



# ADHD & Sleep Workshop

with Dr James Brown

Stream: 6:30pm | Talk Starts: 6:35pm

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@seedtalks

@adhdadult\_james







# WHO WE ARE

**PLANT AN IDEA, WATCH IT GROW**

We want you to come to our events and plant a seed. A seed that will grow with you, so you can enhance your wellbeing, health or simply discover a new fascinating subject to delve into!

Seed Talks was founded in London in late 2021. We are an independent events company dedicated to sharing interesting and worthwhile knowledge around the areas of Science, Psychedelics, Neurodiversity, Wellness, Philosophy, Psychology and Neuroscience.

Our speakers are carefully selected and vetted by a team with over seven years experience in public education. You can rest assured that you are learning from a trusted professional at our events.

**Thank you for coming <3** If you want to support us more... spread the word by sharing our events with your friends and tagging us on social media!

You can send any feedback or suggestions to [hello@seedtalks.co.uk](mailto:hello@seedtalks.co.uk)





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Passionate about our talks? Help us make them even better!

Whether it's in marketing or event management, our team is always expanding.

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# SEED TALKS AT WORK?

Would your company benefit from a Seed Talk? If you recommend us we will give you a £100 gift card!

We can program sessions on wellness, self improvement, mental health, productivity, neurodiversity, psychology, neuroscience, breathwork, creativity and much more.

contact [hello@seedtalks.co.uk](mailto:hello@seedtalks.co.uk)



# CONTENT IDEAS



## Mental Health

- Anxiety
- Burnout
- Happiness
- Depression
- Trauma
- Psychedelics

## Self Improvement

- Emotional Intelligence
- Communication
- Alcohol & Addiction
- Stoic Philosophy
- Building Resilience
- Money Management

## Neurodiversity

- ADHD
- OCD
- Autism
- Neurodiversity & Mental Health
- Neurodiversity in the Workplace
- Women & Neurodiversity

## Health & Wellness

- Our Gut Microbiome
- Healthy Eating
- Women's Health & The Workplace
- The Power of Kindness
- How the Mind Heals the Body
- Hormonal Contraception



The logo for SEED TALKS is located in the top left corner. It consists of the words "SEED" and "TALKS" stacked vertically in a bold, white, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a stylized white leaf icon. The entire logo is set against a circular orange background.

