

10 - Dream CRAFTING 2:



INSIDE OF DREAMS

Lincoln Stoller, 2017. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0, International License

Contents

- Therapeutic Dreaming
- Science and Magic
- When We Dream
- Remembering Night Dreams
- Creating Dreams
- Working with Dreams
- Lucid Dreaming
- How To Lucid Dream
- Exercise:** Daydreaming
- Exercise:** Therapeutic Lucid Dreaming
- References

Therapeutic Dreaming

The first part of the Dream Crafting topic addressed preparing dreams, and preparing yourself for dreams. This part invokes the subconscious in daydreams, and evokes awareness in night dreams.

There are cultures that have and still do ascribe great importance to dreams. And, though seen as superstitious, ours does too. Whether or not we admit their importance, dreams affect us deeply.

The early Greeks practiced a healing regime called Asclepian Dream Therapy. Asclepius was the Greek demi-god of medicine, and a Jesus-like healer of souls. Therapy consisted of ritual purification, and an extended time in the holy chambers wrapped in furs, experiencing dreams and visions. Priests would then consider these indications before prescribing a healing regimen.

Indigenous Americans consider dreams healing, prophetic, communications from a higher source. It's sometime said native cultures don't dream, they have visions. From her apprenticeship in Mayan dreaming, learning traditional recall, sharing, and symbol interpretations, Barbara Tedlock calls dreams "complex psychodynamic communicative events" that create the Mayan social reality.

The Senoi tribes in the mountains of Malaysia sleep all together in family groups. They recognize shared dreaming, which means interpreting as connected dreams experienced by two or more people. The Senoi use dreaming as a tool for maintaining family and social structure.

Tibetan culture includes a pre-Buddhist tradition of dream yoga, through the practice of which we can:

“... cultivate greater awareness during every moment of life. If we do, freedom and flexibility continually increase and we are less governed by habitual preoccupations and distractions. We develop a stable and vivid presence that allows us to more skillfully choose positive responses to whatever arises, responses that best benefit others and our own spiritual journey.

“Eventually we develop a continuity of awareness that allows us to maintain full awareness during dream as well as in waking life. Then we are able to respond to dream phenomena in creative and positive ways and can accomplish various practices in the dream state. When we fully develop this capacity, we will find that we are living both waking and dreaming life with greater ease, comfort, clarity, and appreciation... (and we can) attain liberation from the dreaminess of ordinary life and use sleep to wake from ignorance.”

– Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, “The Tibetan Yogas Of Dream And Sleep”

People of these cultures have an important place for dreams in their everyday lives. They recognize a different boundary between the dream and waking worlds. Considering these alternatives makes it clear that our boundaries are attitudes, not facts. Our view of dreams is neither scientific, certain, or immutable.

Science and Magic

My understanding of dreams comes from the physics of how things are represented. Physics gives us ways to consider separate things that interact, and are simultaneously parts of a whole. It provides models to describe unusual structures, things and events that are related, but may not occur in sequence. Events that affect each other strongly, though widely and unpredictably separated over time and space.

In our common use of language, events that are related but take place simultaneously at a distance from each other are not easily understood. For them we invent theories of cause and effect. Related events that lack a causal connection, or do not happen in sequence are poorly expressed, and poorly analyzed, if they're analyzed at all.

We see what we look for, and consider to be real what we agree to have seen. Through this consensus version of reality we have created a modern boundary between the mental and

physical worlds that is incorrect. The distinction between the objective physical world, and the subjective mental one is a legacy rooted in the early struggle between science and religion. It is no longer helpful.

To understand dreams we need tools that combine alternatives into a whole, especially alternatives that appear to conflict. These tools are beautifully presented to us in the mathematics of quantum systems, and include wave-particle duality, self-similarity, complementarity, the breaking of symmetry, and the simultaneous expression of conflicting alternatives. These ideas pertain to all things and all systems, they are not limited to inanimate laboratory experiments.

In this material I implicitly use ideas of transition through chaos, and the structure of quantum systems. I'm not talking about what has become "quantum flapdoodle," the misappropriation of physics to substantiate the inexplicable and erroneous, but analogies based on a deep understanding of physics and psyche. I make no effort to explain these ideas here, I simply apply them.

It will be decades and several more generations before these ideas are accurately understood in common use. An appreciation of these concepts has barely started to percolate into psychology, engineering, medicine, and social consciousness.

I also incorporate notions of self-healing from "energy medicine," a range of experiential, mind-body approaches to healing and personal change. Energy healing is often untested, unscientific, and metaphysical, even magical. Elements of it exist in reiki, shamanic healing, body work, medical intuition, and other approaches that use similar elements in different forms.

