



# RAW Mental Toughness



*“Mental Skills for Combat Effectiveness...”*



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# RAW Pillars



- Performance Nutrition
  - Nutrient needs
  - Ideal body composition
  - Supplements



- Functional Fitness

- Strength
- Endurance
- Movement skill

- Sports Medicine

- Prevention
- Early intervention
- Multi-disciplinary team

## **Mental Toughness**

- **Peak Performance State**
- **Fatigue countermeasures**
- **Mental Endurance Events**

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# AGENDA

- Mental Toughness Overview
- Goal Setting
- Attention Control
- Imagery/Visualization
- Fatigue Countermeasures



# What is Mental Toughness?

- Sports Psychology
- Peak Performance
- Keeping your head in the game
- Stress Management
- Commitment
- Confidence
- Arrogance



# Why Focus on Mental Toughness?

## Mental Fatigue degrades:

- Performance
- Muscular strength and coordination
- Accuracy and timing
- Vision and perception
- Memory and attention span
- Information integration and logical reasoning
- Motivation, attitudes, and mood
- Communication, cooperation, and social interaction
- Error management and decision making
  - Lower standards become more acceptable!



# How do you objectively measure Mental Toughness?



# Subjective ways to measure Mental Toughness

- Deployments
  - Combat
  - Family & Friends
- Training
  - Convoy Live Fires
  - PT
  - Roadmarching
- Schools
  - Ranger School
  - SERE
  - Military Education
- Chain of Command
  - Superiors
  - Subordinates



# Why Peak Performance Training?

## Use multiple techniques to:

- Amplify self-awareness and confidence
- Enhance personal and team goal-setting practices
- Become focused in critical situations
- Optimize leadership
- Visualize yourself succeeding in all combat situations

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# The Ranger Link



Will  
Initiative  
Self-confidence

Self-control  
Balance  
Stability

Army Leadership Framework, FM 22-100

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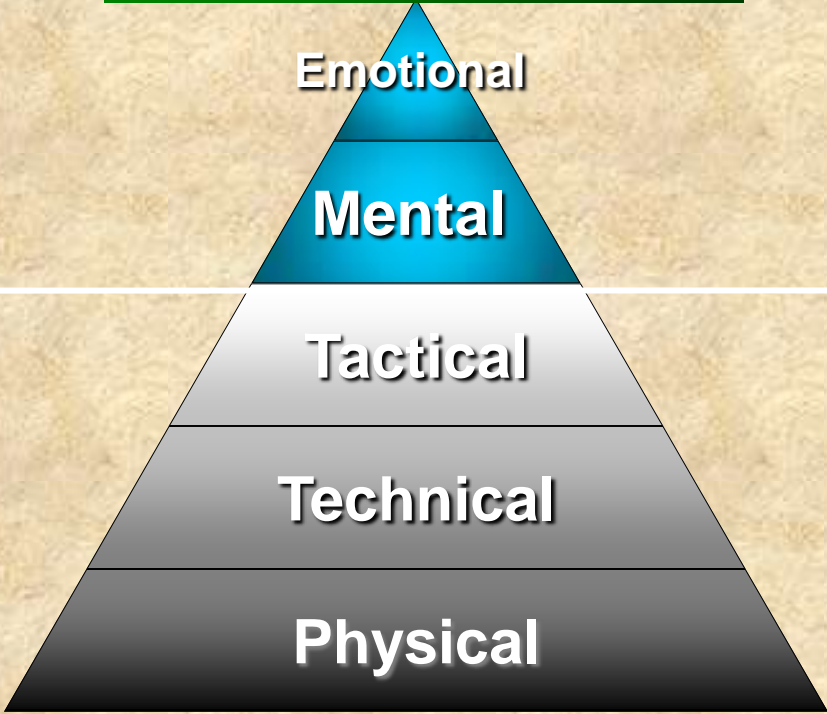
# Ranger Athlete Warrior Training



## Warrior Mindset

Self-Regulating  
Instinctive  
Adaptive  
Agile  
Mental Effort

Build Confidence  
Control Attention  
Recover Energy  
"See" the Battlefield



Self-Critical  
Analytical  
Judgmental  
Physical Effort

PT  
8-Step  
AAR's  
Rote Repetition

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# MENTAL TOUGHNESS MODEL



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# Common Challenges of Elite Athletes and Rangers