**SEED  
TALKS**



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FREE TICKETS!**

**@SEEDTALKS**



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# The Basics of ADHD

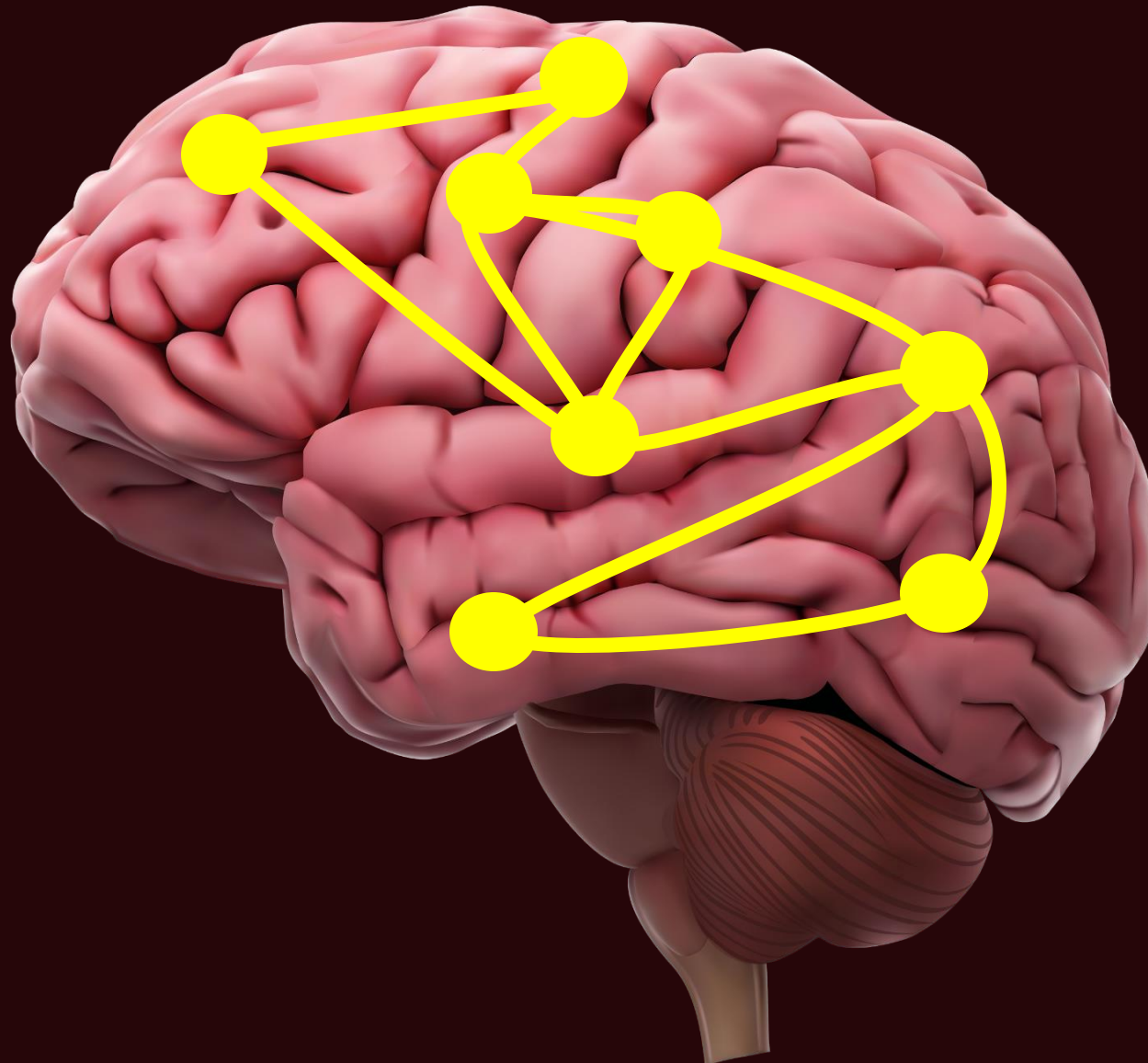




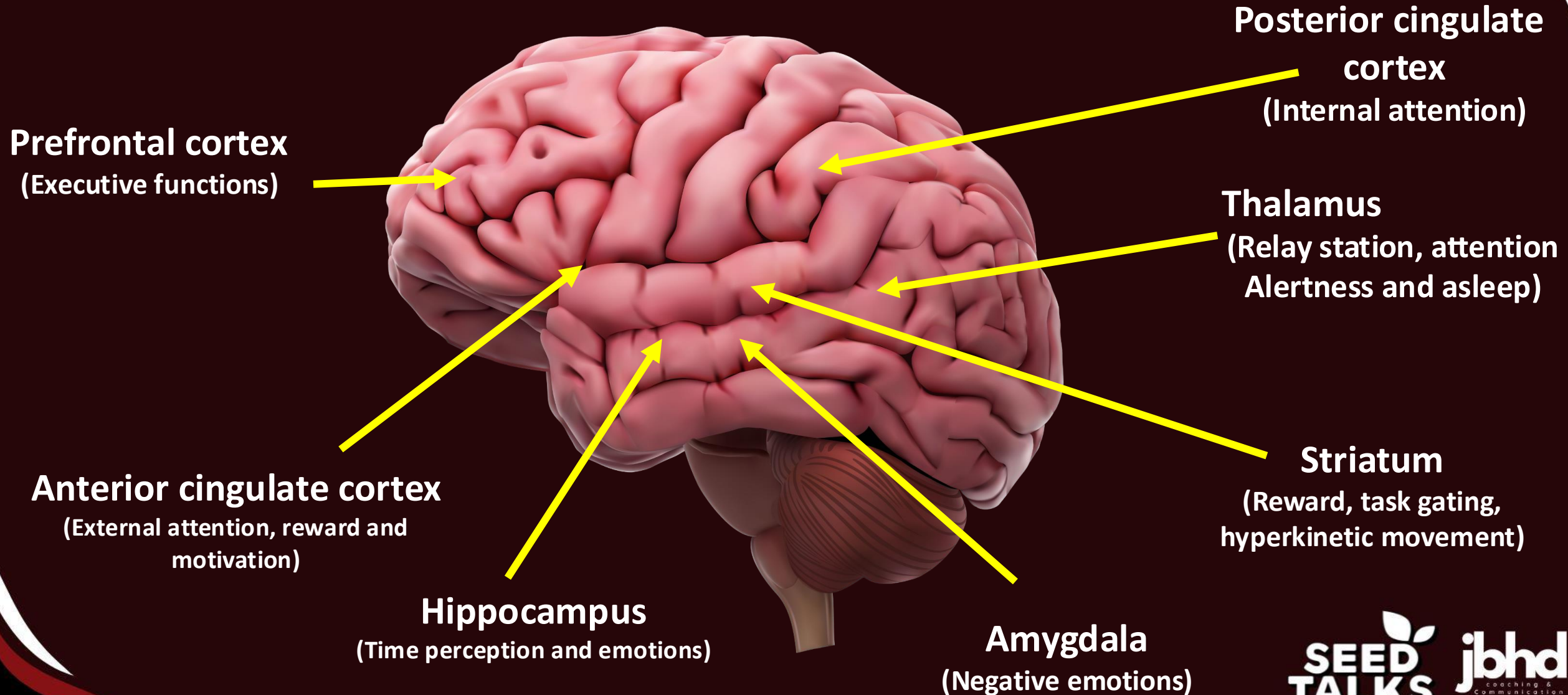
# Neurotransmitters and synapses







# 'Divergent' Brain Areas in ADHD





# The Symptoms of ADHD

## Inattentiveness

1. Making careless mistakes/lacking attention to detail
2. Difficulty sustaining attention
3. Inability sometimes to listen when spoken to directly
4. Failure to follow through on tasks and instructions
5. Exhibiting poor organisation
6. Avoiding/disliking tasks requiring sustained mental effort
7. Losing things necessary for tasks/activities
8. Being easily distracted (including unrelated thoughts)
9. Being forgetful in daily activities

## Hyperactivity/Impulsivity

1. Fidgeting with or tapping hands or feet, squirming in seat
2. Leaving seat in situations when remaining seated is expected
3. Experiencing feelings of restlessness
4. Having difficulty engaging in quiet, leisurely activities
5. Being “on-the-go” or acting as if “driven by a motor”
6. Talking excessively
7. Blurting out answers
8. Having difficulty waiting for your turn
9. Interrupting or intruding on others

# Common 'Non-diagnostic' ADHD Symptoms

- Emotional dysregulation.
- Rejection-sensitive dysphoria (RSD).
- Time blindness.
- Sleep issues.



# The Science of Sleep

## Poll: Sleep Patterns

"How would you describe your typical sleep pattern?"

