Learn Sleep!
An Introduction to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Insomnia

VRA Webinar
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Content

1. Introduction to Sleep
2. Sleep and ageing
3. Sleep architecture
4. The effect of light
5. Sleep pressure
6. The Circadian Rhythm
7. Psychobehavioural interventions

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Without adequate sleep we can become:

- Tired
- Anxious
- Irritable
- Depressed
- Less able to learn and recall skills and information
- More likely to have persistent insomnia

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How much sleep do we need?

- Eight hours?
- Enough?
- Enough for Whom?
- How much do you need?

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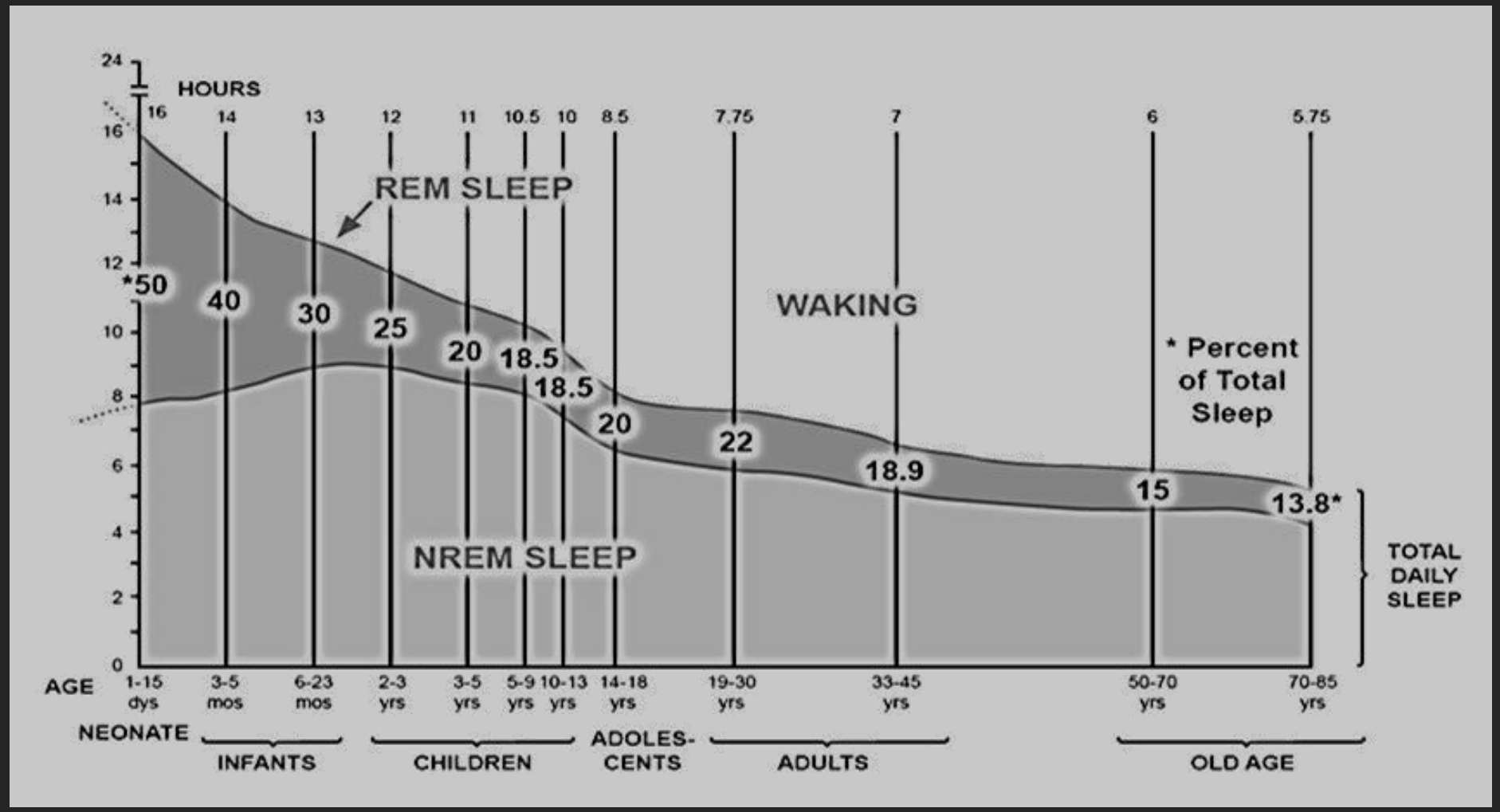
Changes in sleep requirements with age



Reproduced from Roffwarg et al 1966

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We do not require eight hours of sleep per night

Sleep requirements vary with age

3 Years:
12 Hours

5 – 9 Years:
10 ½ Hours

10 – 13 Years:
10 Hours

14 - 18 Years:
8 ½ Hours

19 – 45 Years:
7 ¾ - 7 Hours

46 + Years:
7 – 5 Hours

These timings are approximate as people can be long or short sleepers at any age.

