

Lucid Dreaming

A note to anyone reading this; I wrote this book, plus a little bit more, on a freelance assignment. The person I wrote it for didn't like that it had too much information on lucid dreaming and not enough information, in his opinion, for a novice to learn how to dream lucidly. I think the background information helps establish a basis for the reality of lucid dreaming, and takes it out of the world of fairy tales or the "wouldn't it be nice" arena. Lucid dreaming is fact; has been proven, and is used by people every day. Right now it is just a small percentage of the world population, but that percentage is going up all the time. I hope you enjoy reading this as much as I enjoyed writing it.

Chapter One

"Our truest life is when we are in dreams awake."

Henry David Thoreau.

Lucid dreaming is a subject that is getting more and more attention. This information contained in this book is certainly not the definitive last word on lucid dreaming. It should be considered a how-to manual with a bit of history, trivia and a few tangent thoughts thrown in for good measure. (In other words, I think that a bit of related

information might enhance your LD experience or help you to attain lucidity in your dreams.)

Before we begin this journey, I think just a little background is needed on dreaming in a general sense of the word, and in the sense that is used in this book. Everyone dreams; Day dreams, Night Dreams, Nightmares. Dreaming can just be using your imagination to build a scenario in your mind, or an ideal situation for your future, but this book is about gaining lucidity inside your sleeping dreams.

Dreaming is an event that happens for all people pretty much every night. Dreaming occurs (for the most part) during the phase of sleep known as Rapid Eye Movement (commonly abbreviated R.E.M.) Most people have REM sessions on the average of four or five times per night, around 90 minutes apart. The earlier periods of REM sleep are usually shorter and the REM periods get longer as the night goes on. Total REM sleep for the average adult per night is around one hundred minutes.

Taking the above figure of 100 minutes of dreaming per night and multiplying that by the number of days in the average life (60 years for the sake of this discussion multiplied by 365 days multiplied by 100 minutes = 2,190,000 minutes = 1,520 days, in other words a little over 4 years) Well, that number is a little ridiculous, but say you gain a year of consciousness through lucid dreaming. That gives you a lot more life to live. And through controlling your dreams, that year is going to be most enjoyable!

Although some people claim not to dream at all, the likelihood of that is extremely slim. More probable is that those individuals pay such little attention to their dreams, so the memory of the dreams is brief at best.

One of the most interesting things I stumbled across in my dream research was information on a Malaysian tribe called the Senoi. They were also known as "The Dream People." They held their dreams as a very important part of their lives. Dreams were so central to them that they would discuss them everyday amongst their family. The society as a whole was virtually free of crime and psychological problems.

As youngsters, the Senoi were taught to pay attention to their dreams and to confront their fears. This behavior taught them that their dream world impacted their waking world by teaching them about their inner world. (subconscious thought) By learning to pay attention to their dreams the Senoi also took dream concepts and brought them into the real world. What I mean by that is that the Senoi would dream of an idea, and because they could remember dreams in such detail, they would be able to construct things they had seen (or you might say they made real the things that were shown to them by their subconscious mind.) The things might just be works of art, paintings and such, or they might be some modification of a current practice made better by applying a dream principle.

Unfortunately the world of the Senoi was to come to an end after World War Two. With the exposure to modern ways, their culture got swallowed up. Western ways proved to be too much for them. If

you visit Malaysia now there are remnants of this once dream-savvy tribe, but they will not talk about the theme that was once central to their existence.

Fortunately we can take the concept that the Senoi tribe held dear and perhaps gain the insight they had. The wisdom of the dream world can help you in many aspects of your life, and this book can help you on your way.

You will be shown how to remember your dreams, and to take your dreaming to the next level, Lucid Dreaming.

For this book to be most effective and take your current dream situation to lucidity and control, it would be best if you read through the first four chapters and get a firm understanding of the concept of lucid dreaming. These first chapters will also explain the benefits of lucid dreaming, how you can use lucid dreaming to conquer your nightmares and how to get maximum enjoyment out of your dreams.

Chapter 2

What is Lucid Dreaming?

Man is a genius when he is dreaming

Akira Kurosawa - Japanese Filmmaker



I wandered across the parking lot and passed by a motorcycle that had a giant speaker built into the seat. (That should have been a trigger event.) I entered the building and was immediately seen by the clerk at the desk. He looked up and asked my name. I saw him write it in his ledger. The name in the ledger above mine was the same as mine. He started screaming at the book and pounding his head into it. Suddenly it dawned on me that I was dreaming, and the building dissolved. – Rob



Lucid Dreaming is the terminology to describe the state of being asleep and dreaming, yet being conscious of self, inside the dream. In other words lucid dreaming is being aware that you are dreaming, while you are dreaming. It also gives people a chance to do things that would normally be impossible for them. Lucid dreaming is a gift which allows us to see our true selves and our true potential, if only for a while.

The adjective “lucid” means having a clear mind, and when applied to dreaming, it means that you are in a place of understanding. This is a key point, because starting out at a place of

clarity and understanding will help you in your ultimate goal of being able to control your dreams and fully derive all the benefits that come along with that.