# The Biology of Sleep



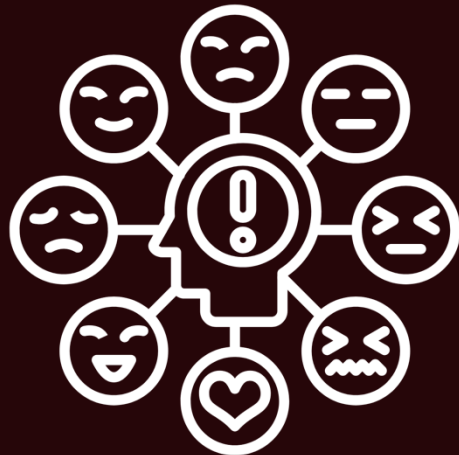
Recovery



Energy  
Conservation



Brain  
Performance



Emotional Regulation



Detoxification



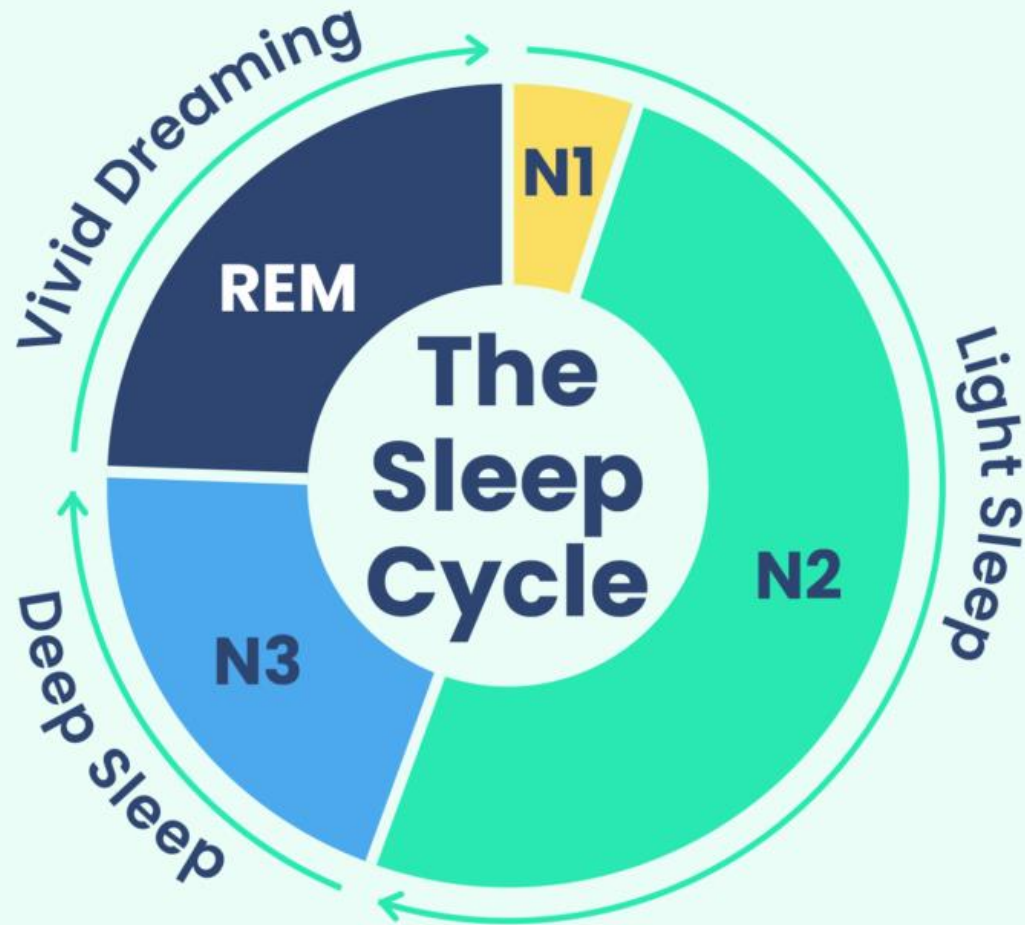
# The Importance of Getting the Right Amount of Sleep

- The quantity and quality of sleep are vital for overall health.
- Adults typically need 7-9 hours of sleep per night.
- Inadequate sleep can lead to a host of health issues:
  - Physical Health
  - Mental Health
  - Emotional Well-being
  - Performance and Safety
  - Longevity