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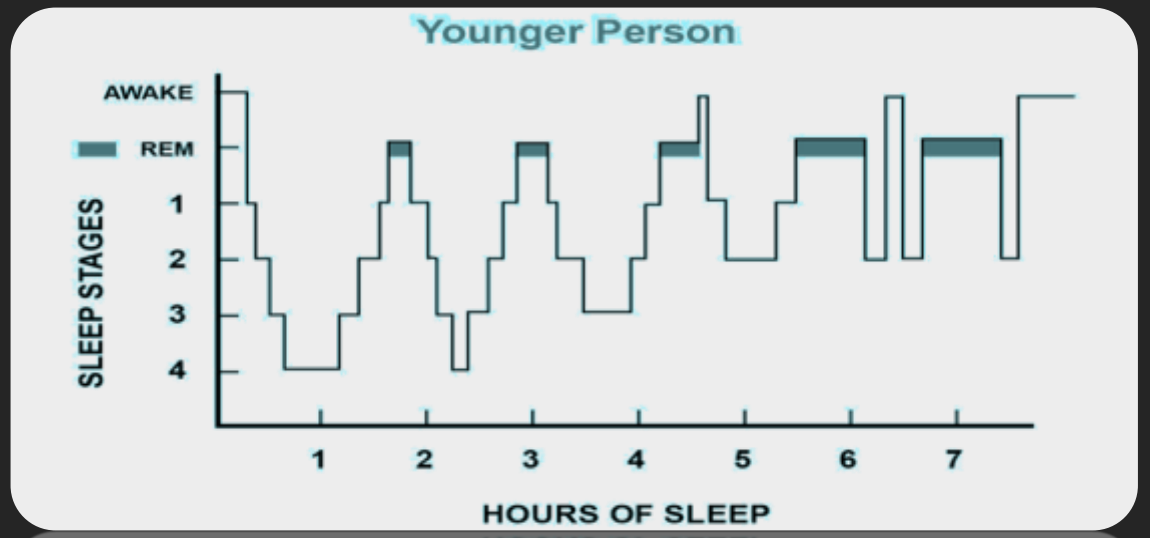
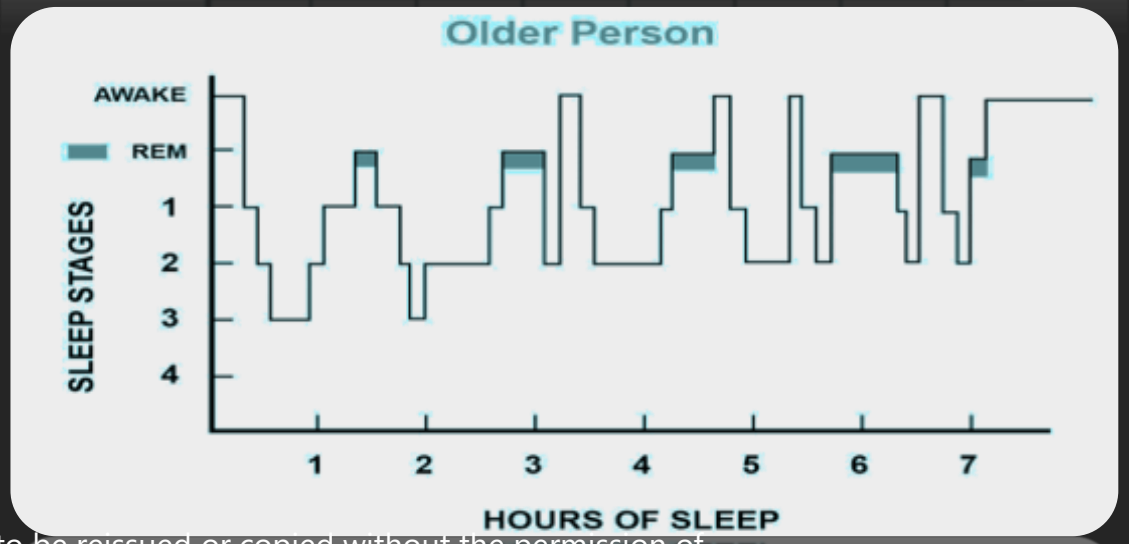
Changes in sleep requirements with age:





