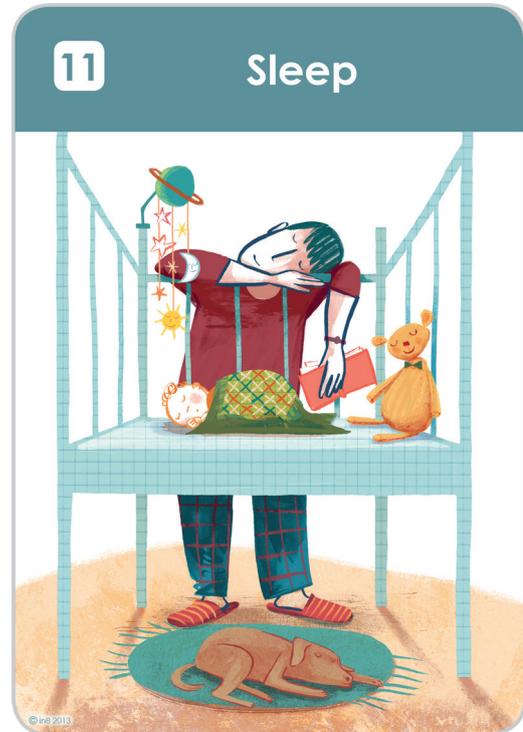
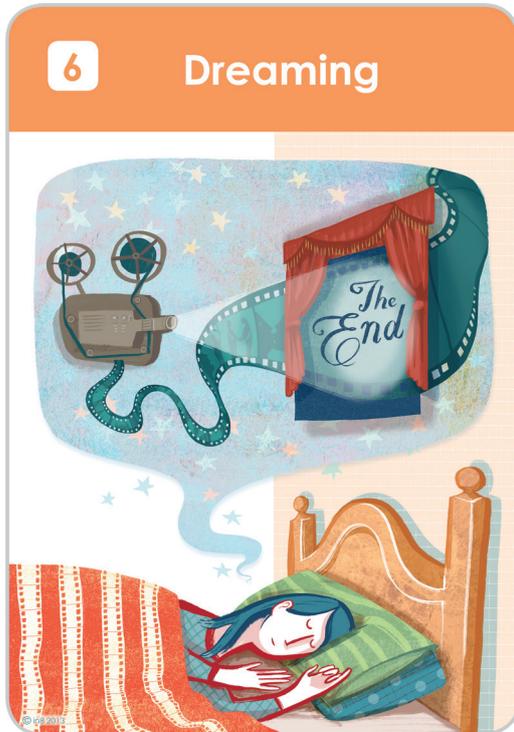
Now, there are two cards in the Anxiety Freedom Cards that relate to sleep and they are: The dreaming brain. Now this is an orange card, which means it’s a resource that’s one of the things that were born within which we can use. You may have heard the phrase “sleep on it”. Well, it turns out that there’s some real meaning to the idea of sleeping on something that our brain is actually doing some quite important processing when we’re dreaming.

And the second card is our need for sleep, which is obviously the other side of the same coin. So we have both the resource of a dreaming brain and we have the need to use it. So the fact that there are two cards just shows you how important this topic is.

I’m going to tell you the story that illustrates how I came to learn this and why it is so vitally important. So, going back 20 years, I’ve got divorced. I was burgled. My mother died unexpectedly, and I started worrying. I worried about just about everything. I worried about me. I’m worried about my work. Um, the fact that I couldn’t work because I was starting to become depressed, I worried about my children, and I worried about my future, just about everything you

can imagine. I went into quite a negative space for a few months.

I would say I have no idea why I started waking up exhausted. And I couldn't prioritize things I couldn't think clearly. I was kind of aware that my brain was like a fog and I could not... My work at that time, I was writing software and I couldn't do it. I couldn't work. I couldn't make decisions and I was really quite disabled for a short period of time.



Now, luckily, I had the support of some really great friends and I came out of depression on my own after a few weeks with no lasting negative effects. I was lucky in that respect because many of the people I helped get stuck in depression and stay there for many years.

But I was puzzled by what had happened to me. I've always liked to try and understand things in life and this was a very scary and very puzzling experience.