Ironically, there is no integrated understanding of integrative healing. These fields will eventually coalesce into a whole, like drops oil on the surface of the water. For my purposes, I collect ideas from energy medicine like flowers, putting those that look good together.

Where science provides definition and discipline, energy medicine allows for free and undefined ideas. This freedom is a large part of all healing, as personal change is largely subjective and undefined. Much of what we do here is suggestive, metaphoric, and contrived for effect. It is difficult to fit within the scientific method.

Understand dreams outside of reality as you know it. Other cultural and intellectual perspectives provide alternative signposts to commonly held beliefs, some newer and some much older.

When We Dream

I object to the notion of dreaming as a separate state. I reject the idea that the physiologically asleep states are the only real dream states. If dreams are a resource, then why limit ourselves to when we are asleep and our dreams are the most difficult to reach? We dream all the time,

asleep or awake. Let's explore and enhance this. Let's become adept at participating in the dreams we have while we're awake.

When we talk about recalling sleep dreams, we're referring to the difference between recalling nothing versus something from the time we're asleep. Throughout the day you have daydreams, reveries, and fantasies most of which you are only peripherally aware of, and usually forget. In fact, most of these we're barely aware of at the time we're having them! Before making a big deal about our nighttime dreams, we should take our daytime dreams more seriously.

Remembering one nighttime dream is a good accomplishment, and remembering more than one from a single night is unusual. What we recall of these nighttime dreams may not be much more than a daytime reverie. It is my experience that by improving my skill at slipping in and out of daydreams, I become better at slipping in and out of night dreams. This only makes sense: if you improve your waking connection with your subconscious, then you'll retain this improved connection no matter what state you're in.

Remembering Daydreams

We typically commandeer our daydreams, not our night dreams. We're involved in long night dreams, but not long daydreams. Of the two doors to greater involvement, becoming less lucid in daydreams is easier than becoming more lucid in night dreams.

To enhance your daydreams give them time, give them power. Set aside time to daydream, to allow yourself to daydream fully, freely, and without the interference of your conscious mind. When I give my mind this opportunity, the ideas that float through my imagination are much like those of a night's dreaming. When I intentionally hold myself in a state of reverie stories start to form like on a stick in a cotton candy machine.

Most people would rather undergo a mild electric shock, than meditate for 5 minutes. Given this level of self-alienation is it any surprise that the night dreamtime our body's force upon us leave strange, confusing, and quickly forgotten memories?

Improve your ability to daydream. I'm not talking about becoming absent by taking more naps, and I'm not talking about controlling your mind through meditation. Though both of these may be steps toward deeper daydreaming, a greater non-awareness.

I'm talking about placing yourself in a trance during the comfortable part of the day. Allow yourself to remain undisturbed for at least 10 minutes. Ask your conscious mind to remain quiet, in the background but not silent, just listening and watching as ideas float and build like clouds in your mind. Have you ever done this? This is the objective of "Daydreaming," the first exercise in this chapter.

Remembering Night Dreams

Whatever purpose dreams serve, remembering them seems unnecessary. This begs the question of whether remembering dreams is even a good idea, or just a disturbance. Is anything wrong with the way we have patterned our lives, a pattern and a schedule that causes us to forget our dreams?

Perhaps we should be waking up gradually, and in that way have better dream recall. Does our sleeping and waking routine, dictated by what is socially accepted and economically required, create underlying problems? I think it does because improving dream recall also improves sleep. That is, weak dream recall correlates with generally poor sleep, and poor sleep is partly due to the way we pattern our lives.

Dreams are not “designed” to be remembered consistently and in detail. They are designed to have a variable effect. This is my opinion. There is a healthy interaction between our conscious and our subconscious minds, and poor sleep and poor dream recall reflects an unhealthy loss of contact.

Recalling dreams does not disrupt the purpose of dreaming. Occasionally we remember detailed dreams, this is when we have woken ourselves up in order to do so. In most cases, we recall little of our dreams, if we remember them at all.

Certainly, one can train oneself for better dream recall, but might this border on interference? And if one trains in this way, then recall grades into intentional, lucid, and controlled dreaming. Taken to the extreme, this certainly is disruptive to the normal dream pattern, and the mostly subconscious world of dreams.

I sound as if I'm against recalling one's dreams, but this is not true. I am against rational arguments that entreat your subconscious to communicate to you. This borders on interrogation.

What I support is a dialog between your conscious and subconscious. If that dialog results in greater dream recall then it's right and natural. And if that dialog results in something else, then that result is right and natural. How will you know which is right for you? You develop a dialog, and then you'll see. With that goal in mind, the goal of giving you the tools to better dialog with your subconscious, we pursue the techniques of lucid dreaming.