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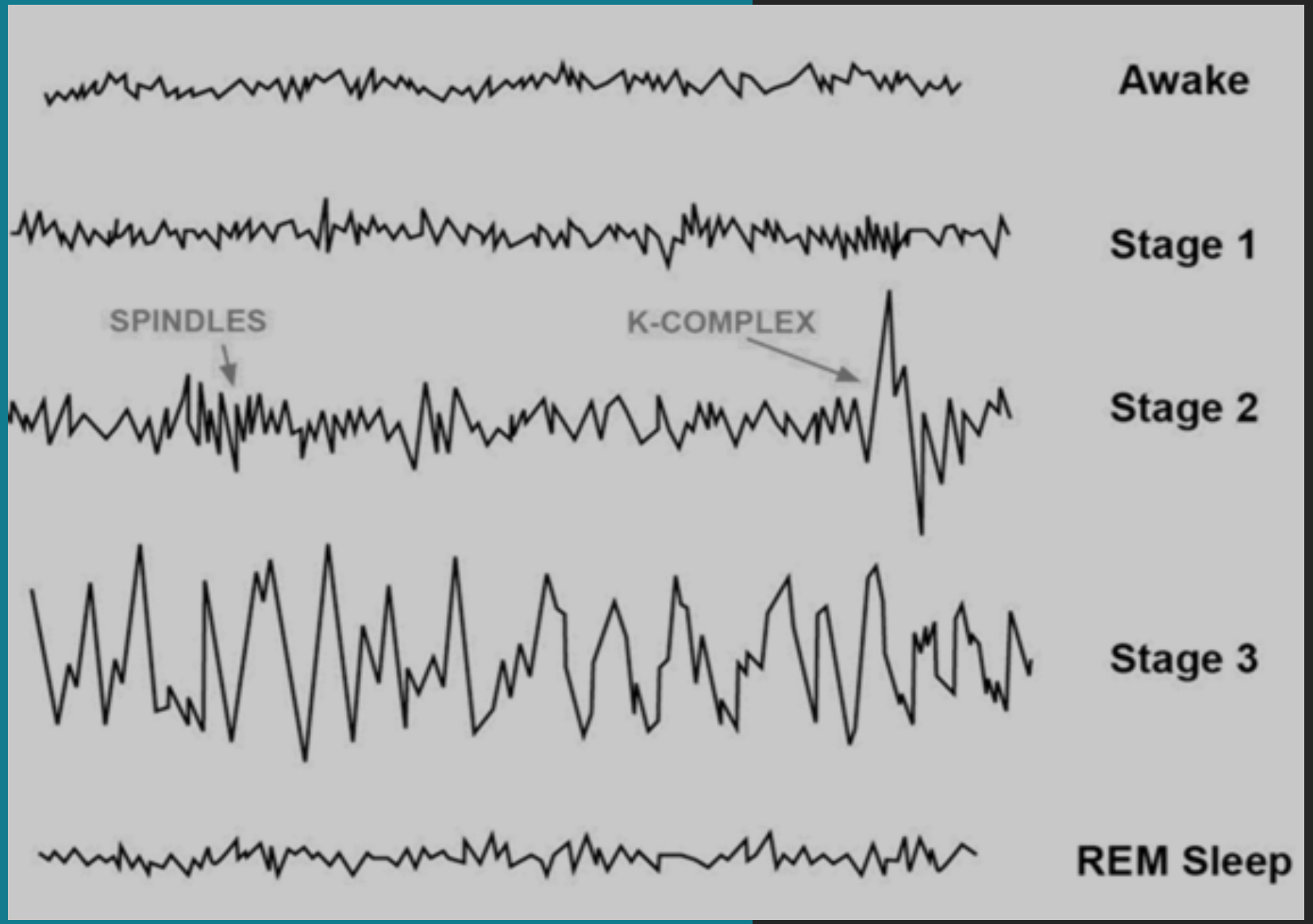
Wave patterns of Sleep



