



ROMANCING SLEEP  
DEEP SLEEP

*methods for deep sleep  
and profound dreaming*

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## Introduction

*Romancing Sleep* approaches the idea of sleep by looking at an entire person. Just as a cake will not rise without the proper leavening ingredients, so sleep becomes an elusive goal without acknowledging all the necessary inner components. These inner ingredients, however, are not found on a pharmacy shelf; they reside within you and are yours for the taking. All you need to know is how to access them.

Let's start with an overview map of one's inner world; it will be explained in detail in coming chapters. The *subconscious/unconscious* plays an important role, and provides you with an on/off switch for entering into the world of sleeping and dreaming. Most of us spend the entire day in our logical, analytical minds. So when that mysteriously magical time arrives each night to "turn off," the analytical mind still wants to take charge. We assume that forcing ourselves to go to sleep is the only way. Well, if this is how you approach sleep, has it been working for you?

The inner workings of our bodies, though, don't understand the daytime, brute-force language directed at convincing ourselves to go to sleep. A softer, subtler language, coming from deeper realms not readily apparent to our conscious, waking mind, is required. In this book we introduce the idea of *paying attention* to what your body is telling you. If you "listen" with *all* your sensory abilities to what your body is already conveying, you will learn what is and what is not working as you attempt to fall asleep.

We begin by inviting your normal, analytically directive mind to become a passive witness, a listener to your somatic body intelligence. Paying delicious attention, without directive or judgment, to the way the tactile body responds to life in every moment is an entryway to sleep. This portal is a centralized landscape, housing sensorial, tactile wavelengths or frequencies, enabling the subconscious/unconscious and emotional worlds to communicate.

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We introduce a language that romances the subconscious into dropping you into deep sleep. It is the same language needed when you persuade a two-year-old to do something. Direct, cold orders generally don't work, but subtle commands usually do. This is the language of the subconscious/unconscious that "hears" and understands through input from the senses of the body. We call this *somatic intelligence*. There are ways for you to begin listening to what your body is telling you regarding what is working or not working. Not only does the subconscious "hear" through its own senses, but it also receives information from the external world, also filtered through the senses. We call this *empathy*. This external information either triggers us into nervous system overload (think of riding the subway during rush hour in New York), or into a calm letting go of that part of our mind that keeps us awake (think of sitting on the beach, quietly watching the sunset).

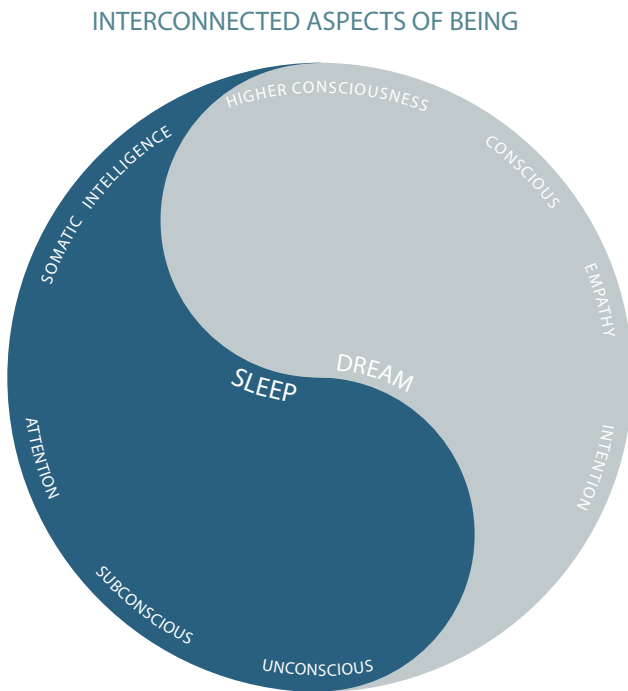
We can ask our conscious mind to signal the subconscious into weaving this magical state of sleep by inviting our daytime, analytical, controlling mind to temporarily take a break. We call this *romancing* the daytime self into intermittently releasing words and descriptions as its primary form of communication throughout the day. The nervous system understands best how to unwind through a somatic, visceral response to the environment rather than through cognitive description. This is not to say that the conscious, analytical mind is off-limits in this recipe for a good night's sleep. Every part of an individual is an important piece of the integrated whole. We are suggesting that the daytime, conscious mind can choose to find a new placement by softening its continually descriptive hold throughout the day into one of soft embrace and quiet listening. These small shifts throughout the day would speak to the nervous system in its "native" language, leading to an easier time at night in knowing how to "let go." This would allow the subconscious/unconscious to exist in daytime reality, where a relationship between the seen and unseen minds can develop into mutual admiration.

