

**Helen Fuller**

Dip T, B Ed

Master Soc Sci-Counselling

M.A.C.A. (Clinical)

M 0412 049360

ABN: 66 896 258

**Individual and Family Counselling**

**Virtual Reality Therapist**

*“Empowerment through sensitive  
self awareness.”*

**Medindie Gardens, 5081.**

### **Having difficulty falling asleep?**

According to the SA Branch of Sleep Disorders Australia, teenagers are particularly susceptible to Delayed Sleep Phase Syndrome (DSPS) with approximately 7% of adolescents affected.

The condition may be triggered by conflict from the stresses of school, or university, and peer pressure to maintain an active social life. Of note is childhood trauma, which lowers the brain's threshold for coping, but more often people are bothered by things in their life, which create dysfunctional feelings.

People suffering from DSPS have difficulty in resetting their sleep/wake cycle in response to environmental cues. This can become a significant problem for sufferers, leading to insomnia, and over a long period of time, it can lead to depression. Sleep Disorders Australia suggests, that in some cases, there may be an imbalance of some hormones which maintain the sleep/wake cycle, especially melatonin, and it would be necessary to consult with a doctor.

In the first instance, it is important for sufferers to try and raise their coping threshold by releasing any emotional blocks with professional assistance as necessary.

Lifestyle adjustments may be necessary to create a time for “winding down” before trying to sleep with the establishment of an evening routine, such as shower/warm drink/teeth/reading or peaceful music. When wanting to sleep, the person can settle with slow, deep breathing, then engage in meditation of the word “peace”. Alternatively, I encourage people to create their own “peaceful place” in their mind on which they focus, continually returning as the mind strays. I also recommend Virtual Reality Therapy (VRT) for Anxiety and Sleep.

It takes three weeks for routines to become a habit, thus sufferers must persist with this routine to gain success. A therapist once explained to me that *people should stop worrying about sleep, as long as they relax and have bed-rest, they can manage!*

[www.helenfullercounselling.com.au](http://www.helenfullercounselling.com.au)