The ability to control your dreams is not something that is typically developed overnight (no pun intended), but is certainly possible for anyone willing to commitment to follow the suggestions contained in this book. Controlling your dreams can mean changing, adding, modifying or shifting the dream into an entirely new direction. As you may imagine, this can be an awesome experience. As a matter of fact, in a dream world your imagination can become a stronger tool for you in all aspects of your life. Just as an Olympic athlete develops their skills and builds their muscles, your imagination can also be developed and turned into a great strength in your life.

Before I go any further, I want to clear up a common misconception. Lucid dreaming is not some sort of new-age touchy-feely concept. It has been talked about and written about for over a hundred years in the scientific and psychological community and has been referenced everywhere from the Bible's Old Testament to the writings of Aristotle.

One of the earliest written works on lucid dreaming was done by the Marquis d'Hervey. In the late nineteenth century he published his book, *Dreams and How to Guide Them*. This early work compiled many years of his personal research including records of his dreams from an early age. In his book d'Hervey told of the evolution of his ability to controls events and situations in his dreams. He followed the same steps detailed here by first practicing remembering his dreams,

then becoming conscious inside his dreams and then finally controlling the situations. His work showed that with effort, lucid dreaming is attainable for anyone to some degree.

The connection between the dream world and the real world is definitely linked through many scientific and psychological studies, dating at least back to *Dreams and How to Guide Them*. The connection may not be physical (although many people would debate that), but it is certainly a mental relationship. Many studies have been done that link real-life problem resolution with dream/nightmare confrontation or resolution.

Chapter 3

The Benefits of Lucid Dreaming

Dreams are the royal road to understanding the unconscious mind.

Sigmund Freud

Why should one want to dream a lucid dream? I think before we get into that we should start with the benefits of dream recollection. Dreams can often reveal solutions that we never even knew we had within us.

In the case of many people, it is often remarked that the problems/challenges of the day are occasionally solved during the night. In other words, one goes to bed with an unsolved mystery and wakes up with an 'aha' moment. Think about that for a second. The ability to rearrange bits of information during sleeping hours can present solutions to items that were unsolvable (or at least perplexing) during the normal conscious problem solving state of mind.

It is fact that many inventions and creative writing endeavors have had their start in the dream world. In 1846, Elias Howe patented what proved to be the basis for the modern sewing machine. Up to that point, inventors had been trying to figure out how to use standard type needles in a mechanized manner. No one had any success with machines that used needle technology that was based on a hand sewing design.

Elias Howe was one of those frustrated individuals whose thinking was tied to current world practices. One night things changed

for Elias. He had a dream of being in a giant iron pot being boiled by cannibals. The cannibals were poking him with odd looking spears that had holes in their tips. This dream inspired Howe to move the hole to the tip of the needle instead of the base. His dream gave him a shift in thinking, and he did what is now termed "thinking outside the box." This is a clear example of dream solutions moved into the real world, and there are many more of these examples.

Another example of dreaming affecting the real world is told by none other than Albert Einstein. Einstein said that his life's work was inspired by a dream he had of sledding down a hill. He said that he went so fast that the colors all blended and turned into a white mass. Travel approaching the speed of light and his theory of relativity were the eventual impact in the real-world of the dream-state

Now, taking that one step further, when someone is able to solve mental challenges, or come up with solutions, while asleep and unconscious, imagine the progress you may be able to make if you are able to guide your process during the puzzle solving portion of your dream-state. Looking at this again, you might think, "wait a second, my subconscious is putting things together. If I try to guide that process I might come up against the same blocks as I do in my waking processes." That is true, but your lucid dreaming is not going to take over all your dreams. Some of your dreams will still be the passive-type dream; you will just be more cognizant of the dream. This means you will get all the benefits of the lucid dream-state and the passive dream state. Win-win.

Another practical use of lucid dreaming is the ability to learn to overcome things in our waking lives by facing things we fear in the dream state. The fears and obstacles in our dreams can be the exact things we face in the waking world or they can be representative of real world barriers to success. Either way, facing them successfully in your dreams can make you realize that those things can be overcome and that success is truly within your grasp in the real world as well.

One advantage to overcoming your fears while in the dream state is that physical danger is non-existent. The old wife's tale of dieing if you hit bottom on a fall is total mythology; the worst that can happen would be falling out of your bed. Of course, you don't want to place your bed next to a cliff, but hopefully that is common sense.

The ability to overcome things or even to *do* things in your dreams can have a definite impact on your waking life. Not only can your dreams show you the way to perform better (perhaps in the presentation you need to make for your boss or to finally make that difficult shot on the golf course) they can actually teach you to perform better. Think not? Well, you better think again!

One technique for integrating your "mental game" into your real life is called visual motor rehearsal. If you are unfamiliar with that term, let me delve into it into just a little bit of detail. Denis Waitley, the well known author of *The Psychology of Winning*, began using visual motor rehearsal when he was working with NASA and then went on to use it with Olympic athletes and players in the National Football League.

Waitley's methodology of Visual Motor Rehearsal was researched using electroencephalogram (EEG) technology. EEG's are used to measure the electrical activity during brain functions. What Waitley discovered was that the EEG activity was the same when an athlete mentally rehearsed their event as when they actually did their event. This discovery led to a series of experiments which demonstrated that virtual practice impacted actual performance.

What I found most interesting was that because the virtual performance could be performed flawlessly each time, the brain activity translated those practices into successful attempts each time. These virtual performances gave the athletes deep-seated confidence in their ability to successfully complete the real-world performance. The reason that the dream world does impact the 'real world' to such an extent is that your mind can't tell the difference between what is real and what is not, so it interprets the events in the same manner.