An unattributed post at The Lucidity Institute (<http://www.lucidity.com>), borrowing from the work of Stephen LaBerge, comments:

“To increase your dream recall is to remind yourself as you are falling asleep that you wish to awaken fully from your dreams and remember them... it may help to tell yourself you will have interesting, meaningful dreams.”

View dream recall as the avoidance of forgetting, as opposed to an act of remembering. We're told:

“A major cause of dream forgetting is interference from other thoughts competing for your attention. Therefore, let your first thought upon awakening be, ‘What was I just dreaming?’ Before attempting to write down the dream, go over the dream in your mind, re-telling the dream story to yourself.

“DO NOT MOVE from the position in which you awaken, and do not think of the day's concerns. Cling to any clues of what you might have been experiencing -- moods, feelings, fragments of images, and try to rebuild a story from them. When you recall a scene, try to recall what happened before that, and before that, reliving the dream in reverse. If after a few minutes, all you remember is a mood, describe it in a journal.”

Finally, we're told to consider what dreams we might have had, even if we're unsure if we actually had them:

“If you can recall nothing, try imagining a dream you might have had -- note your present feelings, list your current concerns to yourself, and ask yourself, ‘Did I dream about that?’ Even if you can't recall anything in bed, events or scenes of the day may remind you of something you dreamed the night before... record whatever you remember.”

This raises an intriguing point. If a dream is a thought like any other, then how much of it is imagined and how much is remembered? Memory and imagination are always intermixed. The recreation of imagination is much the same as the imagination of a recollection. Is there any real difference between falsely remembering a dream you didn't have, and truly remembering one you did?

The real question may not be whether you can remember your dreams, but whether you can regain a creative state. That is your goal. The “reality” of your dream and its recall may not matter. The upwelling of ideas from your subconscious is your dialog. It may be just as well to have that dialog in the moment as to remember it from a dream before.

Dreams are not a realm of unconstrained creativity and impulsiveness. Creativity and restraint remain under your control even when you feel lost or frightened. We don't have a way to measure one person's creativity against another's, but you can measure it for yourself. You can ask yourself how creatively you're willing to think.

You cannot expect any vision of what you are not yet able to see, but you can get answers in the form of inclinations, intuitions, sensations, and expectations. You must understand that in realms where you cannot yet think in words -- whether they be your dream or waking state -- inclination, intuition, sensation, and expectation are mechanisms of thought, and the currency of answers you receive.

The goal of dream awareness is to change your future. You do this by finding new feelings, thoughts, and memories, or a new space of self that welcomes novelty. You do not force yourself into a different state, you create for yourself a different process. A process in which you accept a therapeutic role in calling in those forces that are in you, or operate through you, to address issues that are beyond you.

To converse with your subconscious is to accept the role of being your own doctor, in which case the old adage “the doctor who treats herself has a fool for a patient” could not be more true. It is a dissociated role as you must be both, or several: certainly the doctor and the fool, but also the angels, demons, ancestors, and others too.

Creating Dreams

The goal in therapeutic dreaming is to call upon inner forces to provide a different, richer, and more powerful perspective to life’s issues. You evoke these forces by stirring issues from within your body, deeply feeling and visualizing in your mind as you go to sleep. Create a state of mind that is in touch with the issues that move you strongly.

Shaping the content of your dreams begins with a focus of intention and expectation well before you go to sleep. Your expectation of your dreams plays a role in your waking life as you register certain feelings and events for “sleeping on” in the near future. Recognize issues you want to explore further in dreams. Let sleep and dreaming be a repository for concerns and emotions that build during the day. Issues that might otherwise be lost for lack of contemplation are tagged for review in sleep.

Start the process by setting your intention to dream about these issues. Create an intention deep enough to generate feelings even without your awareness. What about this issue, or need draws you forward? Is it who you want to be, or feel, or think?

Close your eyes to look over your emotional landscape, your dream landscape, and cast the seeds of this becoming. Feel right with their settling. This must feel right, or the intention will not take root.

Rehearse your dreams as daydreams while still awake. Build high expectations, and a greater sense of importance. Build an integrated view of what’s possible, or what’s missing. You don’t know when, how, or if... and you don’t need to. You’re not out to find answers, you’re out to ask

questions. To put these before your higher self. Forming vibrant questions is the point. You put these out, someone else puts the answers together, or simply throws the questions away.

See yourself moving forward toward two paths, one up and the other down, beginning together and leading apart. The path up is constructive. A path of recovery and recreating, reforming and resetting. The path down destructive, a path of dis-creation and discovery, deforming and disassembling. Both can be positive or negative, each can be both, judgement doesn't play a role. Be open.

