

On the Subject of Lucid Dreaming

By Jason Augustus Newcomb

The following passages and exercises are excerpted from my forthcoming book, "The Book of Magick Power." I am providing them here in this place as an important supplement to the New Hermetics Practices.

From "The Book of Magick Power" Chapter Three- Dreaming True:

The next step in our process is to become aware that you are dreaming while in the midst of a dream. This has been popularly named, "Lucid Dreaming." It is far easier to accomplish and commonly occurring than its detractors might have you believe. You may have had lucid dreams that you don't even remember, strangely enough. I have had numerous experiences upon awakening where I thought I had not dreamed lucidly, only to discover as I was writing out my dreams that I'd been lucid earlier. The amnesia effect seems to affect even the lucid state.

There are many varieties of lucidity as well. It is possible to have the conscious and clearly lucid thought, "I am dreaming now," and yet still react to elements of the dream world as if they were real. I consider this a sort of pre-lucidity, and once you are recalling your dreams and familiar with your dream world you will have experiences like this constantly. In some ways, I think this state is the one preferred by your subconscious because it still allows the information processing of your unconscious to go on while you are a more active witness than usual.

All your lucid and pre-lucid dreams will have a much more vivid and powerful quality than your usual dreams. By this I mean that your "physical" and emotional reactions to things will be much stronger. Many lucid dream books describe these sorts of dreams as being particularly colorful and detailed, but I have found in my experience that while they will sometimes be more visually vivid and colorful, it is the dramatic, emotional impact that is the strongest. This may of course, just be me.

There are three main methods of accomplishing lucid dreaming. These are becoming lucid in the midst of a dream, waking up from a dream, and going directly back into lucidity, and going directly from the waking state into a lucid dream. There are numerous tricks and techniques that people have come up with over the years, but I will just cover the three that I think are best and easiest.

Exercise 27 - Reality Check

Time Required: N/A

I'm not sure where I first heard of this exercise, but I think it may have been created by Dr. Stephen LaBerge. My version is slightly different from those I've seen elsewhere. It is the best way to begin the process of becoming consciously aware in the dream state.

The way in which this works is that you will regularly check in with yourself throughout your entire day, asking yourself if you are dreaming. By doing this constantly and repetitiously over the course of a week or so, it will become a habit, and you will eventually find yourself asking this question in your dreams.

This may in fact not happen exactly in this way for you. Personally, I never say to myself, "Am I dreaming?" Instead, I just seem to have an, "aha," where suddenly I recognize that I'm in a dream. At the same time, this happens far more frequently when I'm regularly doing the reality checks when I'm awake, so I know it is related to this technique.

1. Carry some object with you that will constantly remind you to check in regularly. I personally write the letter "c" on the back of my hand, to remind me that I am conscious. Some people simply check in with themselves at certain times each hour. Some people use a ring or some other piece of jewelry. The nice thing about writing on my hand is that people regularly ask me what it is. This gives me another stimulus to do a reality check.
2. Every time you notice this object, or notice the time, or whatever device you choose, mentally ask yourself, "Am I dreaming, or am I awake?" Really ask yourself, and check out your environment. This is your reality check. Who knows, you may actually be asleep. Do this religiously, as often as possible. Ask yourself at least once per hour.
3. Eventually, you will find yourself checking your reality in the midst of a dream.

This method will lead you naturally into lucid dreaming. It may take a little while, but your focused effort will eventually pay off. You may also wish to combine this effort with the next technique, to jumpstart the process. However, do not omit the reality checking. It will help your consciousness to be more alert in general, and a number of later techniques will require this alertness.

Exercise 28 - Wake Up Return

Time Required: must be performed in the middle of the night

This is an exercise you can use to enter into lucid dreaming in the middle of the night when you've woken out of a dream. It is very simple and effective, but it is easy to fall back asleep without succeeding, so don't beat yourself up if this happens. Just keep trying.

1. As you are going to bed, write on a new page of your journal something like, "Tonight I will recognize I am dreaming while dreaming," or, "Tonight I will dream lucidly."

2. Consult with your subconscious using the pendulum about whether it understands your intention, and is willing to play along.

3. As you are going off to sleep, repeat the words you wrote, affirming your strong intention to dream lucidly.

4. In the middle of the night or early morning, as you rouse from sleep, remember what you were dreaming. Without getting up, close your eyes and think about the dream, repeating your words from your journal, and firmly intending to be lucid. You may begin dreaming the same dream again, or enter a new dream. In either case, stay alert and you will become lucid.

This technique may best be tried in the early morning at first. I find this the easiest time to dream lucidly.

Exercise 29 - Directly Into Lucidity from Waking

Time Required: 40 minutes to 2 hours

1. This technique begins just like the Delta state pattern except that you will attempt to remain fully aware throughout. It's probably a good idea to do this at a time other than bedtime.

2. Enter the Alpha then Theta states.

3. From here, simply allow yourself to drift even deeper. Try to remain focused. Focus on the sensations in your body, and try to follow your inner stream of thoughts and images. You may eventually black out entirely, or get lost in a dream briefly, but as soon as you become aware again, you will be dreaming lucidly. Try to relax and stay with the dream, and try to stay alert.

With either of the preceding techniques, you will probably find your lucidity interrupted by waking up at first. You will be excited that you have succeeded, and this will bring you up to waking consciousness. You must endeavor to remain relaxed and simply enjoy the experience. Time will make you expert in this.

Always record your dreams in your journal!