# Sleep Stages

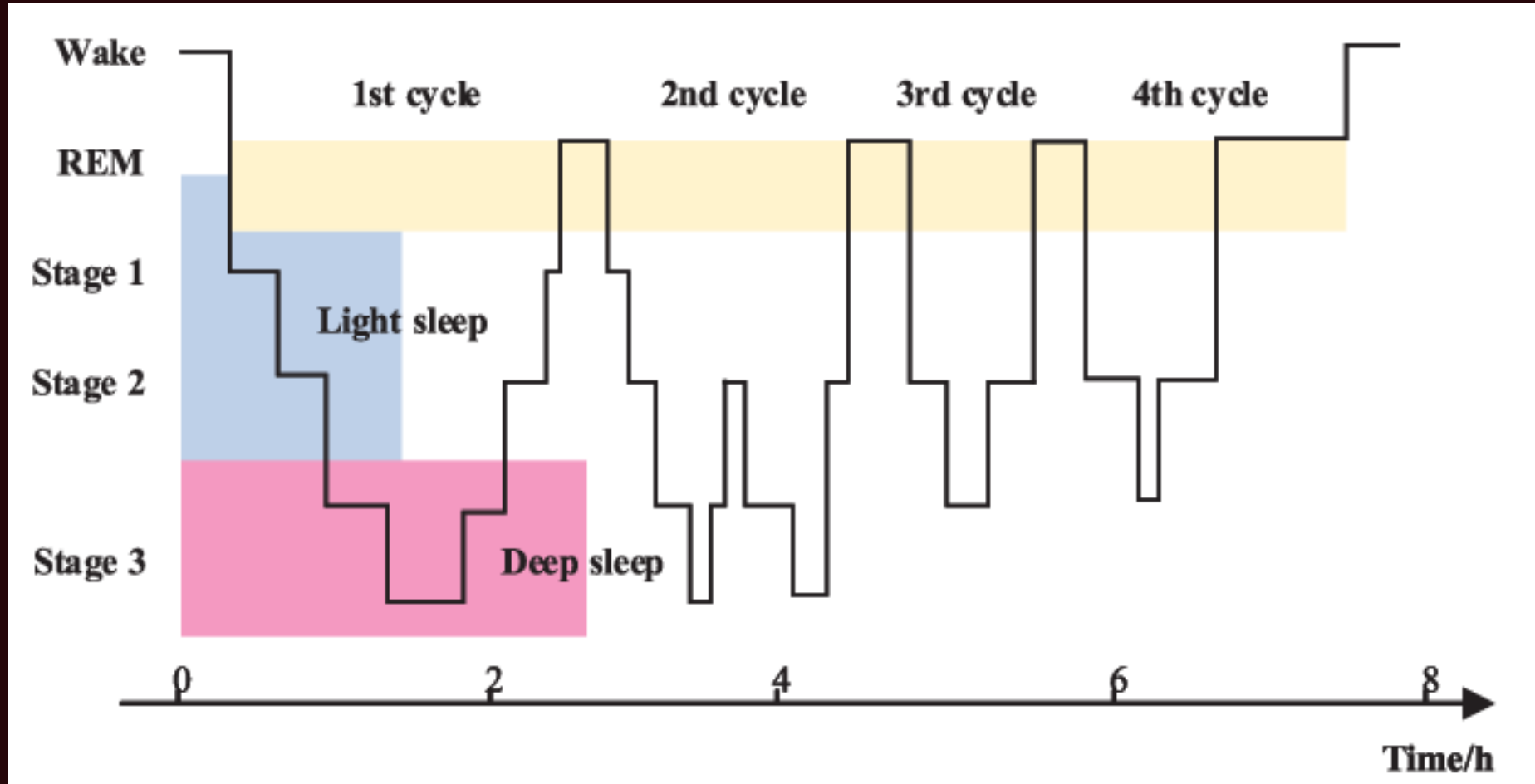
- Sleep can be divided into two main types:
  - Rapid Eye Movement (REM) sleep.
  - Non-Rapid Eye Movement (NREM) sleep.
- NREM sleep is divided into three stages:
  - N1 - LIGHT
  - N2 - DEEPER
  - N3 - DEEPEST