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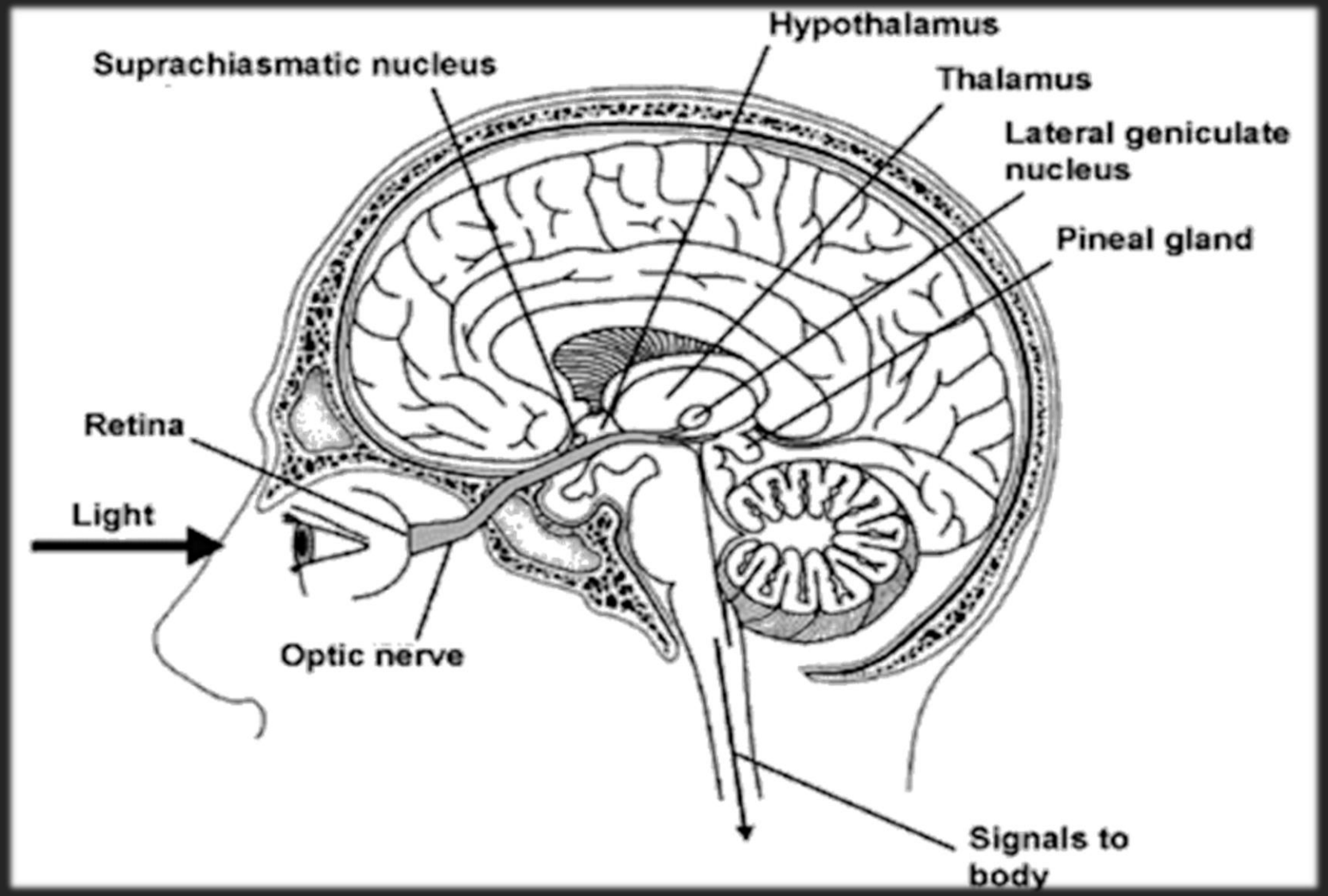
Retino-Hypothalamic Tract