These are paths of connection you can change by intention and force of will. Work with the energies you can change, and change what's within your reach. Dwell on the negative until it softens like butter, mixed with the lard of the positive, cut into the flour of potential until all is coarse and granular. The dream does the baking.

Write an engaging story, a mystery you can't put down. Create your own anticipation for a process with a motion of its own, a movement toward change, enhancing and revising. Confront and conquer danger. Do not be a victim. Advance toward love and respect. Positive energy radiates from your hands and eyes, emerging as light, heat, or liquid. Create space for a positive outcome.

The negative manifests as strife, fear, illness, or disease. Diminish the negative by dissolution, disassembly, detachment, disposal, change, reconstruction, deconstruction, cleansing, clearing, reviving, decaying, allowing, admitting, inviting, assisting, vitalizing, gratifying, forgiving, explaining, releasing, excusing, or simply paying off. Giving these elements their due, enable them to leave.

Let's imagine your actions are to heal yourself now, in this relaxed state. Let this become a memory that you can access in your dreamtime. Let this become a guide or template for where to find your healing energy, and how to focus and direct it.

Lucid Dreams

The goal of therapeutic dreaming is insight. The goal of lucid therapeutic dreaming is to ask for insight while you're dreaming. You will not know the situation or the question until the dream, so you aim to have enough awareness to ask the right question at the time.

There are several confusions about lucid dreaming. The first is that anyone can learn to lucid dream. While hypnotic training has the highest success rate in teaching lucid dreaming, half of those who engage in multi-week programs still report no lucid dreams. The evidence is that half of those who try do not learn to lucid dream.

The second confusion is the idea that creating a dream, imagining you're lucid while dreaming, and actually being lucid in a dream are different things. They are not, they are all aspects of the

same process. It's important that you do not judge your success in these tasks separately. Think of lucid dreaming as a process, not an outcome. Engage the process, and accept the result.

The third confusion is that we understand lucidity. We assume we are lucid when awake, but we are not. Normal waking state awareness is narrowly focused, limited, and transient. We believe we share our common awakesness with others, but it is not even that. Develop the habit of questioning the reality of your waking state and you will become more self-aware in your dreaming state.

Lucid dreamers are not fully aware, even when they believe themselves to be. This suggests that you are not really, fully aware even when you are awake. People with many varieties of awareness, personality, and mental health march in our consensus reality parade but, beyond basic physics, we do not share the same world. There is not one world to be lucid of.

How To Lucid Dream

The technique of Paul Tholey, presented in the 1980's, includes the following guidelines of what to do while awake.

1. **Are you dreaming now?** Ask yourself whether or not you are dreaming at numerous times during the day. Ask it whenever something surprising or improbable occurs, or whenever you experience powerful emotions
2. **Imagine you're dreaming.** Imagine you're in a dream state and everything you perceive, including your own body, is merely a dream.
3. **Recognize dream events.** If you have dream experiences which never occur in a waking state, such as floating or flying, then while you're awake intensely imagine having these experiences while telling yourself that you're dreaming.
4. **Expect lucidity.** Go to sleep thinking you're going to attain awareness while dreaming. Avoid conscious effort of will while thinking this thought. This is especially effective when you have just awakened in the early morning, and feel you're about to fall asleep again.
5. **Have a signal.** Resolve to carry out a particular action while dreaming. Simple motions are sufficient.

The following indications apply to your actions within a dream. These are a westernization of practices ascribed to the Malaysian Senoi.

1. **Conquer Danger.** Assert yourself. Do not become a victim of any situation.
2. **Accept Pleasure.** Reject the notion of pleasure as self-indulgent or indecent because pleasure is therapeutic: it helps you love and respect yourself. Without this you cannot love or respect others.
3. **Achieve a Positive Outcome.** Dream-reality reacts directly to the quality of our thoughts. Dreams are a training ground to see the results of our thinking: fearful thoughts produce nightmares. Loving thoughts build empathy and

affection in your personality. A solution-oriented approach changes your dream landscape accordingly.

Exercise: Daydreaming

This is an easy exercise if you relax completely. Remember how you start a daydream? Something breaks your attention, and triggers a new line of thought. Relax your body, your nerves, and your mind. The hardest part of daydreaming is holding the images so that the thin rivers merge to form a narrative.

Remember when you were bored? Maybe it was in a classroom when you were a kid, or a conference room, or doing repetitive work. Make that feeling now. You are in a classroom where you don't want to be, bored by what has no meaning. You are in a conference of reviews that have no point, or direction. You are shuffling and filing, doing taxes, tabulating numbers, and organizing receipts. Let me bore you to distraction.

One hundred notices, confirmations, informationals, and orientations.

Ninety Nine reminders, fliers, receipts, advertisements, claims.