Lucid Dreaming allows oneironauts to not only practice events "in their heads" but also to practice their events in an environment that more closely approaches real life than any virtual reality simulator! This "*Virtual* Visual Motor Rehearsal" takes Waitley's tool and supercharges the results.

To make perfectly clear, when I say "events" I am not limiting those to athletic endeavors. The term events can represent any activity in your life. This covers everything from solving an equation, designing a machine, giving a speech, or anything else.

The most common fear in the world is fear of getting in front of people and giving a speech. I know that at one point in my life I would get nervous, have 'dry mouth' and forget information that was second nature to me! That even happened when the group I was presenting to was made up of colleagues and there was no pressure involved. I got past that. Imagine that you are in front of an auditorium of people, and your speech concludes and is met with thunderous applause. You were calm, cool and collected throughout. In a lucid dream that can happen, and the success and confidence can be carried into the real world.

You can use lucid dreaming to conquer fears and have great adventures. People are only limited by their imagination, and Virtual Visual Motor Rehearsal and Lucid Dreaming can also help boost that!

Now that I have all the matter-of-fact information out of the way, I want to talk about the other aspect of lucid dreaming. It is just plain fun! You are in a world of your own creation. Anything you want is yours for the asking. Anything you want!

Have you ever wanted to meet a sports figure or a movie star? Easy enough to do! Drive the winning car in the Monaco Grand Prix? There's the checkered flag waving at your car. Travel around the world in an instant and see the sights you've only read about, or seen on the television.

But wait! That's only the reality-based situations that you can experience. Who has not wanted to be able to fly? It's the easiest way to conquer any fear of heights! You can't possibly fall, unless you

wanted to. And if you wanted to you can make a giant pillow to catch you and cradle your descent. Take your personal rocket to the Moon or Mars. Explore the galaxy. Meet your heroes. Travel in time. Talk to God. There is no limit to what you can do in a lucid dream.



I was driving along a highway in a brand new sports car and I realized I don't even own a car. It was then I knew I was dreaming. A motorcycle flew past me, and I was suddenly chasing the motorcycle. I looked down and noticed I was floating on air, but I wanted my own motorcycle. Like magic, suddenly there was a powerful machine under me, and I was in total control. I knew I was dreaming, so I didn't care about accidents or losing control. The wind was whipping my hair around. I felt totally free. I passed the other motorcycle and had the road to myself.

R.O. - Tel Aviv



I was standing at the top of a tall building looking down at my home town. I knew I was dreaming. I felt relaxed and secure, and I knew what I wanted to do next. I took a step toward the edge and jumped! I wanted to fly. I started falling, but kept calm. Before I hit the ground I just thought about pulling up and I did! I was flying all over the place and it felt like I was a bird. I don't know why but I decided to fly to New York City, my favorite place in the world. The trip there took only seconds and I found myself swooping and flying between buildings.

N.L. - Tel Aviv



These stories are just the tip of the iceberg. Imagine your most wild crazy fun experience, and then multiply that many times. There is no limit, and you will surprise yourself over and over again as you explore this new world full of opportunity and adventures.

Chapter 4

Conquering Nightmares

I have had dreams and I have had nightmares, but I have conquered my nightmares because of my dreams.

Jonas Salk

Another advantage to Lucid Dreaming is it gives us the ability to face our nightmares whatever they may be. Nightmares come in a variety of packages. Deaths of family and friends, injuries to oneself, being chased by known or unknown assailants, monsters, and being lost are just a few of the things that make people afraid to go to sleep, or dread dreaming.



I was watching TV and suddenly the power went off. I tried the remote, but nothing happened. Suddenly the TV started to stand up! Legs and a body grew out of the bottom and the screen turned into a set of jaws filled with thousands of tiny triangle teeth. It was like being inside a great white sharks mouth. I screamed as it approached me, but somehow I was glued to my seat and could only shield my face with my arms.

H.K. – Chicago, Illinois



No doubt there are many people who have nightmares, and from everything I've read and from most of the people I have talked to, most nightmares are recurring ones. Could this be the subconscious mind trying to bring conscious thought to something we

are trying to avoid? Are we trying to communicate with ourselves on issues that we can't bear to face in the waking world? Whether it is a Frankenstein monster chasing you to a cliff, or finding yourself naked at work, there is an endless variety of topics. To one person the naked scenario might not have as much impact as the monster, but we all have situations, people or things that we hold at bay. So, what can you do about those things?

There are two basic schools of thought on nightmares; confront your fears or embrace your fears. Either one can have merit, depending on the particular topic of the nightmare. I'll go into it briefly and let you sort it out in your dreams.

The confront school of thought says that your fears are mostly boogie men hiding in your closet, waiting for your eyes to close to make an appearance. In those cases I would certainly agree that to confront and conquer the villain is the best choice.

The other time that "confront and conquer" could make sense is when the villain in your nightmare is a known quantity. Is this someone in your waking life, past or present, who did you wrong? Is this an ex who stole your money and/or your heart and disappeared? Or is it a criminal who robbed you (or worse)? All of those situations warrant conquering your assailant. Strike out at the thug who haunts your nights, or turn around and chase them down. Reverse the pattern and you can end the visitation.