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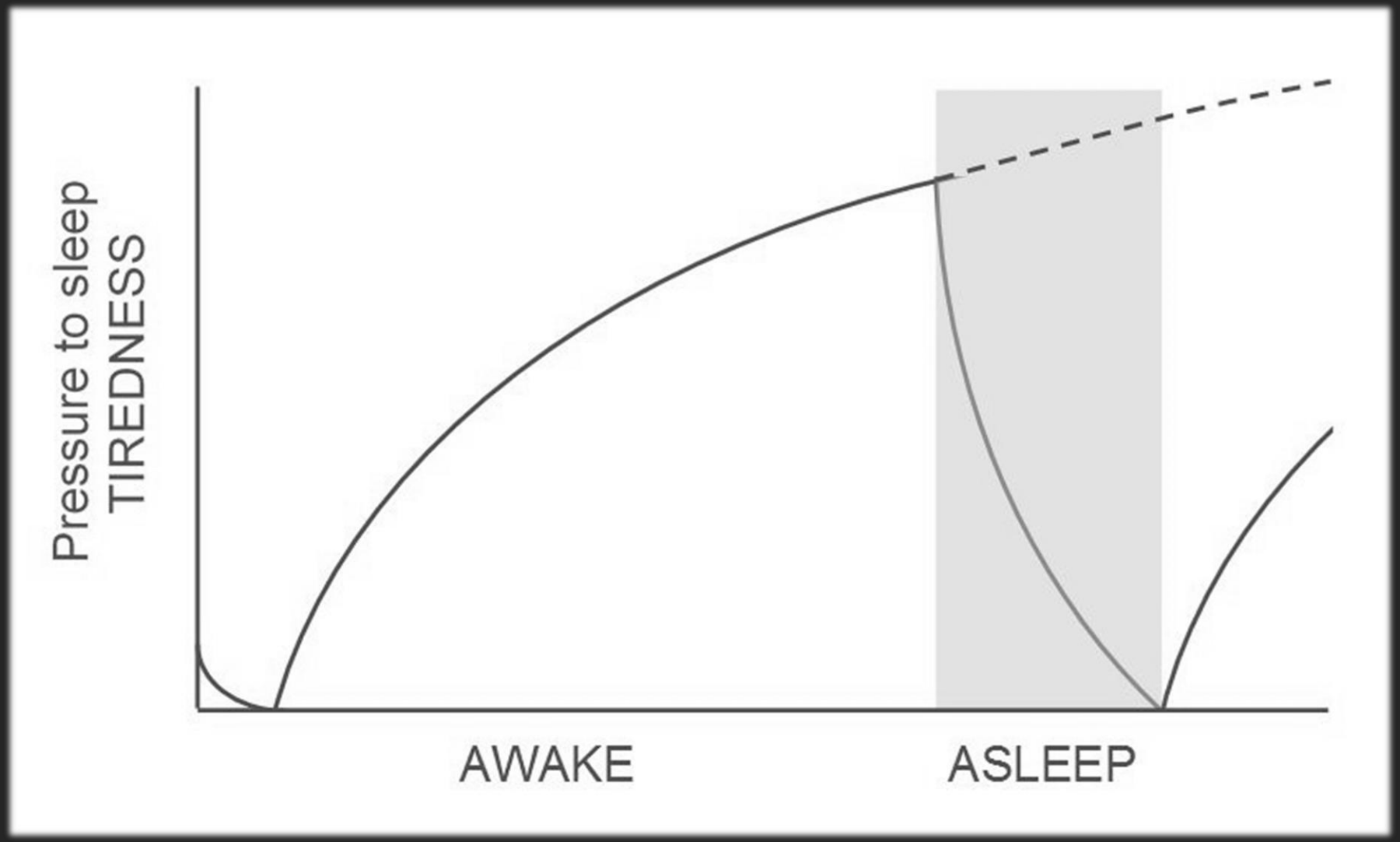
Sleep Pressure