Ninety Eight sheets of numbers, tallies, testimonies, postponements.

Ninety Seven envelopes, addresses, redirects, and referrals.

Ninety Six items for entry, business cards, transcriptions, corrections.

Ninety Five customer lists, inventory, product codes, serial numbers.

Ninety Four phone numbers, emails, web sites, important contacts.

Ninety Three essential items, important issues, things not to forget.

Ninety Two grocery lists, shopping lists, lists of words, parts, and assemblies.

Ninety One things to do, things you'll never remember.

Ninety people you'd like to connect with...

Who is someone you'd really like to connect with? Is this a person you know, have known, would like to know, would like to know better, or would like to meet? Hold them in your mind's eye. Are they looking at you, or at something else? Draw their attention to you, as it once was, could have been, or may yet be. Feel the connection, a spark of ignition, to turn over, catch, or recognize. Consider it.

Daydreams start like confetti, thoughts of one word each. Hold them in your mind until they become a turbulence of butterflies and moths, ideas and images made from tatters and tippets. With deep and quiet relaxation these ribbons settle into a story.

Daydreams have the mysterious quality of falling apart if you look at them while they're forming. You must keep them in the corner of your eye, without attachment, or involvement. Without thinking about them.

Daydreams form like snowflakes in a cloud, growing around a seed as a memory, an idea, image, or feeling. They grow quickly, almost too quickly. You must slow them down, slow them down.

Imagine you're in a wide, grass field on the first day of winter. The sky is a thick white and there is a cloud all around you and near above you. You can barely see the edge of the field as surrounding tree tops are lost in white. The sound is muffled and still. The air is crisp on your skin, dry, and prickling. And there is a blanket of silence that you can almost hear coming, coming from above you. The sense of sound being sucked away as the first snowflakes of winter begin to swirl about you.

Think about the last 24 hours, your last full day's cycle. Think about how it started. Maybe it was today, or maybe yesterday.

Who did you see? Recall the scene, maybe it's a face, or an empty room, or a room with a person you can't see. What did it feel like? Hold on to a picture with a feeling.

What happened then? Move on to later, something happened next, maybe not immediately but later. What comes to mind?

It's odd how insignificant pictures present themselves: you drove into a parking lot, looked into a cup or out a window, a sensation of going through a doorway, a feeling when your phone rang. A dog crossing the road, a flock of birds.

What happened last evening? The sun was setting, the day already over. How did that feel? What emotions textured past, almost gone before you noticed, like a change in the surface of the road?

These are the snowflakes, all around you. And see yourself from the viewpoint of the snowflakes, circling in helical patterns as if down a spiral slide, a slide at a playground, a slide at a waterpark. Falling, swinging as if on a string, and there is you down below looking up. And with each rotation, spinning down, you rotate into view and then out again. And what do you look like? What are you wearing?

And each snowflake is a thought, one of your thoughts, one of your memories from the day gone past. Each snowflake an idea or image repeating: parking lot, window, doorway, phone call, wolf. And as these snowflakes circle down, drawn toward you by your focus and attention, now in a whispering blizzard of a whispered silence, circling your head like moths around you, a warm candle in a cold winter field. Circling around you.

And as they circle, entraining behind them a trail of other snowflakes, each growing into ideas and feelings. Hanging snowflakes of yesterday's images. Pick ones that keeps calling you. Imagine a moth, not the little moths that live indoors, but the great wild furry moths that could have been fairies in another life: Atlas, Comet, Emperor, Luna. Colorful, huge antennaed, with single minds and kaleidoscope eyes.

This moth carries a story written on its wings. On the scales of its wings. A story that starts with a single word, thought, or picture and repeats in greater detail on each of its scales, its hundreds of scales, reflecting and refracting. Its hundreds of thousands of scales, so delicate, so easily brushed off at a touch, which is why you should not touch it, but watch it turn and shape into ideas and feelings.

What idea has found you, to circle about your head? This from which your dreams are made, rising like a cake in the oven of your sleep. Rising now.

Take off and stow your judging mind. Set it by the door, and let ideas pile up like snowflakes on a windless, early snowstorm afternoon. They won't last. The sun will soon return and the now white trees will be grey again in minutes. You only have a moment to collect them.

Take this idea and let me count from five to one, keeping your ears busy and the hound of your attention occupied.

Five, the idea that came to you, with details that have meaning.

Four, an idea that whispered recollections and meaning.

Three, reminders, recollections, and emotions that trail behind it.

Two, from its images and pictures that grow like shoots to unlikely places.

One, a sidewalk sketch, magic, and imagination. Things, places, people, pictures.