- Similar situations in which the athlete and the warrior need to cope with:
  - Perform under pressure and high anxiety
  - Uncertainty
  - Decision making under pressure and physical stress
  - Fear from physical harm
  - Motivation



# Thought/Performance Interaction

## Self-Fulfilling Prophecy



Thought → Feeling/Emotion → Performance

### Physiological changes:

- Skin Temp
- Heart Rate
- Blood Pressure/flow
- Hormone production
- Muscle tension

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# Mental Attributes

- Self Confidence
- Arousal Control
- Attention Control
- Imagery Control
- Motivation
- Positive Energy
- Attitude Control

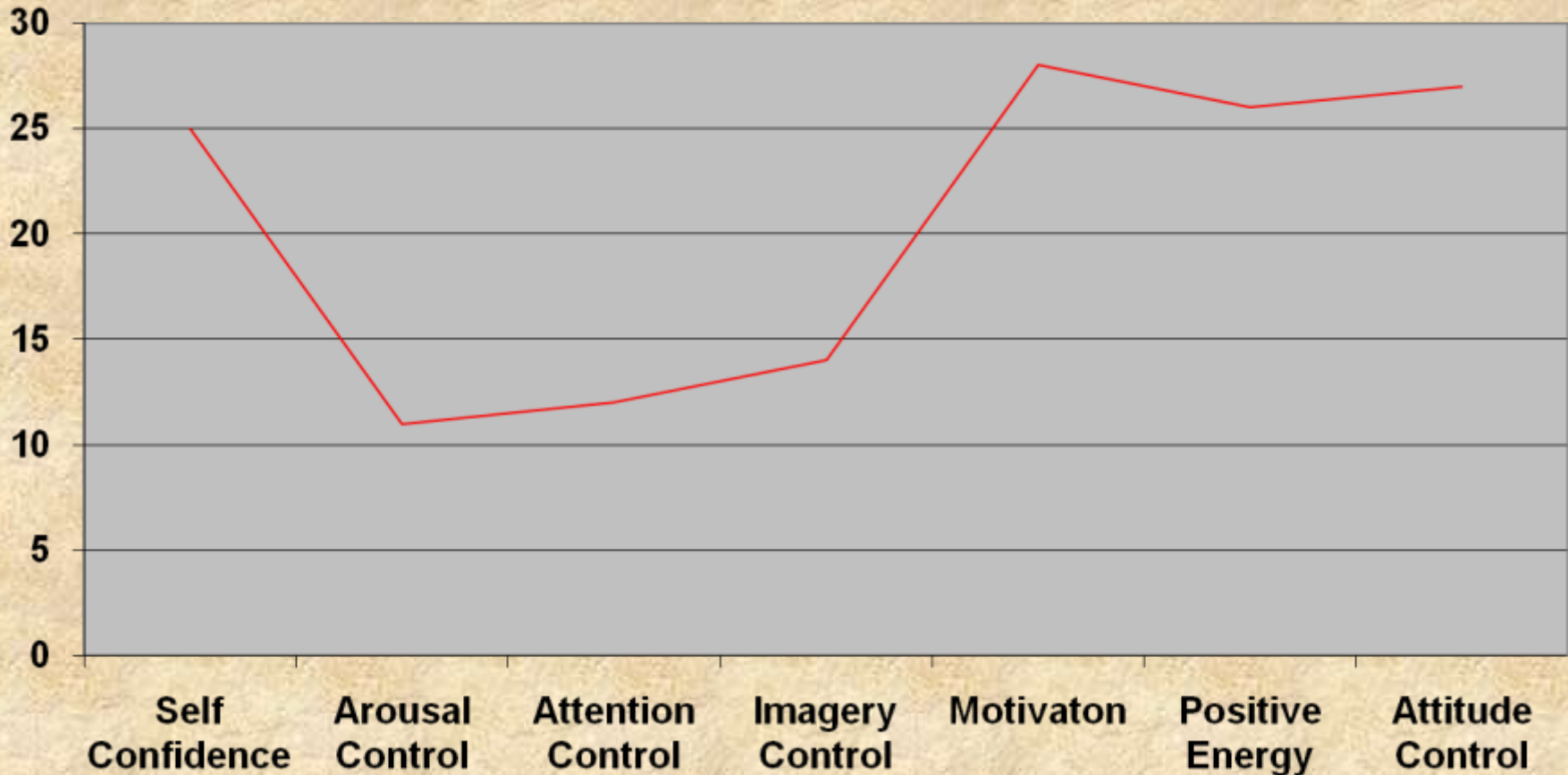
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# Profile: Young Athlete