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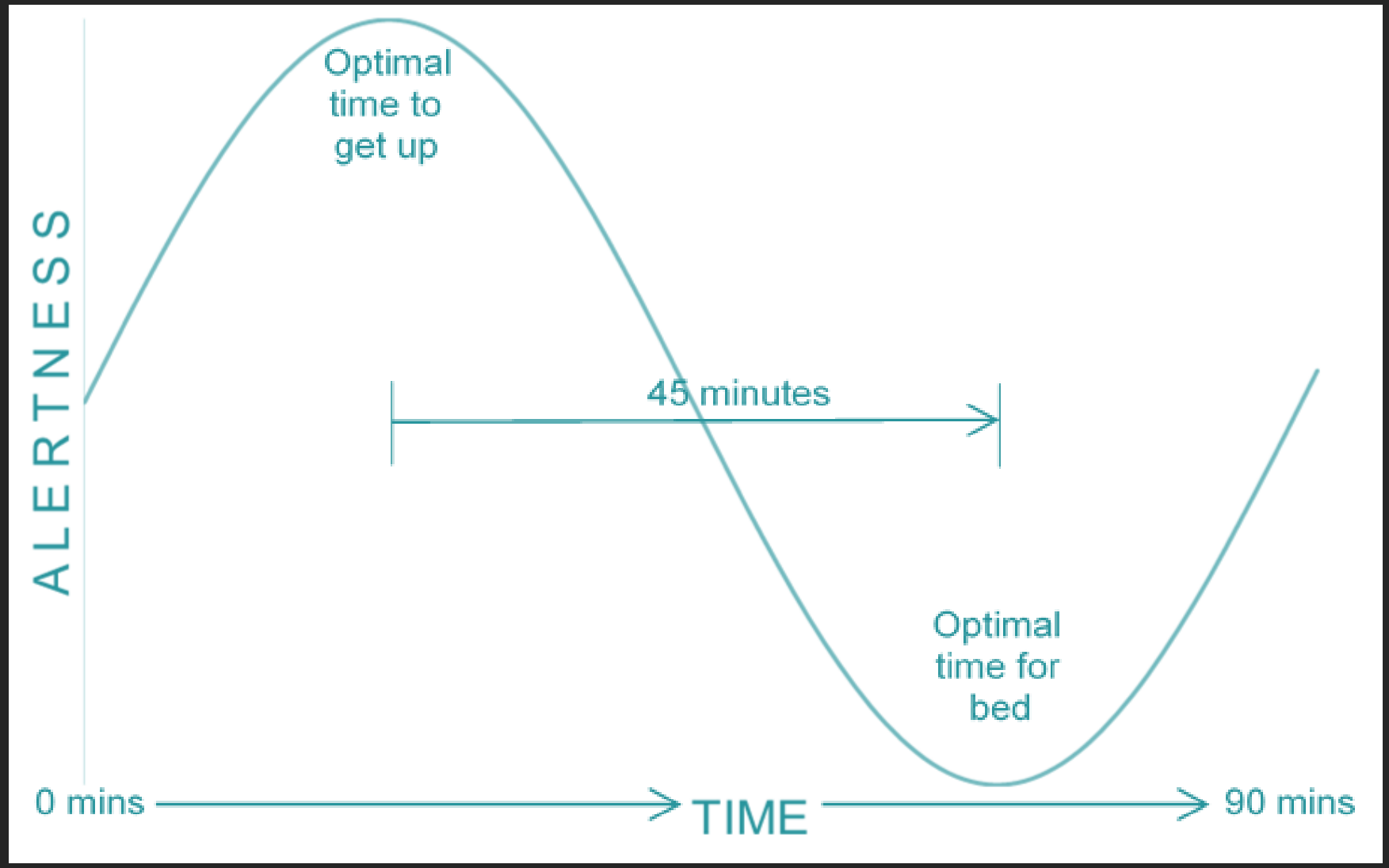
Circadian Timing



