

HOW DO YOU



LUCID DREAM?

AND IS LUCID DREAMING REAL?

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PREFACE

When attempting some of the techniques in this book, you may have some frightening experiences, such as falling or shaking sensations. Although the authors attest these are not dangerous, you should avoid techniques that create these sensations if you would prefer not to experience them.

Some of the drugs may have side-effects. It is recommended you research drugs further online and/or with your doctor or general practitioner before using them. Additionally, the placebo effect has a major effect on dreaming. If you believe that dream characters act dull and lifelessly, they are far more likely to do so. If you believe they can be creative, original, and surprising, they are far more likely to be. Much of the content of your dreams is affected by the placebo effect. Remember that the easier you think it is to dream lucidly, the easier it will be.

Many of the techniques and “facts” presented on these pages are not backed up by research. This is not to say that these techniques do not work, only that they may be placebos or be ineffective much of the time.

As so, this ebook is just a brief introduction and guide to lucid dreaming. If you're truly interested in learning more, please seek a professional on this slightly obscured topic.

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LUCID DREAMING

CHAPTER I

Lucid Dreaming Explained

Each night, we spend about one and a half to two hours dreaming. We dream about once every 90 minutes of sleep. The time you spend in dreams becomes longer throughout the night, from about 10 minutes to around 45 minutes or slightly longer. But what happens when we sleep?

The stages of sleep.

- NREM 1
- NREM 2
- NREM 3
- NREM 4
- NREM 3
- NREM 2
- REM
- BRIEF WAKING

There are five stages of sleep: four stages of NREM (Non-REM) sleep, also called SWS (Slow-Wave Sleep), and one stage of REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep. The most vivid dreams, and therefore the ones we remember the most, occur during REM sleep (though we dream in other stages too). One sleep cycle is roughly 90 minutes long.

- (NREM) The first stage is a transition state between wakefulness and sleep. This is the stage that hypnagogic imagery occurs in. It usually passes into stage 2 within a few minutes.
- (NREM) During stage 2, the body gradually shuts down, and brain waves become larger.

- (NREM) Stage 3 usually occurs 30 to 45 minutes after falling asleep the first time. Large, slow delta brain waves are generated.
- (NREM) Stage 4 is often called “deep sleep” or “delta sleep”. The heart beats the slowest and there is the least brain activity. It is during this stage that sleepwalking usually occurs.
- After stage 4, the NREM stages reverse and move back to stage 2, and then into REM sleep.
- (REM) During REM sleep, some parts of the brain are nearly as active as while awake. In this stage, your eyes flicker rapidly (hence the acronym Rapid Eye Movement). Your body is paralyzed, probably to prevent you from acting out your dreams.

After the REM state, you sometimes wake briefly. This is usually forgotten by the time you wake up in the morning. If you don't wake up, you go to stage 2.

”I never dream anyway.”

You do, actually — you simply don't remember any of your dreams. In the next chapter, you will find out how to improve your dream recall.

Why do we dream? What do dreams mean?

The various hypotheses for this are detailed in the dream recall section.

WHAT IS LUCID DREAMING?

Lucid dreaming is basically dreaming while being aware that you are dreaming. If you are in a lucid dream, you will usually have some power over your dream — anything

from being able to fly or making an object or room appear behind a door or inside a pocket, right up to being able to change into animals and create a whole world! It is like being a director of your own movie. Lucid dreams have been scientifically proven to exist.

Stephen LaBerge of *The Lucidity Institute* used a special machine to track eye movements during a dream (these are linked to your eye movements within the dream). He asked lucid dreamers to point their eyes left and right in quick succession and this movement was recorded on the machine. For more information on this and other experiments, read *Exploring the World of Lucid Dreaming*.

There are plenty of reasons you might want to lucidly dream:

- Simply for fun! Just flying in a lucid dream is an exhilarating feeling. Lucid dreams are generally far more intense and vivid than most non-lucid dreams. You can use a lucid dream to wind down after a long day.
- Transforming into animals or getting superpowers is a unique experience that is hard to get any other way.
- A major part of “training” for lucid dreams is improving your dream recall, that is, how many dreams you can remember.
- If you are particularly interested in dreams — either in spirituality or in psychology — trying lucid dreaming could help you in your research.
- If you're writing fiction or even creating a world for a computer game, lucid dreaming can help you visualize it. You could ask your characters how they feel about something or what they think will happen.
- Some people compose music in their lucid dreams. Lucid dreams can be realistic enough to rehearse a speech or musical performance.