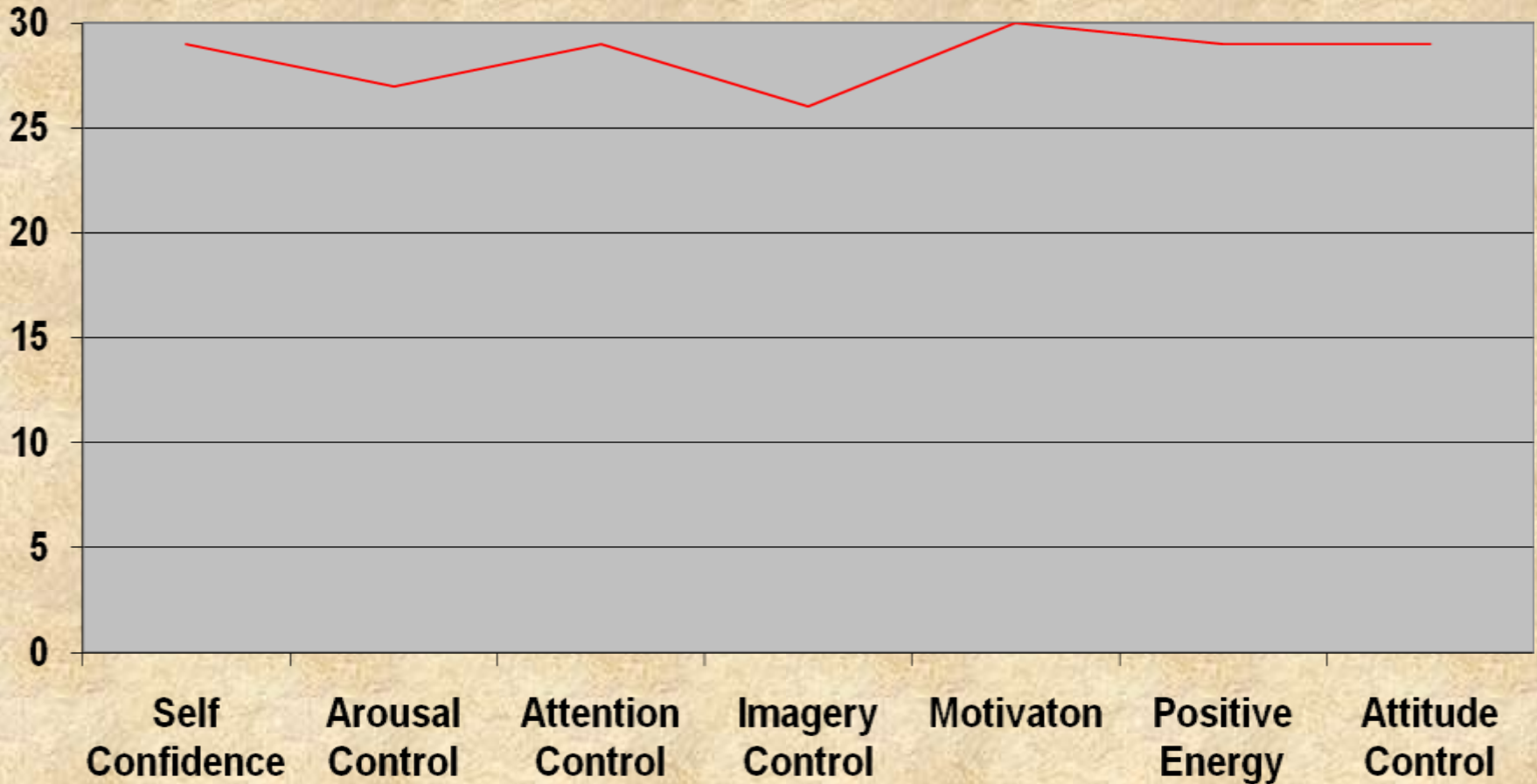


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# Profile of a Champion



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# “The Zone”