Other ingredients in the recipe for sleep are *intention* and *attention*. By shifting our focus from a directive approach to a softer one, *intending to pay attention* to the body's

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signals, we can gently encourage restful, rejuvenating sleep. It is an inner-world tapestry, woven by an unspoken language that caresses the nervous system into deeply languorous sleep.

The following graphic illustrates the interconnected aspects of an individual, all seamlessly flowing through each other. There is a constant exchange of information and validation of the individual as a whole comprised of many parts, each aspect holding its rightful place in nourishing the integrated unity of the person, ultimately resulting in a harmonious, stress-reduced state of being.



The yin-yang symbol is used to weave together the Interconnected Aspects of Being in the diagram. A black and white yin-yang represents opposites uniting, chasing after each other in perfect symmetry, existing in equality. It is unity, shadow and light in one form, spinning in energetic union. They do not exist in mutual negation; they are not at war. But rather, they completely admire and synchronize with each other.

This graphic represents the various aspects called upon to induce a good night's sleep with a more relaxed, stress-reduced daytime experience. Nothing needs to change in your environment. Sometimes that's out of your control anyway. What *is* in your control is how you relate to your environment.

## Introduction

Throughout this book you will learn simple practices to enter the *void*—that place of no-mind stillness that is ever-present in the background, ready to comfort and nurture your body and mind, no matter what is happening in the external world. Becoming familiar with this aspect of who and what you truly are will lead to a deeper and more satisfying relationship with sleep.

We invite you to consider *sleep* as something vast and undiscovered, like an unexpected lover that has always been yours and yours alone. Romance the night and dreamtime as you would a highly desirable paramour. Sleep is your companion, lifelong partner, and friend. The more you invest in your relationship with sleep and dreams, the better able you will be to penetrate the gorgeous mystery that unfolds as “your life” every day. On a practical level, the benefits of Deep Sleep include remarkable, life-enhancing, age-reversing, energy-boosting effects that you will begin to notice as you embrace a new approach to and relationship with sleep.

*Romancing Sleep* offers a whole new context for your relationship with sleep. Notice we keep talking about your “relationship with sleep.” Sleep, like anything that nourishes and nurtures you, deserves special attention. The daytime self can invite the nighttime, sleep self into its daily routine, and vice versa. This way, when it comes time to lay your head down on your pillow and go to sleep, you won’t feel like you’re attempting a foreign, unattainable endeavor.

Once upon a time, your daytime and nighttime selves were so merged that you could not tell them apart. Myths throughout the world refer to this state as some form of “Eden.” But in today’s hyperactive and ultra-revved world, the conscious mind—your daytime self—can become estranged, if not completely divorced, from your subconscious and unconscious mind, at least on the surface. At a deeper level, these two aspects of you are timeless lovers who have always had each other’s best interest at heart. Trust us on this one, and allow us to lead you into a deep and fulfilling relationship where your daytime and nighttime selves work together in harmony.

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Now we will play Cupid and prepare to launch our arrow from its bow. All you have to do is say, “Okay. I’m ready to start.”

The following chapters map a path through an inner-world journey of discovering new ways of relating to the self concerning falling asleep, new ways of falling in love with the beauty of your unique being. Enjoy!

### **Take Time for a Moment of Silence Before Eating**

Set a personal intention for yourself before eating. For example, you could ask for improved metabolism, better digestion for better sleep, or weight loss. Stillness before meals calms the nervous system and improves digestion, allowing toxins to flow out of our system without being lodged there. You can make up a poem or grace that you recite to yourself before each meal, or look one up in a book. A favorite of mine is:

*I am grateful for the food in front of me,  
The people around me  
And the Love between us.*

- Alexandria Dee, 7 years old

In today's society, our circadian rhythms are falling out of synch with normal sleeping and eating patterns. This causes us to lose the effect of our youth hormones and their anti-cancer protection properties.