- You can relive previous dreams or experiences.
- They can help in dream interpretation and communicating with your subconscious.

I Can't Control My Dreams

This is very rarely actually the case (though sometimes it is in nightmares). Usually it is just your memory which treats you as though it were beyond your control. If you become lucid in a dream where you have a body, you will almost always be able to control your body. However, you might not manage to do anything else. Don't worry, though — most people have no problem with jumping very high or flying in a lucid dream!

On the other hand, parts of your brain are less active while dreaming, which can lead to dream/trance logic and sometimes choices you will later regret. For example, you might choose to continue your lucid dream, although you know that once you wake you will only remember half of it. Once you wake up, you may wish that you had stopped your dream. Another example is of somebody who dreamt they were sitting next to Mother Theresa. They wondered if they might be dreaming, thinking *isn't Mother Theresa dead?* They then concluded that she was obviously right next to them and therefore alive, and that it wasn't a dream!

Are Lucid Dreams Related To PSI Phenomena?

There are differing views on this. Some people claim to have organized shared dreams or precognitive dreams through lucid dreaming. Others say these are simply created in the brain like any other dream, something like self-hypnosis.

How Long Does It Take To Learn How To Dream Lucidly?

This completely depends on the person and circumstances. Some people have a lucid dream just a few nights after finding out about it (usually by accident), while some people can take months! If you don't get enough sleep or feel too stressed after work to try techniques, then it may take a long time, especially if you expect it to. It will also depend on how much effort you put in. However, *everybody* has the ability to dream lucidly.

I Think I Do This Naturally. Does This Happen?

It is quite rare to have regular lucid dreams naturally, although most people have had a lucid dream at some point in their lives. If you want to increase the frequency of your lucid dreams, carry on reading through the book; otherwise, skip to the *Using* section to get some ideas for your dreams.

“I Had (dream), Was I Lucid?”

In general, a lucid dream is defined as a dream in which you know you are dreaming at some point, regardless of anything else. Even if you were lucid one second but lost your lucidity, it is still technically a lucid dream. However, this can be a little misleading. Sometimes you dream that you fall asleep and have a lucid dream! This is often thought of as a sign that you will have a proper lucid dream soon, as your mind is thinking a lot about lucid dreams.

Signs you were lucid

- Doing a reality check which gave a positive result
- Remarks to dream characters that you are dreaming
- Attempting to stabilize the dream (see the Using chapter)
- Attempting to fly, walk through mirrors, etc. immediately after realizing you are

dreaming

- Waking up as soon as you realize that you are dreaming

Signs you weren't lucid

- Dreaming that you dreamt
- Treating dream characters as you would real people
- Having an unusually poor recall for that dream after you became lucid
- Not recognizing illogical parts of the dream as a dream

CHAPTER II

Possible Dangers of Lucid Dreaming

While there is no current evidence of lucid dreaming being abnormal or unhealthy in any way, there are a few things you should be aware of that could occur as a result of practicing lucid dreaming techniques. These possible side effects have been outlined for you below. Please don't let this scare you away from this wonderful tool; rather, remember that with dreams you are dealing with your own subconscious mind, and recklessness is not recommended.

Alienation

Many people have never even heard of lucid dreaming, much less ever experienced it. Some people are also less than open-minded and receptive to new ideas. Don't be surprised if someone considers this whole phenomenon "weird" or "crazy" (which it is not). Don't preach, either; it's not your job to absolutely convince everyone. Often people who spontaneously lucid dream, especially children, may find it surprising that not everyone does. They may even start thinking that they are the only person in the world who has lucid dreams. If they're worried, the best support is to let them know that they're not alone, and they're not abnormal.