# Sleep Cycles

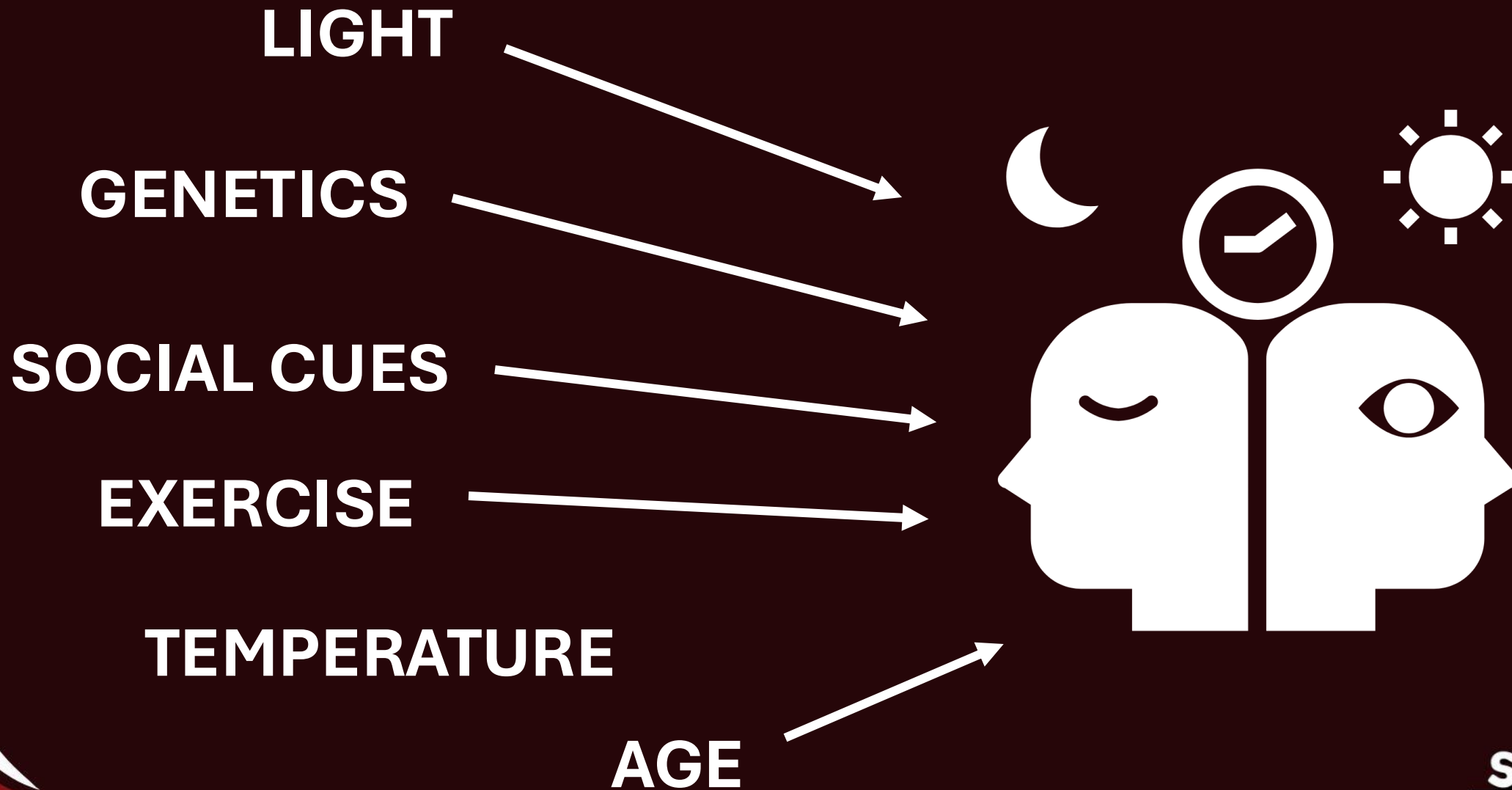




# Sleep Stages

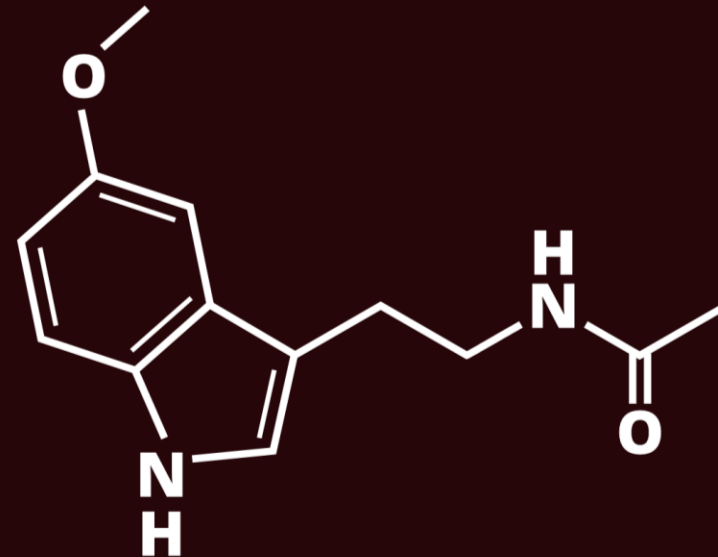


# Circadian Rhythm



# Internal Clocks

- Clock genes (in the eyes and other tissues).
- They encode proteins that regulate daily physiological processes.
- Influence the production of melatonin from pineal gland.
- Melatonin promotes sleep.





# ADHD & Sleep

**ADHD is a 24-hour disorder**

## Poll: Sleep Quality

"How often do you feel rested and refreshed after a night's sleep?"

All adults with ADHD should be evaluated for sleep problems.



# What Do We Know?

- ‘High nocturnal activity’ and disordered sleep were defining characteristics of ‘hyperkinetic reaction in childhood’ or ‘attention deficit disorder’ in earlier versions of the DSM.
- Removed in revised edition.

# What Do We Know?

- 80% of adults with ADHD report sleep problems.
- Only 7.5% are diagnosed (1.5% in non-ADHD population).
- “If we stopped testing, we’d have very few cases” – D. Trump, 2020.