**“A psychological state in which one’s performance seems supernormal.”**

Characterized by:

- Intense focused awareness
- Altered perception of time, space & size
- Sense of total control
- A momentary shift in thoughts & emotions

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# SIX-STEP PROCESS

1. Define your Objective (Long-Term Goal)
2. Assess current status
3. Establish Short-Term Goals to achieve Long-Term Goals
4. Develop Course-of-Action
5. Total Commitment
6. Constant monitor progress and reassess if needed



# Examples of Successful Goal Setting



- Think of Goals from
  - Personal/Family Members
  - Athletes
  - Rangers
  - Commanders/Leaders



# SMART GOALS

- S-Specific
- M-Measurable
- A-Achievable
- R-Realistic
- T-Time frame



# Factors Influencing Goal Setting



- Confidence
  - how you think
  - what you focus on
  - how you react
- Self-talk
- Setbacks are a normal part. Find ways to get back on track



# The Key Points

- **Pick a “target”**
  - Find the “one thing” that you can focus on...
- **Make it routine**
  - Develop 3-5 steps, ending in control and focused on target
  - Cue Word
- **Let it happen**
  - Trust these things
- **Practice these things!**



# WHAT IS IMAGERY

- “The thought process that uses all the senses to either create or recreate an experience in the mind.”
- Also commonly referred to as “mental rehearsal,” “mental practice,” and “visualization.”
- A form of internal simulation training.
- Kids do it so easily and naturally



# IMAGERY PRINCIPLES

- ◆ We all possess the power of imaging
- ◆ Every experience is recorded forever
- ◆ We perceive reality like we do a picture on a TV screen – in bits
- ◆ We can recall the bits in the same design and order as we received them, or, we can replay them in new combinations
- ◆ The power of our imagery, therefore, is a function of our ability to retrieve these recorded sensory bits





# HOW IMAGERY WORKS

- The brain has a difficult time differentiating between real and highly imagined events
- The body responds to both as though they're actually happening
  - Heart races
  - Breathing rate increases
  - Blood pressure spikes
  - Muscles tense and tremble
  - Body sweats
- The brain processes both as though they actually happened
- Do you remember your last dream?



# USES OF IMAGERY

- Pain management
- Simple and Complex movements
- Athletics
- Combat Operations



# Fatigue Counter-Measures

*Sleep—like food, water, and air—is a necessity, not a luxury. In combat, sleep is taken for granted all too often.*

*When you don't get enough sleep, performance suffers and everyone is put at risk!*