Another prominent thought is to embrace your nightmare, and try to understand it. The monster that is chasing you might be your

own self-doubt. Stop running and ask the creature, "What do you want from me? What can I do for you?" Perhaps healing can begin when your subconscious mind can talk to you through the apparitions of your dream world. The "embrace and conquer" can lead to deeper understanding and healing of your psyche.

Either path you take can lead to resolution and banishment of recurring or occasional nightmares. Both of those paths are best taken through conscious thought during your dreams/nightmares and so now, let's get started on the path to lucid dreaming!

Chapter 5

Step by Step Guide to Lucid Dreaming

There is nothing like a dream to create a future.

Victor Hugo

Now that the stage has been set, the next obvious question is already in your mind. "OK, I can understand how I could benefit from lucid dreaming, but it seems like a unique talent. I don't even dream much. How can someone like me go from almost no dreams to having lucid experiences? Is that even possible?"

The answer is yes. Almost everyone who follows a tried and true formula will have the ability to have lucidity at least occasionally, if not regularly. Like many other things that you do in your life, lucid dreaming is a learned skill. The first time you sat at a computer, you did not know where the on/off switch was, but now, through repeated use, you don't even think about how you open your most commonly used application, you just do it. Lucid dreaming can work the same way. After practice and time, you just do it.

There are a few basic steps toward lucidity and I will lay them out here, and then go into detail on each.

1. Become more aware of your dreams through the use of a ***Dream Journal***
2. Set your mind to remember your dreams
3. Teach yourself to recognize when you are dreaming to allow consciousness shift to awareness

4. Keep yourself in the dream state, even though you are conscious
5. Learn to manipulate your dream environment

Step 1. The Dream Journal

A famous American writer, Langston Hughes said, "***Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die, life is a broken winged bird that cannot fly.***" A dream journal is a way to hold them.

A "Dream Journal" is exactly what it sounds like. It is an ongoing diary of dreams that you have. I can already hear some people saying, "But I don't have dreams. I never or rarely dream at all. The journal will be mostly empty!" And to this I say nonsense. Everyone dreams on a nightly basis. Those who claim not to are unaware of their dreams, or have poor recall that quickly fades to memory lapse.

The very act of purchasing a journal for the specific purpose of recording your dreams will inspire you to remember what you have dreamt. That along with a few exercises will strengthen your recall and soon you will be amazed at what you remember. And for those who don't fit the "I don't dream at all" category, your dream recall will be boosted by a huge percentage. The human brain is a marvelous piece of equipment that we all have been endowed with. The things we emphasize, or focus on, become more important and soon we don't remember not having capacity to perform functions. They become second nature.

Think of dream recall as learning an instrument. When a person first learns to play a piano, they peer studiously at each note on the sheet of music and concentrate on finger placement. For most students, after only a bit of time, they soon are seeing the music as a whole and their fingers, seeming to have a will of their own, automatically stroke the correct key. And the student soon doesn't even remember looking at individual notes. The same can be said for the dream journal. Although at first you may not remember much (or any) of your dreams, soon details will surface without much effort.

The first step towards journaling is setting your mind in the correct state when you are going to bed. Telling yourself that your dreams are important and stressing to yourself that you want and need to remember the dreams will cause your brain to give your dreams a higher priority. (We will go into specifics of how to remember your dreams in the next section.)

The next step is to write down your dreams, whatever you can remember, as soon as you wake up. Dreams are like grains of sand in an hourglass. The longer you wait, the more will slip away. When you wake up in the morning sometimes the dream memory is so vivid you think that there is no way you will forget it, but if you don't write it down, the memory will probably be gone forever.

There are different schools of thought on Dream Journals. Some people like to write down things they think are significant in the dreams first, so they won't lose the thought, and then try to fill in the details and the background stories. Other people like to just start

writing and let the events unfold as they will. Either one is fine. The main point here is writing them down.