Let this vision, feeling, sit comfortably, like swings set in motion, resonating as long as you don't touch it. Swing, roll, drift, rock, slide into a sense of mindless watching whatever comes up, out, and past you. Quietly watching without judgement, sensical conclusions mixed with nonsense rolling past a landscape in your mind, your calm, relaxed state of mind, and maybe clear or crazy headed. No judgement needed when no understanding is presumed. Swing, drift, roll, rock, slide, drill, and tumble. Easy, nice, good, calm, and patient.

Let me ask your higher guidance, let me call it in by name. What is the name you give your higher guidance? There is none, I would expect, but I call it just the same, and I ask it:

"What is this image? How will this whisper collect and vote itself into existence? Why will it, when will it, and what does it mean?"

*Five, how will these whispers of recollections rearrange themselves?
Four, where comes from the idea to join them together, a stew of ideas?
Three, will they find themselves in your dreams, now, later, or ever?
Two, from images and pictures growing like shoots and surprises.
One, like a picture book, a painting, or a poem.*

*You lose yourself in these thoughts, as you want to. Release the eye of your control.
Just as you often try to find an understanding, no reason to do this now. Let ideas float
in fractured form, well packed or even broken, no instructions or insurance. No
expectation, no hurry, no need. Relaxed and attentive.*

*You lose yourself in the thoughts tracing through the back of your mind. Some coursing
jet trails over the puffy clouds of feelings and emotions. Others tumbling softly, building
up or evaporating down to shift, coming and going like bubbles, like snatches of music,
like sensations.*

*If we've kindled a fire or primed a pump, then let the fire burn and the pump spill ideas
that flow through your head like water and fire, some cool and others hotter, some closer
and others far away. Listen to my patter just to have something to push against, it
doesn't mean anything, it just holds place to keep our mind's eye calm, scratching
behind the ears of our mind's eye, rubbing the dog's belly of our perseverating mind,
whose thinking is reflex like the tremor in the dog's leg, lying on its back, scratching at
the air.*

*Relax and give yourself a moment of blank thought, bright as daylight, grey cloudy
twilight, or the rich, dark of insight.*

*Return to the normal time, the time we consent is awareness. The you that we agree is
who you appear to be. Put that back on with little need for thinking, and so you come
back, return to yourself with your daydream mind intact, ready, operating always. You
better now to hear it. Always.*

*I'll count from one to five, count from deep relaxation back to the present and its
commonplace preparation, consideration, deliberation. And when I get to three you'll be
feeling your hands and your feet. And when I get to four, but I have not gotten there yet,
you'll feel the live energy in your lungs, throat, face and eyes. And when I reach five
you'll be feeling refreshed and relaxed, more balanced and more comfortable than
before.*

*One, recalling your mind and presentation, yourself, personality, and surroundings.
Two, letting my voice drift into the background and your voice resume its echo.*

Three, feeling your body, all around your body, your hands and feet, chest, sides, arms, head and shoulders.

Four, focus on your own energy, the rhythm of your pulse, swelling of your breath, tingling of your skin.

And Five, feeling refreshed and relaxed, balanced and comfortable, vibrating. Back, present, eye's open, awake and aware.

Exercise: Therapeutic Lucid Dreaming

Look straight ahead of you. Then, without moving your head, what do you see in front of you, and if you move your eyes to either side? What is beyond the walls around you, what would you see if you were one hundred feet in the air looking out toward the horizon?

Relax and take a deep breath, inhale... exhale... and remember when you were in the water, or on the water, floating in the ocean, a lake, a raft, or boat. And if you can't remember exactly, then imagine a warm bath heating and relaxing your joints and muscles. Lifting you beyond gravity, beyond weight, and beyond concern.

Feel the water lifting your shoulders, taking the weight off your back. Feel your feet weightless.

Feel your hands surrounded by light, and warmth. Encased in auras, like clouds of ball lightning, full of energy.

Hear what's around you: my voice, the ticking of a clock, the humming of a motor, the movement of air, the quiet in the room.

Imagine I'm slicing a fresh lemon, and you can smell it. Can you recall the smell of freshly cut lemon? I have a bouquet of fresh, red roses. I unwrap them and their odor wafts through the room. Can you recall the sweet fruit smell of roses? Imagine the smell of pine, the balsam fir at Christmas. Shopping for a Christmas tree, and the smell as you run your fingers across the needles? The smell of pine sap, or the smell of oranges, or of rain?

Relax your neck, your jaw, your back and spine. Inhale... and exhale all the tension in these bones and muscles. Imagine we are driving a car on a dark night and I am with you. You're tired, and you pull over. I get behind the wheel so you can take a short rest. You are lucid now but not dreaming.

