



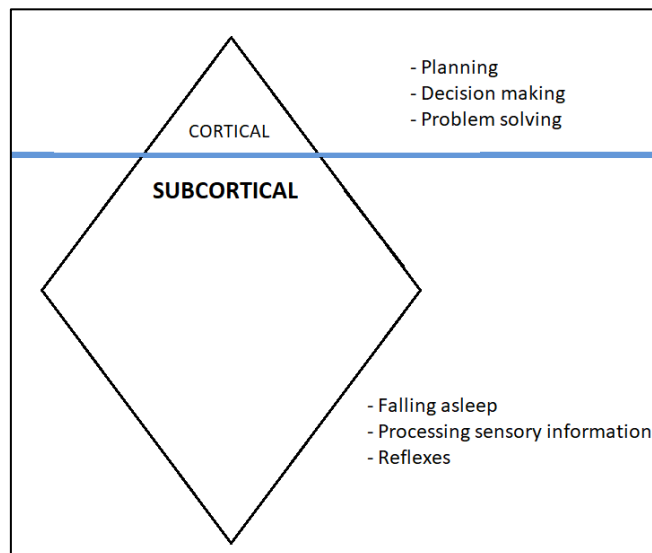
## GIVING PROMPTS SUBCORTICALLY

### Cortical and subcortical processing

There are two ways the brain can process information and operate – cortically and subcortically. **Cortical** processes are ones when we consciously think, plan, organise, rationalise, and reflect.

**Subcortical** processes are ones which can happen without our awareness. Sometimes we can bring our awareness to these processes, but if we stop thinking about them they will continue 'in the background'.

We often don't realise how much our brains and bodies are doing. Our cortical processes only form 'the tip of the iceberg'.



### Different types of prompts

Whenever we use words to ask someone to do something, we are using a **cortical prompt**. However, there are many situations when cortical prompts are ineffective or even counterproductive. Instead, use subcortical prompts.

A subcortical prompt is one which doesn't require them to **think** about what you want them to do.

#### Examples of subcortical prompts:

- Gently taking them by the hand and walking together
- Light touch on the body to direct the person where to go
- Gestures
- Rhythmic tapping (or use of the metronome)
- Walking to where you want them to go
- Modelling what you want them to do

**TIP:** When giving these prompts, you can ensure they are processed subcortically by chatting to the person at the same time. This conversation will occupy their cortical attention, enabling your prompt to be received subcortically as intended.