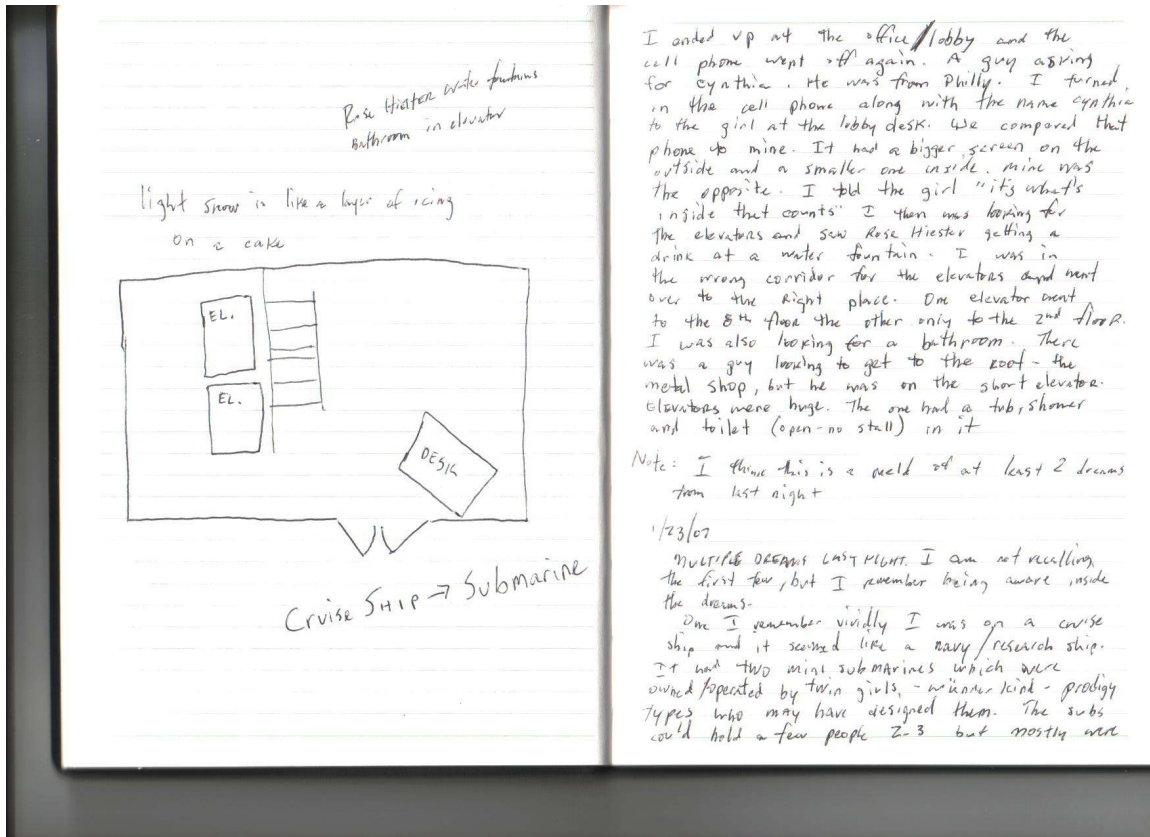
As a personal perspective, I think that letting things flow sometimes brings up things that otherwise might be forgotten and that the big things you remember might not be what really is significant in the dream. For instance, I dreamt about sitting in a classroom and during the instruction I saw that my father was sitting in the back of the room. If I was trying to pull the large details out of that dream I might concentrate on my father and the fact that we were both learning together. The thing I might miss was that there was a formula written on the chalk board, or that I was being taught a life-changing subject. Writing my way through the dream could turn out that the instruction was the key issue, or that my father was trying to connect with me. If I didn't write down the dream, I would miss it either way.

Hopefully the point of all of this gets through to you. If you don't concentrate on remembering your dreams, gaining insight or being lucid, isn't going to matter. You won't remember either way. One of the best ways to get into a remembering mode, is keeping a journal and you never know what the journaling will reveal. It could release your inner muse.

The actual dream journal doesn't have to be anything formal or fancy, but it should be something you can keep track of and refer to. You might want to go to a bookstore and get a blank page lined journal with a cover that appeals to you, or you might just get a spiral bound notebook. I wouldn't recommend a three ring binder, the papers tend to get torn out or the binder rings get loose and then you

have a disorganized mess. It is best to get something that is bound in some way to keep your journal in order.

As you open your journal, I would suggest making the long version of your dreams, some sort of flowing story, on the right side, and the left side can be for notes or drawings.



The above is a sample page of my dream journal.

Sometimes I remember many details and dreams, and sometimes I only recall some short sequences. To start I usually write the date and then start letting the information flow. I keep all of that on the right side of the journal. On the left side, as shown above, I tend to write quick phrases to help me remember, and sometimes I do drawings. (Obviously I am not an artist.) The drawings provide

nudges to my memory or help clarify something. It is interesting to see that sometimes visual nudges, even from basic drawings, can bring back memories of the dream that may otherwise have been lost.

When you are writing in your dream journal, do not be distracted by concepts like sentence structure or spelling. Write furiously and boldly. Make a mad dash to record everything you can remember and when you have caught your breath, then you can go back and try to make more sense of it all.

Know that the more you write down, the more will come to you. Know that you want to start to write immediately upon awaking. I have to run up to my office to write (trying to keep peace with my wife and letting her sleep), but many people keep paper and pencil next to their bed, so the memory is just as fresh as it can be.

The paper and pencil on the nightstand approach is one you may want to seriously consider, especially at the early stages of journaling. Sometimes you will wake up in the middle of the night after a particularly vivid dream, and you don't really want to get out of bed, but you also don't want to lose the dream! So in that case, you jot down a few notes (or a detailed account) and then transfer the information to your journal in the morning.

At this moment, it may be hard to understand the importance of the dream journal, but soon you will appreciate all you have gained from it. In a few months you will be able to look at the journal entries and see recurring patterns, settings and stories and that information will help you to more easily move to lucidity.

The other interesting thing you can do when reviewing your dream journal is try to interpret what the dreams mean. If you constantly have a teacher telling you something, is the dream about the teacher, or about the learning? Is there something written on the black board? Does the teacher resemble someone you know, or are the teacher's mannerisms or speech patterns familiar? Don't assume the dream characters or settings are strict interpretations of things in your life.

A group of monkeys running around in the jungle could represent a group of your co-workers, or it could represent a lack of direction in your thoughts. Do you have lack of focus; is your life more fun than a barrel of monkeys? Your dream could represent any or all of these scenarios. Look at patterns and again, let your imagination go and don't limit yourself.

There are many books on interpreting dreams. I'm not going to go into them at all, but take a look around Amazon and I'm sure you can find something that will appeal to you. I won't recommend any because it really depends on you what you will like. Some books take a more scientific/psychological approach and others are more spiritual or esoteric.