Addiction

Lucid dreaming can be used for different purposes. Some may want to try it just for fun, using it as a "safe drug", or a personal virtual reality machine. Having fun is a fully valid application of lucid dreaming. However, be careful not to be addicted to this way of escaping your waking life. If you find that you are spending more time asleep than actually needed, or that you are thinking more about lucid dreams than your real waking

life, take a break.

Dissociation

Lucid dreaming may weaken the borders between waking and dreaming, the conscious and subconscious mind, reality and fantasy. This might lead to problems of a dissociative nature. Probably the most common form of dissociation involves having problems distinguishing your waking memories from dream memories. Everyone who recalls at least one dream will have to sort out their dreams from reality in the morning. This can really be a problem for those who have previously had zero recall and, due to lucid dreaming, have had a major uptick in recall. Now, suddenly, they have all these excess, illogical memories to sort out. **This is unlikely to be a major problem**, but may be a big annoyance. However, there are signs that you should watch for that indicate a bigger problem may be developing. Lucid dreaming in itself should not cause these to appear *in a waking state*:

- Ability to ignore extreme pain or what would normally cause extreme pain
- Absorption in a television program or movie
- Remembering the past so vividly one seems to be reliving it
- Finding evidence of having done things one can't remember doing
- Not remembering important events in one's life
- Being in a familiar place but finding it unfamiliar
- Seeing oneself as if looking at another person
- Other people and objects do not seem real
- Looking at the world through a fog
- Not recognizing friends or family members
- Finding unfamiliar things among one's belongings
- Finding oneself in a place but unaware of how one got there
- Finding oneself dressed in clothes one doesn't remember putting on

If this has happened, and there is no other cause (e.g. drugs), take a break from lucid dreaming for a while. In fact, take a break from anything fictional for a while, at least until symptoms stop.

Controversial: Creating Bad Habits or Becoming a Control Freak

When lucid dreaming, you have the option to control the dream world in ways that are impossible in the waking world. You can, for example, make objects appear or disappear, or make people act according to your will. Some people believe this may lead your subconscious to desire this kind of control in the waking world, where it's highly inappropriate. Also, you might be tempted to apply dream-world solutions to waking-life problems instead of actually facing them; for example, just willing bad things to go away or escaping or destroying them by superpowers. Again, this is probably more of a problem if you are not mentally stable at the outset of your dreaming process.

Controversial: Accidentally Encountering “Spiritual” Entities

This depends on your worldview. If dreams are a creation of your brain and nothing more, you don't need to worry about spirits or anything similar. If you want to be on the safe side, treating objects in your dream decently and politely won't do you any harm.

Similar Techniques “I Can Do Astral Projection, Should I Learn How To Dream Lucidly?”

Possibly not. If you often enter a “dream world” after leaving your body, that is basically the same as the method called *Wake-Initiation of Lucid Dreams*. Keep in mind that many people believe that “astral projection” or “out-of-body experiences” are actually lucid dreams. Whether these PSI Phenomena are real or just the creative content of your dreams, learning to lucidly dream will expand the variety of your experiences.

“I Can Use Self-Hypnosis, Should I Learn How To Dream Lucidly?”

Again, maybe not. If you often enter a “dream world”, that is basically the same as the method called *Wake-Initiation of Lucid Dreams*.

“If These Are So Similar, Why Learn Lucid Dreaming and Not Self-Hypnosis or Astral Projection?”

Here are some reasons:

- Lucid dreaming is something that everybody can understand. Most people have already had a lucid dream. Self-hypnosis is not fully understood and no single theory about astral projection is accepted in the astral projection community.
- Hypnosis has many negative connotations for some people. This is mostly from myths in books and films, but some people remain afraid of hypnosis.
- In contrast with self-hypnosis, much material about lucid dreaming is available free.
- If you are prepared to spend money, there are some gadgets to help people dream lucidly. Usually, they will give a light or sound signal shortly after the REM state is detected. Hypnosis tapes usually focus more on self-improvement and you cannot decide what to do with your hypnotic trance.
- If you don't believe in PSI Phenomena, you will likely be much more comfortable reading books about lucid dreaming or self-hypnosis than those on astral projection.
- You would be sleeping anyway, so it doesn't take up waking time.

- You'll be able to use this ebook to your advantage!

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