Now, it was some years later that I met Bindi, my now wife, and she was working in the NHS at the time, and she was doing some courses and said, Why don't you come along to one of them? At first I was a bit puzzled. I thought, Well, this is your work stuff. Why would I be interested? And she sort of said, "Well, you're always talking about brains and how people think". I think you'd find it interesting.

So I went along to this one day workshop in London. I think, actually it was a seminar and Ivan Tyrrell stood on the stage and he said something that I thought was really a little bit controversial. He said: "Of course, we now understand depression. We understand what causes it. We understand why people get stuck in it, and best of all, we understand how to help people overcome it."

And I thought, really? I was very skeptical. I thought, My GP doesn't understand depression in that way. You know, they prescribe SSRI's, Prozac, Citalopram, Sertraline, those kind of medications that help people who are struggling. But would they claim to understand depression? I kind of thought "This can't really be true, but if it is true, then it's worth knowing about!"

So I say, I was very skeptical, but I went back and I heard him speak again on a related topic, and I started to realise he was saying some things that I'd never heard anybody else mention

in relation to depression. And because I've been there myself, I could relate personally to some of that information. That's how I got interested.

And I started to study what he was teaching, and I read some books. One of the books was this book. It's no longer in print. It is "The Origin of Dreams" by Joe Griffin, Ivan's collaborator. Then it was later re published as "Dreaming Reality", and I think the same book is now. It's been revised and updated, and I think it's now called "Why We Dream - The Definitive answer" and it's by Joe Griffin on Ivan Tyrrell. And that book absolutely changed my understanding of the importance of sleep in dreaming process in mental health, because what it did is it explained what had happened to me.



It explained what depression is in the way that Ivan claimed, and so this was very exciting because there was suddenly a new model for understanding something that it seems like half the world are struggling with.

Now, when I was 15 years old, I was a bit of a dreamer. I was not quite old enough to be a child of the sixties. But I was, you know, I was a little bit detached from normal reality in some ways. I can remember at the age of 15 thinking, "How on earth will a person like me ever earn a living?" And I looked around to see not only what I was interested in, what I could do well at, but also what topics were growing and what might support me in a career.

And I chose electronics. And in fact, I studied electronics at university, and later I got involved in writing software. Now, going back 20 years ago or a little bit less than that, perhaps at the age of 46 I looked around to see what I was good at on what might support me, And I discovered that this understanding of depression could be a really new, fruitful venture for me.

So I dropped everything that I was currently doing and I retrained. Bindi and I both studied and we did a diploma in psychotherapy being taught by Joe Griffin and Ivan Tyrrell in the school of Psychology that's known as the "human givens". And that includes a very thorough understanding of the cycle of depression, what it is, why it happens and how to help people recover from it.

So then, for the next 15 years, Bindi and I have been helping people who struggle with anxiety. My specialty is depression, because that was the reason I got into it. But I also help people with anxiety, phobias, trauma, addictions, anger, any of the kind of topics that bring people into therapy in the first place.

And Bindi and I developed a tool to help people, which is the Anxiety Freedom Cards. And we now sell that tool online. And we support people who use that tool, teach them how to make the best use of it so that they can help other people. And we can spread this message spread this fantastic new understanding about mental health, which is gradually making an impact across the world.

So what's the main point I want to teach here? It's that depression and sleep are linked. They're very, very closely linked. And I can explain the cycle of depression if you're interested, and maybe I'll do that in a later video because it probably deserves the video all on its own.

But understanding the role of dreaming on the importance of sleep and its relationship to the topic of depression allows you to find very practical ways to help people who are struggling with depression. And I'm very pleased to be able to report that I've helped many, many people over the last 15 years come out of depression without pills, relatively quickly and easily. Now obviously, it depends on the background. It depends on people's life experiences and the challenges that a uniquely face, Um, but depression is not something that people have to tolerate.

There is an understanding. It does work and I love to teach it, and I love to help people overcome it. So let me know if you want to know more about that, please comment in this video.

And if this makes sense to you, if it's interesting, then please interact in some way. My work involves talking to people who are struggling, and I know that I've helped people in the past by explaining these things. And if you interact with this video by liking it, sharing it or best of all, commenting on it in my blog, then you'll help me to reach more people. And that will mean that I can help more people. So please scroll down and comment and share.

And whatever else you're doing, don't forget to keep breathing.

Thank you.