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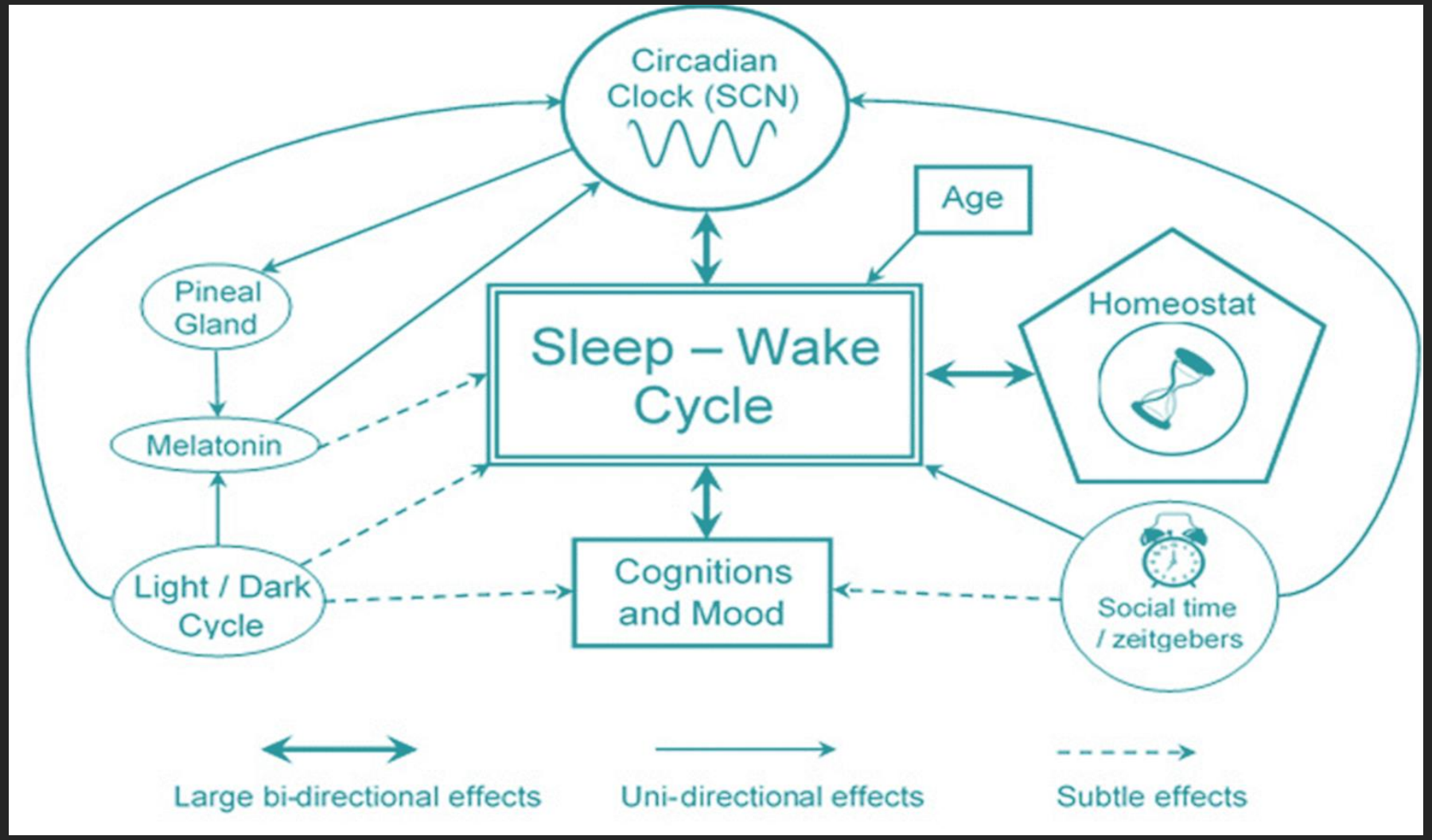
Sleep Mediation, Moderation and Control



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Psychobehavioural Treatments

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Sleep Types:

Morning Lark

Morningness:
Favour early rising and early bedtimes

Ambivalent

Night Owl

Eveningness:
Favour late rising and late bedtimes

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Routine and Behaviour

- Humans are diurnal with two phases in a 24-hour period
- We have evolved a set of behaviours for day and night
- Changing these goes against our natural diurnal predispositions
- Humans thrive on routine

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Good Sleep Practices

- A conducive environment – quiet, dark, boring
- Seasonally appropriate duvet / bedding
- Comfortable bed
- Reasonable temperature – not too hot / cold
- Thick curtains
- No computers or TV in the bedroom – a stimulus poor environment

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Stimulus Control

- Regular bedtimes and wake times
- Fluid restriction in the evenings
- No milky drinks (unless habitual)
- No big meals or exercise too close to bedtime
- Only sleep in the bedroom to build the link between bed / bedroom and sleep

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Stimulus Control

Making the bedroom sensorially deprived / stimulus poor

Behaviourally and mentally active during the day = behavioural and mental inactivity during the night

Exposure to bright (natural) light can increase the amount of melatonin released at night time which promotes sleep

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Sleep Restriction Therapy

Can’t get to sleep within 15 – 20 minutes?

- Get up - leave the bedroom – only return when you’re tired
- If sleep still doesn’t come within 15 – 20 minutes, then repeat this process through the night
- Get up at the same time each morning regardless
- You may feel tired the next day, but you’ll sleep better the next night

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Contraindications for poor sleep

Poor: routine, sleep practices, stimulus control including:

- Smoking
- Drinking too much fluid
- Screen use
- Taking some medications (NSAIDS)
- Alcohol / recreational drugs
- Consuming caffeinated products
- Other (e.g. poor pain management)

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