Imagine you are dreaming of sitting in your car. I have taken over driving and we are back on the road. You're resting, feeling the vibration of the car, and the road. The dull hum of the engine and the roar of the road. Imagine you are lucid in a dream that you are imagining.

I will offer you ideas to keep in the back of your mind. These ideas help you transition from being passive in a dream, to becoming aware that you are dreaming and asserting you have your own identity even there. The ideas are about becoming lucid.

I will give you suggestions of how you will resolve to think and act in a dream. The suggestions are true whether you are lucid or not. Part of your dream is written before it starts, while you are awake. Part of it is written before it starts while you are asleep. And part of it is written after it starts and you are dreaming. Whether you are lucid or not may or may not determine how your dreams end.

Recognize right thinking and acting in dreams, as in life, as something you do regardless of who you are, where you are, or when, whether you are lucid or not, awake or asleep, dead or alive. Adopt right thought and action everywhere, and it will be in your dreams as well.

Here are the ideas you are to follow simply throughout the day. Simple thoughts that are just for you to remember. Ideas that you recollect whenever you switch gears or take a breath, and ideas that can float through your mind both serious and humorous, dull, vague, focused, or refined.

Are you dreaming now? Are you perceiving what's in your mind, or are you imagining it? What does this mean? Get in this habit. When something strikes you, something strong, an emotion or a feeling, ask if this is a perception or your imagination. Get in the habit of asking if this is real. How do you really feel, and are you indulging in a dream, or are you really in possession of yourself? Who is in possession of you now, is it the familiar you, or an unfamiliar you? Whenever something odd or out of the ordinary occurs ask this. Ask if you are dreaming.

Relax more deeply now. Take a breathe. Inhale... exhale... Sink more deeply, spinning like a leaf or a maple seed, twirling on its rotor blade. Spinning from the tree top in a sunshine and cloud of skies.

Imagine you're dreaming. Imagine this now, looking through the trees to a blue sky with high white wisps. Imagine other daytime scenes that happen all the time. Walking out your door, getting in your car. Standing on the street. Buying groceries. Watching traffic in your rearview mirror. And in these times and places, imagine they are dreams. How would they be different?

You give them a momentary glance, and then back to your inner thoughts. You check the mirror, your footstep, or the position of the sun, and then you go back to your thoughts and reveries. Imagine this a dream, and how similar this is to waking life.

Sense your body. The shape of your head, the width of your shoulders, the size of your ribs, the curve of your spine. If this was a dream would it not seem just the same? It might, it might not. If this is a dream, what would you feel next? Attend to the next sensation, sense your feet or look at your hands. Imagine these and recognize it in your imagination. Is it a dream, or is it awake? Are they different, can you wake up in either of them?

Move your right forefinger. Squint your eyes. Pout your lips. Take a breathe. Inhale... exhale... Let your mind go blank for a moment. Relax and sink into the chair. Relax and sink. Feel the texture under your fingertips.

What strange things have you done in your dreams? Have you flown? Sometimes I do, and other times I almost do. I float. I often jump off whole flights of stairs to land perfectly, easily, twenty or forty feet down at the bottom. I do this always. I do this when I'm awake, or I think I do. Am I? Are you? What do you do in your dreams that is such a relief?

Do that now in your imagination. If you fly, then fly. If you see far away or around corners, then see this. If you teleport, then do that. Pass through walls, hear other people think. Heal yourself miraculously. Do that.

These are dream things. You are dreaming when you do this. Awake or asleep, these are dream abilities. See yourself doing your dream ability, your sleep ability, and tell yourself you will know this when it happens as dream.

And when you know you are dreaming, then you know you are simply imagining, and you can set the topic of conversation, you can ask the dream to speak to you, as if it were an artist's canvas that hears and responds, because that is what it is, and you can talk in it, with it, to it, and it will answer you as the voice, the face, and the hands of your imagination.

When these ordinary and amazing things happen, you are dreaming. Practice now. It's not so easy to be aware and in control, and also imagining and watching. Becoming lucid in dreams isn't much easier than becoming lucid when watching your awake state thoughts form, but it isn't harder either.

Try it now. Imagine you're on a small boat pushing off into a lake. You're with a companion and a picnic basket. And now your boat, passenger, and basket are floating in the air, above the lake. And now you stand in the boat and you say "A beautiful

island,” and an island appears, and all of a sudden you are sitting on the ground watching a sunset form over the lake.

Wave your hand and the island becomes a forest, and the forest forms a road, and you wish a car to appear and it does, and you get in, and you drive off into the sunset. It's hard to both imagine and control, it takes effort, but you can do it.

Relax, take a break. Let your legs settle. Make yourself comfortable. Where are you tense? Your neck, your back, your jaw, your shoulders? Relax those, let them down, out. Balance your neck, release the tension in your neck. Release more deeply and let your breath out, let your mind out.

