



Afeni Shakur and Jasmine Guy.

Shakur biography

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Guy includes the story and words of Sekyiwa Shakur, Afeni's daughter who was forced to live alone in the eighth grade when her mom was living with her crack addict boyfriend.

She talks about how she wasn't there for her children. Yet she says it was the love of

family and truth that eventually led to her recovery.

The only drawback of this book is Guy shares too many of her thoughts and story instead of Afeni.

Although this piece isn't flawless its a great story of woman's road to redemption. I believe it is a must read.

Methods to get around sleep

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you could get at it at a fundamental level ... I think once we learn how the system operates we'll be able to successfully manipulate it."

Of course, in an economy with such potentially perilous round-the-clock workplaces as trucks, airplanes, nuclear power plants and super-tankers, even helping people sleep and function well one day at a time would be a benefit.

An estimated 70 million people in the United States suffer from sleep problems, either because of disorders such as apnea and insomnia or just a lack of time devoted to slumber, the federal government says. At least 100,000 auto crashes and 1,550 traffic deaths a year are caused by falling asleep at the wheel.

And sleep deprivation leads to reduced productivity, poor performance in school or the workplace, and possibly medical problems like high blood pressure, heart disease, depression and reduced resistance to viruses.

"Sleep is as important to our overall health as exercise and a healthy diet," says Dr. Carl Hunt, director of the government's National Center on Sleep Disorders Research.

So how much sleep is enough? The typical recommendation is at least eight hours a night for adults. But in the February issue of the journal *Sleep*, an expert called on doctors to abandon that blanket prescription.

"It appears seven hours or even five or six is safe for people who aren't sleepy during the day," said Dr. Daniel Kripke of the School of Medicine of the University of California, San Diego.

Kripke cited large studies that tracked death rates in people who habitually slept different lengths of time. But "if someone is sleepy during the day with less than eight hours, as I am myself, then I think it might be wise to get eight hours sleep," he said.

Hunt said sleep studies overall indicate that adults generally need seven to eight hours a night to be well-rested. "As you ratchet down from seven hours to six or five or four, there's a progressively greater price" in illness, acci-

dents and mental malfunctioning, Hunt said.

Studies show people can sleep too little and still feel fine during the day, but that's because people stop realizing they're impaired if they sleep too little night after night, Hunt said. So while there probably are some people who truly function well on six hours a night, they can't just rely on how they feel, he said.

Teenagers need around 8.5 hours of sleep a night, and younger children should aim for about nine hours, he said.

When the brain runs on too little sleep, it malfunctions in a wide variety of areas:

- Your reaction time slows and you have trouble paying sustained attention. Driving is "the worst kind of thing," especially in bumper-to-bumper situations or lonely roads, said Edward Stepanski of the Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. "You're forced to sit still, so you can't move around and do things people ordinarily do to keep awake, and you're staring at the road."

- You have trouble keeping tabs on multiple sources of information. So you ignore some of them to focus on a few, and "you fail to notice that you're running out of gas," said David Dinges at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine.

- Creativity suffers. You get stuck on bad solutions and can't think of better ones.

- You can't remember as much, and "a sleepy brain is just not very good at learning new information," Stepanski said.

- Your brain just can't do some critical things in a hurry.

If given the luxury of time, it actually does pretty well with tasks like making decisions and solving complicated problems, says Hans Van Dongen at the University of Pennsylvania. That's because

the brain has "an almost stunning ability to find tricks" to get around some hurdles imposed by sleep loss, he said.

So if you work late in your office answering e-mails without any reason to hurry, you'll probably do all right, though you might have to read some sentences a couple times, he said. But then, as you drive home, you have to react and make decisions — right away.

"And you find that, oops, you're still impaired, after all, even though you didn't notice it," Van Dongen said. "And now you've got a problem."

Much of the overall problem in the sleepy brain is what scientists call microsleeps, repeated periods of a second or two, or maybe 10, when you just zone out and don't process information.

Microsleeps reflect "a kind of struggle inside the brain at the most fundamental biological level" between sleep and wakefulness, producing a sort of in-between state of reverie or inattentiveness, Dinges said. A person might look awake to a casual observer during microsleeps of a couple seconds, or the episodes can be more obvious.

Think of trying to stay awake at a meeting after partying all night. As Dinges observes in lab experiments, the eyeballs try to roll, the eyelids move unusually slowly and neck muscles start to go limp, which suggests that even muscle-control parts of the brain participate in sleepiness.

Work in Dinges' lab has shown that after a few nights of too little sleep, people stop realizing their daytime performance is suffering. So researchers are studying whether machines can do a better job of spotting sleep-deprived people.

Dinges said federal investigators are now seeing whether specialized monitors

Walk for cancer cure

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high as the rate for white Americans.

The causes of higher rates of prostate cancer among black men are unknown. A National Cancer Institute study found that even when income and education are controlled African Americans have much higher rates than whites.

Hickey says he has made a lot of sacrifices to increase cancer awareness. But he has met a lot of good people who have helped him along the way.

"We all have the ability to make a difference in someone else's life," Hickey said.

To donate to funds to Joshua Polk call (704) 289-3851 or to make donations to Hickey's favorite cancer research organizations in his name hit www.bigjohnsteam.org or www.city-ofhope.org

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PUBLIC MEETING

The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) will hold a public meeting to receive comments on the ADA Certification Process and service expansion for CATS Special Transportation Service. A meeting is planned for:

March 11, 2004

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, Room 267

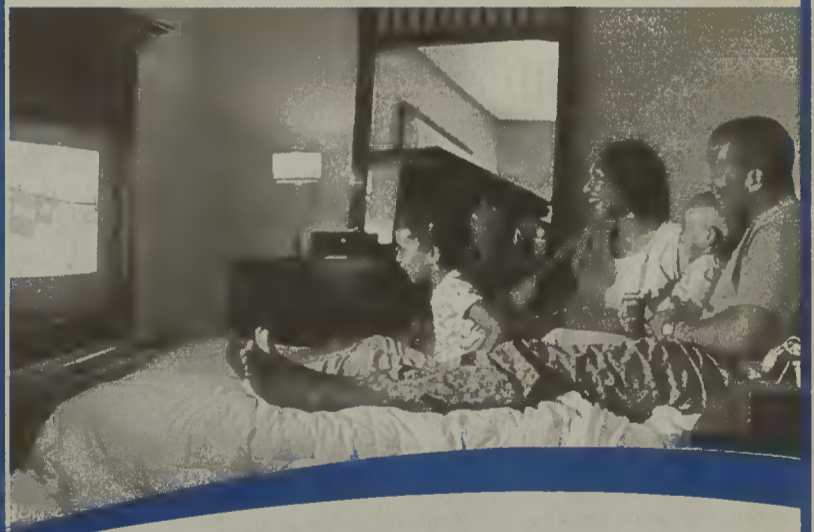
4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

600 E. Fourth Street, Charlotte, NC

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