# What Do We Know?

- Clock genes are mutated in some ADHD adults.
- Circadian rhythm is then shifted later.

e.g. urge to sleep may be delayed by 90-120 minutes

# What Do We Know?

- ADHD adults with sleep problems perform worse on tests of attention.

**ADHD  
SYMPTOMS**





# What Do We Know?

- Increased nocturnal activity is common.



**Movement**



**Brain Activity**

# What Do We Know?



**Excessive Daytime Sleepiness**

## Poll: Sleep Quality

"How much do you believe your ADHD symptoms impact your sleep quality?"

# ADHD & Sleep Disorders


- Delayed sleep onset.
- Reduced sleep quality.
- Insomnia.
- Circadian rhythm disturbances.
- Night awakenings.
- Restless legs syndrome/Periodic limb movement disorder.
- Obstructive sleep apnoea.

# ADHD Medication & Sleep


- Stimulants can have diverse effects:
  - Methylphenidate can improve sleep in some people.
  - Lisdexamfetamine and atomoxetine can worsen sleep in some people.
  - Stimulants can mask daytime sleepiness.



# LET'S TAKE A BREAK...



**UNDERSTANDING  
ADULT ADHD**  
6 week interactive course



with Dr Alex Conner  
Starting Mon 23 Sep | 6pm | Online



**COMING SOON**

# Approaches to Improve Sleep with ADHD.

**Start with your routine...**

# Approaches

1. Sleep hygiene.
2. Bright light therapy.
3. Sleep Training.
4. Exercise.
5. Melatonin – often needs behavioural support.
6. Weighted blankets .

# 1. Sleep Hygiene

- AKA 'The stuff we know we need to do, but don't'.
- Good advice on Sleep Foundation website:





# Sleep Hygiene (1)

1. Maintain a Consistent Sleep Schedule
2. Create a Relaxing Bedtime Routine
3. Limit Naps
4. Optimise Your Sleep Environment
5. Invest in a Comfortable Mattress and Pillows
6. Limit Exposure to Artificial/Blue Light
7. Be Mindful of Food and Drink
8. Exercise Regularly
9. Manage Stress and Anxiety
10. Limit Fluid Intake Before Bed

# Sleep Hygiene

- 11. Get Exposure to Natural Light**
- 12. Reserve Your Bed for Sleep and Intimacy Only**
- 13. Wake Up Naturally**
- 14. Create a Comfortable Pre-Sleep Routine**
- 15. Limit Nicotine**
- 16. Maintain a Healthy Diet**

## Poll: Sleep Quality

"Which of the following sleep hygiene practices do you regularly follow?"