Step 2 - Set your mind to remember your dreams

Many people say that they don't dream. As I have already said this is simply not true. Society as a whole has generally dismissed dreaming as a random firing of synapses that our brain tries to interpret and those interpretations are our dreams. That may be a little too 'scientific', but what it really means is that we don't assign any importance to our dreams because they don't mean anything to 'modern man.'

Case studies have shown that dreams serve the function of helping us to de-stress and also to sort out information gained during our normal waking hours. Modern life has us multi-functioning and filling every hour with tasks (work related, family related and recreational all included here) and we really need dream time now as much, or maybe more than ever. All this is saying dreams are important, and the best way to remember dreams is to tell yourself that they are important.

How do you do that? The first step is to say it out loud "My dreams are important and I want to remember them. The contents of my dreams are important and I will remember them." Step two is waking up and immediately writing them down in your dream journal as stated above. I know this information is repetitive, but it is such an important step that I want it emphasized.

So here, you go. These are some vocalizations you can do prior to going to sleep to help you remember your dreams.

- 1. *My dreams are important***
- 2. *I will remember my dreams***
- 3. *I easily remember my dreams***
- 4. *I remember my dreams vividly***
- 5. *My dreams are interesting***
- 6. *My dreams are crisp and clear***
- 7. *Remembering my dreams helps my waking life***

I realize that many people reading this have other people sharing their room or their bed, so, you don't *have* to say these things out loud, but it does help. You can say them aloud as you are getting ready for bed, while washing your face, or whatever other preparations you have going on just before going to bed. Once you are in bed and starting to fall asleep, you should be repeating these to yourself over and over, like a mantra. Maybe latch on to one or two of the sayings and repeat them to yourself. Really try to *feel* what you are thinking. Don't say them like it is an exercise; say them like they are going to impact your life, because they are! Believe what you are saying and it will be true in your heart and then in the external world.

If you do these exercises and really hold the thought to be true, you will start remembering more and more of your dreams. Before you know it, you will have to buy another journal because the first one will be full!

Step 3 – Awareness - Teach yourself to recognize when you are dreaming

There are some 'standard' or common triggers, and although you may not experience all of these, you will probably recognize most. What I call "trigger events" are also known as dream signs, 'aha' moments and probably a few other terms. All of them mean the same thing, there is something going on that makes you realize, "we're not in Kansas anymore Toto." Once you recognize a trigger event, you are at the beginning of a transition to lucidity.

Common "Triggers"

- Locations
 - The house you grew up in, but no longer live in
 - Your old school or college
 - Old Jobs
 - Outer space
- Situations
 - Being lost in a well known place (work or school)
 - Being naked (very common)
 - Unusual sexual activity – this may be a strange act or unknown partners/multiple partners, etc
 - Flying (no plane, or plane, if you don't fly one normally)
 - Driving a car, when you know you don't drive
 - Lighting
 - Too bright or dim
 - "Wrong" everything bathed in blue lighting
 - Light switches don't work
 - Inside or outside scenery is "wrong"

- No ceilings in a house
- Trees are blue
- Two moons in the sky
- People
 - Seeing people from your distant past (high school friends)
 - Seeing people you know have died
 - Seeing people who are disproportional (large heads/long arms/giants/leprechauns/gnomes/etc)
 - Seeing celebrities (unless you live in Hollywood)
- Things
 - Unusual vehicles
 - Inoperative or malfunctioning machinery
- Other beings/Oddities
 - Aliens
 - Pink Elephants
 - Giant bunnies (Ok you get the idea, 'wrong' animals)

This list is by no means complete and is only meant to make you think about what you have seen in your dreams that should have given you a clue to become aware that you were dreaming. Dreams are our own representations of life, so we tend to accept the most bizarre things as plausible. Your dream journal should help you to recognize factors that are common to your dreams to allow you to become lucid. I have found that the same things crop up time and again. They begin to feel like *déjà vu*, and *déjà vu* should also be a sign for you to do a reality check.

I call these trigger events because when you see something like this in your dream, hopefully it will trigger a response in you. The

response will be *awareness* that you are dreaming. Once you find yourself *aware* of being in a dream, you have reached the first stage of lucidity.

What I have personally found (and most people I have talked to agree) is that the toughest part of becoming lucid is not actually becoming aware that you are dreaming, but staying asleep at that moment. The feeling of being aware can cause you to wake up either from the excitement or from the disconcerting feeling you may get. The next section, *Staying in Your Dream* discusses this in more detail.

But to finish the thought, once you become aware that you are dreaming, and you can stay asleep and dreaming, you have taken a huge step toward lucidity. Just being aware is a low level of lucidness. Next up is to start to move around and explore the dream environment. Once you do that, you are truly Lucid.

Here are some phrases to help you with recognizing trigger events.

- 1. *I know when I'm dreaming***
- 2. *I am fully aware in my sleep***
- 3. *I ask myself if I am dreaming***
- 4. *I quickly take control of my dreams***
- 5. *I instantly recognize when I am dreaming***
- 6. *I know when I am asleep***

Think about the six things that are listed above. Do you really know when you are dreaming? Have you ever had a day, or a moment in your life that you thought was “too good to be true?” Pinch me I must be dreaming? No doubt at least a few times you have. Or maybe you were thinking ‘this is a nightmare.’ In any event what makes you realize that you are awake when those things happen? If you are on a great date, maybe the thing that happens is the check comes. If it was a dream, you would move right from the dinner to the dessert, so to speak.