You can expect to be lucid. Imagine a dream, a ridiculous dream. You're in a place and it's not familiar. You're with people and you cannot see them. You're traveling but you don't know where. You see yourself, but you don't know how you got here, or why, or where you're going.

And when you do, it's no big deal. It's just a moment of novelty, and idea from another place, and movement out of normal, and situation with a message. You will know it's a dream. You know it's a dream. You will have known it's a dream. It's obviously a dream, and you're comfortable in it.

You can tell the others, but they likely will not listen. It's not their world, just yours. You'll look for those who do know. Those are the ones to talk to. They know what goes on behind the scenes, beyond the script, outside the set. They know the higher worlds, or else they might direct you there. That's where you'll go. To the higher worlds. To look out over the hills of possibility, the mountains of certitude, and the ocean of wisdom.

Have a signal. When you get there, to recognize you're dreaming, knowing you can look for another path. Signal to yourself simply. Be quiet and reserved. Just to look at your hands or feet, see yourself in a mirror, scratch your nose, lift a finger, make a fist, squint your eyes, look left and right. You might say out loud, “I am dreaming,” or “I can change things,” or “it doesn't have to be this way.”

Don't interrupt your dream, work with it. Don't be a bother, or a nuisance. Part of being lucid is being sensitive. It may be that your being lucid is allowed because it serves the dream's purpose. And the dream has a purpose, and it's not yours to hijack.

Be positive, speak quietly, be present and attentive. Overcome danger, accept pleasure, move toward the positive. There will be things you need to hear, opportunities to speak, and actions you can take.

Being lucid is a role like any role, and you must apply for it, and apply yourself to it. In what dream would you be comfortable lucid? In what dream would you be helpful? In what dream would your being lucid accomplish what you could not accomplish otherwise?

Being lucid is rare for me, and in most of my dreams being lucid would be inappropriate. If I were lucid in most of my dreams, being the thinker that I am, I would avoid the unpleasant and resolve the unresolvable. That may not be right. Do I need to experience the unpleasant? Do I need to accept the unresolvable? Being lucid is to have a narrow and willful view, and dreams are often just the opposite: wide and will-less. That's how you move to new territory, experience new sensations, and feel new emotions.

You will be lucid in a dream that is safe and comfortable. You will be lucid in a dream where you can be a "student driver," and you won't hit anything. You will be lucid and it will be safe, and comfortable, and positive. And if you don't find yourself lucid, then know there is a reason for it, that it would not be right, or safe, or helpful.

Offer your services as a lucid dreamer and accept what comes. Release your lucidity now, and let your intentions relax. Let yourself drift away from sense of self and purpose, and float in that amniotic sea of in-between there and here, real and imagined. The open space, the field, the ocean.

Bob up to the surface of the ocean and breath air again. You're a walking animal, feet on the ground. Feel the weight of your feet, and energy rising up from your feet.

Your hands touch, and sense through touch what your hands sense now. Warm or cool, what's beneath your fingers? What's around your hands?

Ears hear. What do you hear around you? My voice, the static in your ears, air moving, the creak of movement. Can you hear your own pulse? Can you hear what's far beyond: birds singing, trees moving, the atmosphere, the sun?

Tongue tastes, nose smells. What can you taste and smell now? Take a deep breath, what can you smell? Is it new air, or air that you're used to? Can you remember any smells, any good smells, like pine or roses, oranges or rain?

And open your eyes and look. Without moving your head, what do you see in front of you, and if you move your eyes to either side? What is beyond the walls around you, what would you see if you were one hundred feet in the air?

Bring these all together: sight, sound, taste, and touch. Take a breath and be present, awake and alert, contained, comfortable, safe, and positive. As you want to be always, awake or asleep, in day dreams, in night dreams, and in no dreams.

References

LaBerge, S. (2009). *Lucid Dreaming: A Concise Guide to Awakening in Your Dreams and in Your Life*. Sounds True, Boulder, CO.

Tedlock, B. (1991). *The New Anthropology of Dreaming*. *Dreaming*, v.1, 2.

Tholey, P. (1983). "Techniques for inducing and manipulating lucid dreams." *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, v.57, p.79-90.

Tholey, P. (1988). "A model for lucidity training, as a means of self-healing and psychological growth." In J. Gackenbail, and S. LaBerge (Eds.), *Conscious Mind, Sleeping Brain*, Plenum Press, New York, pp.263-290.

Wangyal, T. (1998). *The Tibetan Yogas Of Dream And Sleep*. Snow Lion, Ithaca, NY.
<https://archive.org/details/TheTibetanYogasOfDreamAndSleep>