Through modern research, we have a new understanding of sleep. At McGill University in Montreal, Canada, research was done to determine when aging begins. The results showed that aging begins at 24 years. From birth to 24, regardless of what we do, nature gives us a survival advantage. Up to 24, our hormones and enzymes are naturally elevated. At 24, our survival advantage is lost, as our hormone and enzyme levels plateau up to age 34. This is a second opportunity given to us by nature, but there is no real advantage to procreate. At 34, nature says, "Thanks, but I don't need you any more." From 34 on, you take up valuable space, food, and are competition to the younger crowd. At 34, aging begins like a descending waterfall, accelerating over time. We can participate and slow it down, or unwittingly accelerate it for an early demise.

The decade from 34-44 is one of vulnerability for us. This is when the aging process is most rapid. During this decade, the average American or Canadian woman ages 18.6 yrs. The average male ages 16.2 years. As a species, we “lose it” between 34-44. Biologically, we are well into our 50s by the time we are chronologically 44. Body fat accumulates; the hair thins, we don’t sleep well, and we lose libido. People let go and give up because it is too difficult to keep up with the aging process.

### **Where does sleep fit into this?**

## **Honoring Our Circadian Rhythm**

### **Catabolism—Breaking Down**

Daytime is when catabolism takes place. This stage produces wear and tear on the body. Consequently, aging accelerates during the daylight hours. A 24-hour period is broken into circadian rhythms: a light period and a dark period. Our ancestors were hunters and gatherers and the rhythms of the day affected their appetite and fertility. At night, melatonin increased in the body for sleep and the sex hormones were suppressed. There are two biological systems we look at during the catabolic stage: melatonin and estrogen/testosterone. Since the sex hormones are related to wear and tear on the body, as we lose our libido, the aging process accelerates.

### **Anabolism—Building Up**

The other half of the circadian 24-hour period is nighttime. It is only in the dark cycle of night that the endocrine system goes into the anabolic stage, where it restores, revitalizes and regenerates every bodily function. If we do not restore at close to 100 percent each night, we function at something less than 100 percent during the day. Over time, this accumulates a sleep debt that, in turn, accelerates aging.

## **Total Darkness is More Important than Deep Sleep**

Research has shown that it is not so much sleep that we need, but it is more important to be in total darkness for us to adapt to the circadian rhythm. We were not necessarily

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Constantine Darling

## What people are saying about Romancing Sleep:

*"Romancing Sleep will train you with simple and proven techniques to recalibrate your nervous system for profound sleep and rejuvenation. Constantine combines a lifetime of studying the best principles of meditation, nutrition, and physical training along with a deep commitment to optimum health."*

-Marci Shimoff

New York Times best selling author, *Happy for No Reason* and *Chicken Soup for the Woman's Soul*, and featured teacher in *The Secret*.

*"Constantine's work in sleep and dreams integrates psychological and spiritual principles in a seamless fashion. He has a talent for helping people discover their intellect and empathy by getting them into their bodies."*

-Steven Macramalla, Ph.D.

Associate Researcher, Nasa Ames through the San Jose State University Foundation

*"As a student and friend for many years, Constantine Darling is one of the most valuable teachers, on many levels, that I have ever had. His mastery of body, mind and spirit is amazing, along with his deep psycho-spiritual understanding of himself, people and the world. I learn deeply from him, as I witness him, as he consistently walks his talk through his life."*

-Debra Giusti

Founder of 32nd Annual Harmony Festival

*"Constantine's teachings have opened me up to many new worlds. He is always tuned into the energies of the moment, inquiring deeper into every direction, constantly creating learning landscapes and offering gifts of possibilities and choices to everyone. His techniques integrate ancient wisdom into a modern life. Every meeting with him is truly transformational and deeply enriching."*

-Sameer Gupta

Systems Analyst, Spiritual Healer

*"Romancing Sleep is a wonderfully written journey on how to enable our over-active and highly process oriented minds to take a vacation and allow our bodies to sink into deep and reinvigorating sleep. Whether you have difficulties sleeping or you want to find a deeper essence for your sleep, Romancing Sleep is a great read."*

-Karl Sniady

Chief Operating Officer, The Coaches Training Institute

Price: \$15.95 USD, \$16.95 CAD

ISBN: 978-0-9819050-0-0



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