When the waiter comes with the check, that is an example of a reality indication, or what is commonly, in lucid dreaming, called a reality check. (OK, maybe that was also an example of a bad pun.) The point I am making here is, if you are looking around and paying attention in real life, you see details. The second hand on the clock is moving. Your computer cursor is blinking. Your feet feel cold. All of these are reality checks. If you start doing reality checks while you are awake as a regular thing, the habit will follow you into your dreams, and make the “trigger events” that much easier to recognize. I have heard that it is nearly impossible to read more than a few words while you are dreaming. I know that I can’t read more than one or two words in a row. If the page I am trying to read either starts to blur or fade away I know I am in a dream. What it boils down to is that the world of the dream state is just not that stable for most people. So maybe if you think you may be dreaming, pick up a book and try to read a passage.

Step 4 – Staying in your Dream

Early in the process it is very common for people to get so excited at the first taste of lucidity that they simply wake up. This happened to me actually quite a few times in the beginning and still does once in a while. There are numerous ways to combat this.

The first thing is to add a verbal message to yourself as you are going to sleep. In addition to the "I will remember my dreams" statement, you can add the statement "I will stay calm when I encounter a trigger and become lucid." This small statement may be all you need to stay inside your dream and remain lucid.

Another type of calming factor is physical movement in your dream state. A typical thing to do is to spin like a top. This is literally what it sounds like. Keeping one foot in place, you spin in a circle. It's easy to do in the 'real world' and just as easy to do in your dreams. What this does is keep you focused on you. (Not on the excitement of being lucid) This technique is used by lucid dreamers of all levels. At first you may become excited just by realizing you are lucid in your dream, but as you become more accepting of lucidity, that won't happen as often. BUT lucid dreams are fun and exciting, so as you get excited at first by just being lucid, later you will get excited at meeting a movie star or being able to breathe under water. You can always revert to spinning to center yourself and calm down, so you can continue to enjoy the experience. The spin move has helped me stay calm quite a few times; I know it works.

Step 5 – Manipulating your Dream Environment

This is where it *really* starts to get good. Being lucid in your dream is a great experience. You are astounded by what you see. You interact with what's going on. You explore things you never have seen before. Those sorts of things can keep you entertained for a while, but sooner or later you are going to ask the question. Now what?

So I'll tell you. You change things. This can be a difficult thing at first, so you might need to take it one step at a time. Instead of trying to change a dream about your house into a dream where you are on another planet, try to imagine a different color telephone on your coffee table. Don't stare at the phone trying to force a color change. Look somewhere else in the room and think to yourself, when I turn back around and look at the phone, it will be purple. Then turn around and look at it. Is it the same color, or has it changed?

This is the start of lucid control.

Chapter 6 Lucid Control

When you begin to be able to control your dream environment, you will soon want to control or change major aspects of your dream. What I have found is that doing that is sort of like learning to walk. Although you don't remember learning to walk, you certainly have seen toddlers in that stage of life. First they crawl, then they stand, then they walk while holding on to a steadying force, then they walk on their own (very wobbly) then they are running all over the place.

So what you are doing in your dream is learning to crawl. Observe your dream, walk around. Explore. Then try to manipulate the environment in some subtle way. Say to yourself, over that hill I will see some yellow flowers. Around the corner is a man wearing a hat. Try different things and see what works out for you.

You might use the 'doorway' technique. In the real world we know that a doorway is going to lead to another room or the inside or outside of a building. So as you approach a door decide what is on the other side. You could walk into the Louvré or into the past. The idea that doorways lead to places is firmly implanted in your mind, so to have a doorway lead to someplace totally new is not such a giant leap for your mind to make.

Another exercise which you might find less daunting is to visualize a grain of sand in your hand. Once you can manifest the grain of sand, try to make it change to two grains. Soon you will have sand overflowing your hand, and you will know that you are in control.

The sand exercise can also go like this; Look at your hand. **Will** a grain of sand to be in your palm. It is such a small thing. You can do this. Suddenly the grain of sand appears, maybe from between the folds of skin by your fingers. That might make it seem easier. It didn't just magically appear, but you made it happen. Concentrate on the grain of sand. It is getting larger. You notice it looks more like a tiny piece of glass. Sand is made of silica, like quartz. The tiny piece is shining; it is a diamond! The light glitters off the diamond. The diamond is almost too brilliant to look at. Ah, you are now holding a ball of light.

The previous exercise shows that you don't need to make a dinosaur appear out of thin air. Starting with a small manipulation, you gain confidence in your ability to change your dreams into whatever you desire!

The idea is to change small things. This gets you accustomed to creating your universe. You will find that the concept of control is the only barrier. Changing the color of the phone is truly the same as changing a 1988 Volkswagon Jetta into a spaceship. The difference is only one of scale. Once you realize that you have control, you can change the world. Once you move from New York City to Paris in the blink of an eye, you know that you are the master of the universe.

Chapter 7

Restructure Your Dreams

A powerful way to influence your dreams is to do it from ***without***. What do I mean by impacting your dreams from without? The previous exercises were all done while you were dreaming. The next ones will be done while you aren't. Since your conscious and sub-conscious thoughts make a difference in the way you feel and the way you act in the 'real world', they certainly impact your dream world, as well.