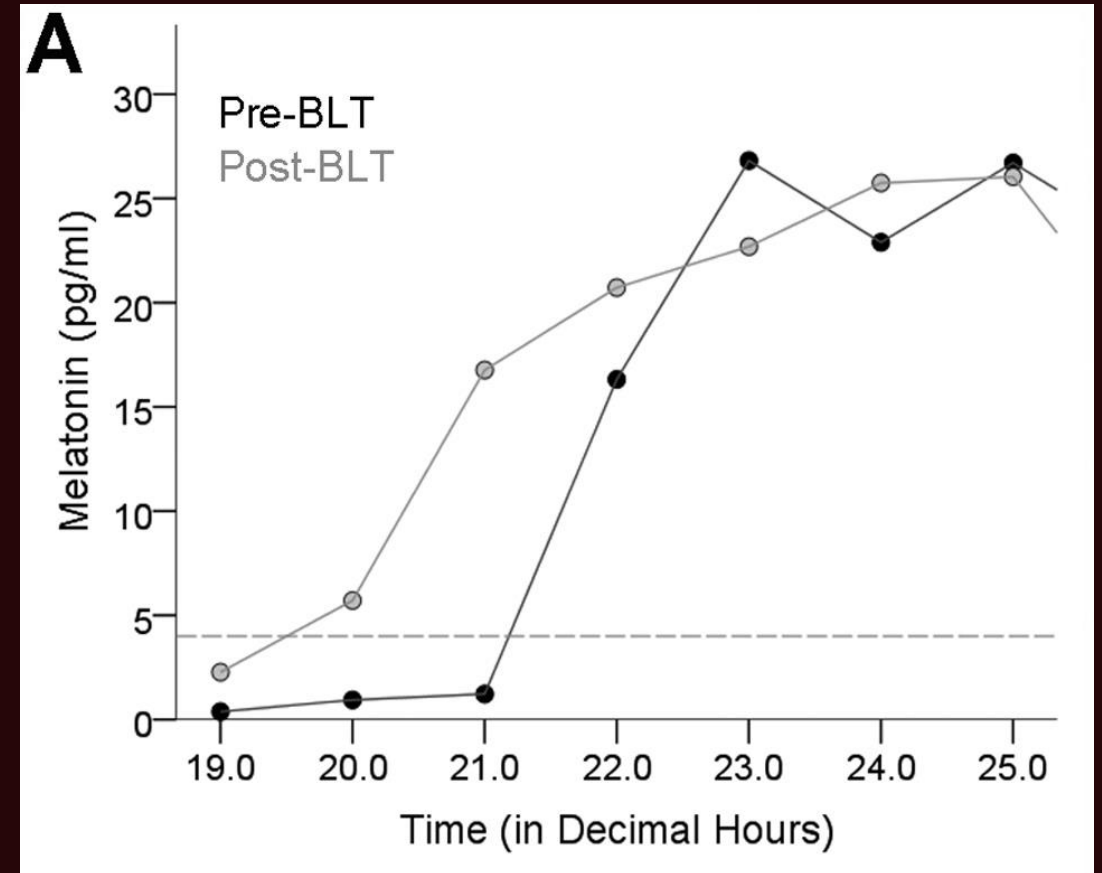
## 2. Bright/Natural Light Therapy

- Has strongest evidence base for ADHD.
- Advances the circadian clock to shift sleep-wake rhythms earlier.
- Can improve delayed sleep onset (unlikely in severe delayed sleep onset).
- Caution: photophobia.



# Bright Light Therapy in ADHD

- Three studies show that BLT:
  - Brings forward melatonin.
  - Brings forward 'mid - sleep' time.
  - Decreased ADHD symptoms.
  - Decreased daytime sleepiness.



Fargason et al, 2017



# 3. Sleep Training

- Online courses available.
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Insomnia (CBTi).
- 5 stages
  - Cognitive therapy
  - Stimulus Control
  - Sleep restriction
  - Sleep Hygiene
  - Relaxation
- One study reported prolonged benefits in ADHD.

# CBT-i

- Possibly available on NHS (check with GP or Sleepstation)
- NHS Self-help guide below:



# Melatonin Supplementation

- NHS approved for childhood ADHD.
- Adults under 55 usually require a specialist for a prescription.
- Melatonin advanced circadian rhythm by 1 hour and 28 minutes.
  - Some suggestion that taking 4-6 hours before and then again before sleep may work better.

# 4. Exercise

- Exercise (at the right time) can:
- Improve sleep quality.
- Reduced the number of midnight awakenings.
- Improve sleep efficiency.
- Reduced sleep onset latency.
- Reduced 'wake after sleep onset'.

# 5. Weighted Blankets

- Originally developed for autism.
- “Deep pressure therapy – activates the parasympathetic nervous system.
- Increases melatonin.
- Insomnia severity improved in ADHD.

# Summary

- ADHD is a neurological condition which has sleep at it's core
- Sleep is essential for health and cognitive function
- Adults with ADHD are more likely to have undiagnosed or diagnosed sleep disorders
- Sleep *can* be improved in ADHD.



# Resources

## Personal



Website: [JBHD.uk](http://JBHD.uk)

Social media: [@adhdadult\\_james](https://twitter.com/adhdadult_james)

## Charity



Website: [ADHDadult.uk](http://ADHDadult.uk)

Social media: [@adhdadultuk](https://twitter.com/adhdadultuk)

Online magazine: [Focusmag.uk](http://Focusmag.uk)

Discord: [theadhdadults](https://discord.com/invite/theadhdadults)

## Podcast



Website: [TheADHDAdults.uk](http://TheADHDAdults.uk)

Social media: [@theadhdadults](https://twitter.com/theadhdadults)

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## ONLINE

AUG

19

**Trauma & The Body  
Workshop**

with Dr Jane Mulcahy

AUG

20

**ADHD & Women 6 Week  
Course**

with Dr Anneka Tomlinson

SEP

08

**Autism & Women**  
with Dr Rachel Moseley

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