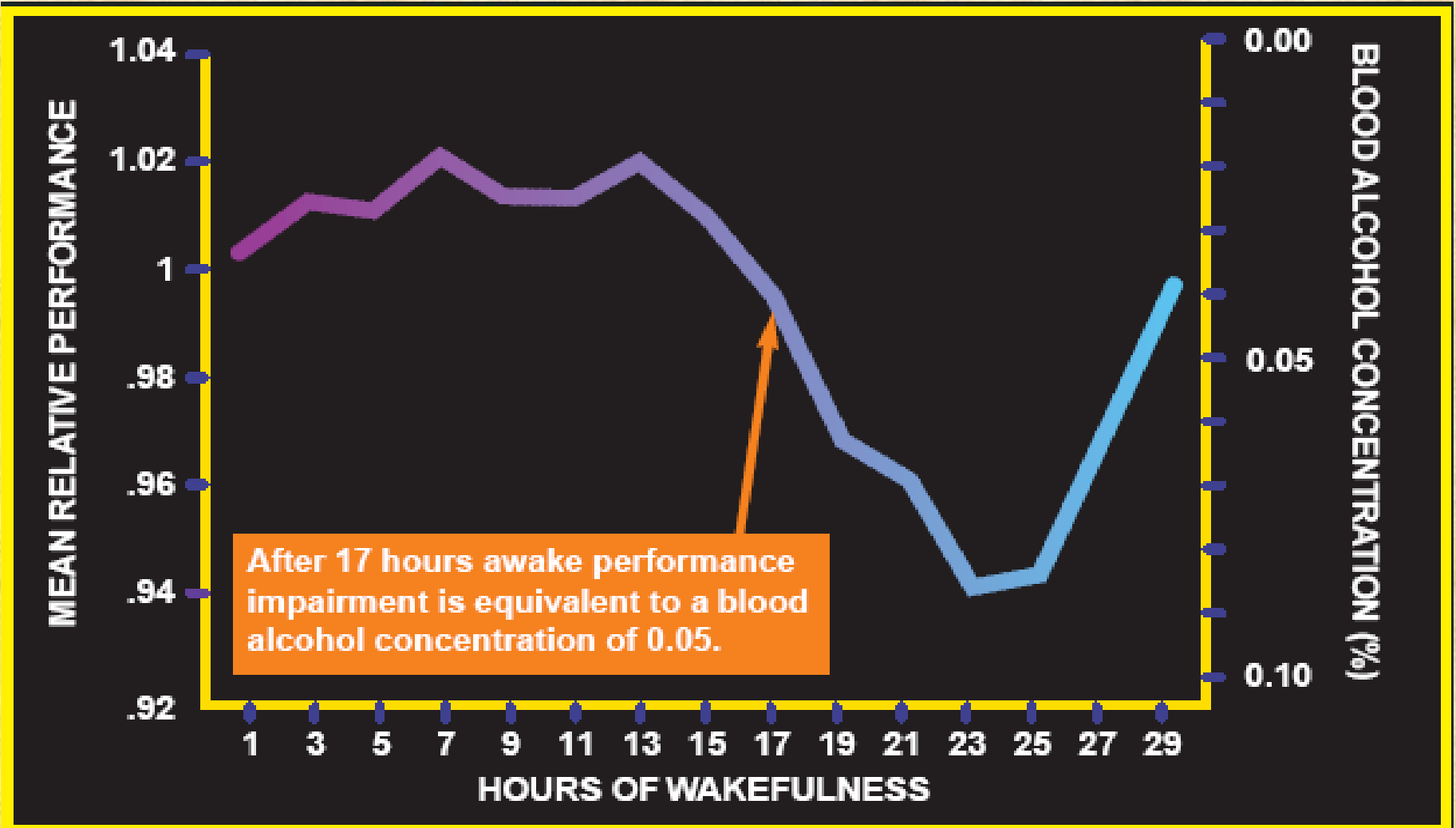


# Fatigue

- Sleep restriction severely degrades performance.
    - Less than *5 hours per night*, fatigue becomes a problem almost immediately
    - Less than *4 hours per night*, uncontrolled sleep attacks occur
  - *Seven to eight hours per night* is the minimum requirement.
    - *However, the DOD Policy is 8 hours, and some people will need more.*
    - **People will know they've found the right amount when it's easy to stay alert even during boring and/or sedentary tasks.**
- ❖ *People cannot train to get by on less sleep!***



# Would You Go On a Mission Drunk?



After 17 hours awake performance impairment is equivalent to a blood alcohol concentration of 0.05.

Source: Hayward, B. *Pilot Fatigue and the Limits of Endurance*. Flight Safety Australia, April 1999 p 37.

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# Recommendations

- The effects of inadequate sleep cannot be overcome by motivation, training, or experience.
- Tradition and pride are barriers to change.
- Safety, performance, and operational readiness can be preserved by:
  - Decreasing long duty hours when not required and providing late first calls when possible



# Fatigue

- Allowing adequate time to adapt (time zones)
  - Time changes  $\geq 3$  hrs will cause significant jet lag.
  - Jet-lag is usually short-lived and the body readjusts relatively quickly as compared to shift-work.
  - It can take 1-2 weeks to readapt after a 5-8 hour time change.
  - Rule of thumb: *At best*, 1 day of adjustment is required for each 1 hour of time change, and, it is easier to readjust after an east-west flight than a west-east flight.
- When possible on reverse cycle:
  - 1) Go to sleep before the sun rises
  - 2) Wake up and get outside in time to obtain 2-3 hours of sunlight exposure
  - 3) Limit caffeine intake 3 hours prior to bed



*Ignore what other people say about how much sleep and recovery is necessary.*

*Individual needs and fatigue vulnerability differ significantly from person to person.*

*Do the basics well:*

***Exercise! Nutrition! Sleep!***





# QUESTIONS

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