One technique for changing your dream world is to rebuild, or what I like to call "dream restructuring." I have heard and read many concepts similar to what I am going to describe, but I think they all fall just a little short of having the full impact possible. You may have heard the term 'rewrite your dream' or maybe re-dreaming, but I think the term 'restructure' captures more of what you really want to do. It gives a three dimensional, real-feel to making your dreams turn out the way you want them to.

You have to use your full facilities. What I mean by this is you need to relax and close your eyes. Get into a meditative state. If you are unfamiliar with meditation, there are many free sources on the internet on basic meditation techniques, and there are also sites that sell tapes and cd's that help get you into a deeper state of meditation.

You do not have to use that sort of technology to get into a meditative state, but it can help get you into a deeper state more

quickly, if you are new to meditation or even if you've been doing it for a while. And before I go any further on this, I need to make clear that meditation has nothing to do with religion. There is a misconception in some people's minds that to meditate is to practice some new-age religion, or to become Buddhist or something. Meditation is simply a way for you to connect with yourself. That might seem silly to some that I would even have to mention that, but I felt it ought to be said.

Once you are in a state of meditation, or deep relaxation, you need to reconstruct your dream and take it in a new direction. The restructuring process works best if you have recurring dreams. To illustrate this, I will go through an example of my own.

I have a recurring dream that I am running up a hill toward a mansion that looks like the house in the movie "Psycho" a haunted-type house. I don't know why I am running, but suddenly I look back and I see that there is a giant Frankenstein monster chasing after me. I get to the door of the mansion and it is locked! The monster is always just behind me, but never catches up. I run around the house and suddenly I am at the edge of a cliff. I have only two choices; fall to my death on the rocks that are being beaten by the waves of the sea, or let the monster catch me. In my dream, I always jump. The fall scares me, and I wake up.

Now, what could I do with that dream? First, I am going to "*dreamagine*" the dream in full detail. I am going to reconstruct the dream in my meditative state. I am going to make everything in the dream as real as I possibly can imagine. I am running and I can feel my heart beating and the sweat dripping down my back. The wind is

cool in my face. I can smell the salty air of the coastline. I am looking back and the monster looks like Bela Legosi in the classic Frankenstein movie. I see his greenish skin and the bolts on his neck, the scars from the surgery that stitched him together.

Are you getting the picture here? I am trying to make the experience as vivid as I possibly can. These details aren't in my dream, (well, not all of them) but I am trying to make the whole experience as real as I can.

Now it is time for the restructure. I am running, but it is effortless. It feels like I am flying. I turn to see the monster chasing me, but as I watch, the monster suddenly is morphed into my best friend from childhood, and we are playing a game of tag.

Do you see where this is going? This dream doesn't have to be about the original subject matter exactly, but you are building a new dream. You are restructuring the dream to be the way that you want it. I don't want a monster, but in my nightmare, I don't seem to have a choice. If I manufacture a choice in my imagination, I can realize that choice the next time I have the dream. Suddenly my choices aren't death or capture; they are unlimited. I could fly off the cliff, hug the monster, make the monster the girl of my dreams (literally).

This is a way to take dreams and decide where you want them to go. Visualize the various aspects of the dream and make them better suited for you. You can take a dream that used to scare you and make it into a comedy. Or you can talk to the characters in your dream and learn what your subconscious is trying to tell you. There is

no limit. Once you reshape the dream in your waking life, you can re-dream it as you want it to unfold.

The conscious molding of your dreams can impact the dream world and make you (in your dream) realize you have choices. This practice can help you with the lucid control that was discussed in chapter six.

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.

Robert Frost

Conclusion

The benefits, uses and understanding of Lucid Dreaming is still in its' early stages, even though philosophers, scientists and ordinary people have been reading, writing and discussing it for hundreds of years. Lucid dreaming is just a part of your dream life. Remembering your dream world, whether lucid or passive can be a wonderful addition to your life. Take what I have written here and use it to compliment the life you already have.

I want to emphasize that your dreams are your own. They are a most intimate private aspect of your life. They can be shared and discussed or they can be held close and treasured. They can be used as tools for understanding or they can be the greatest virtual reality simulated adventure. Have fun with your dreams. Enjoy them and remember them. Some of the most fantastic things you may ever see, do or be will be in your dreams.

There has been a lot of information presented here in this book. There is much more information on lucid dreaming out on the web. If you take time to go to some of the discussion boards on lucid

dreaming you will find that there are many people enjoying it on a regular basis. They are willing and eager to meet and help people just beginning this journey.

This book is just the start of your adventure. The tools are designed to get you into the lucid state and bring awareness to your dream world. You can take this as far as you want. It really is an amazing journey you have started and there is no limit to what you can do. Good luck to you and welcome!

I have scattered quotes throughout this book. I started with one from David Henry Thoreau, and I would like to finish it with one from him as well. ***Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined.***

I would like to thank Dr. Stephen LaBerge for his groundbreaking work in the lucid dreaming arena and also for the terms D.I.L.D. (Dream-induced Lucid Dream) and W.I.L.D. (Wake-induced Lucid Dream) Dr. LaBerge has inspired much of the lucid dreaming web community and without him and the web, this e-book would not have been written. Sincere thanks from the author.