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# Lucid Dreaming for Physical and Emotional Healing

Clare Johnson

**T**he route to true healing always comes from within. We can take helpful medications to alleviate our physical symptoms and decrease the pain we feel in our bodies, but for anyone who believes that the mind and body are inextricably linked, it makes sense to look within ourselves for ultimate healing.

Physical and emotional health seem deeply interconnected. There are many ways in which the mind can make the body ill. The mind can get stuck in a “worry groove” where worries and problems are focused on to such an extent that negative emotions are continually stirred up. Without even being consciously aware of it, we can spend much of our day suffering from the emotional fallout of our own thoughts. Emotional stress can be a slow killer, in part because it leads to sleep deprivation. Sleep balances hormones, supports a healthy immune system and helps us to heal. When we are under stress, our bodies and immune systems no longer function well, leaving us open to disease.

The root cause of some illnesses may be linked to unresolved emotions or traumatic events that lead to energy blocks in the body. Other possible causes of illnesses include disharmony within relationships, or stress in some form or other, whether it be from low self-esteem or overwork. When we address the root cause with brave honesty and the desire to change

for the better, the road to healing may suddenly open up before us.

But *how* do we access deep levels of healing?

A lucid dream is a wonderful place to draw on the vast resources of healing energy that we all possess. Lucid dreams happen while we are asleep. In a lucid dream, you know that you are dreaming, while you are dreaming. When we become lucid in a dream, we “wake up” inside the dream. In a lucid dream, we understand that everything we see and experience is part of a dream and that we are face-to-face with our unconscious imagery.

It is by communicating with this highly personal and emotionally charged dream imagery that we can generate deep, long-lasting change within our own psyche. For example, we can face nightmarish imagery with equilibrium and love while lucid in a dream — to integrate any underlying message this imagery may have for us. When we face our fears in a dream, we take the first important step to freeing ourselves from them. This mind-change then facilitates body-change. When we have a healthy mind, our body is free to heal.

Actions that we take in a lucid dream can have a physical effect on the body. In 1975, Dr Keith Hearne provided the first scientific proof of lucid dreaming in





an experiment that showed the lucid dreamer's gaze within his dream affected the physical movements of his eyes as recorded on a polygraph machine.<sup>1</sup>

Female orgasms during lucid dreams have also been recorded in the sleep lab, as verified by Dr Stephen LaBerge,<sup>2</sup> and they are found to result in physical effects such as increased heart rate, faster breathing and genital arousal.<sup>2</sup> Other studies have found that lucid dreamers can purposefully affect their muscle tone and respiration. Recent doctoral research by Dr Melanie Schädlich of the University of Heidelberg<sup>3</sup> shows that sports and skills such as swimming, kick-

Really ask yourself. After all, how do you know you are not dreaming? In dreams, we tend to believe that everything we see and experience is real... until we wake up and realise that seeing flying pigs or hanging out with long-deceased relatives are things that only seem to happen in the dream world. While awake, test your reality by trying to float in the air or pinch your nose closed and see if you can still breathe through it (in a dream, you can). Really take a moment to work out your exact state of consciousness.

Questioning and defining your current state of

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boxing, dart-throwing and guitar-playing can actually be improved by practising them within a lucid dream.

All this shows that we can do things in lucid dreams that have measurable effects on our physical body. Before we look at some healing actions we can take in our lucid dreams, here are some tips for waking up in dreams.

## How do we get lucid in our dreams?

If you want to become conscious in your nightly dreams and interact with your dream imagery in healing ways, the best three ways to get lucid are:

1. **Keep a dream journal.** Jot down anything you can remember of that night's dreams — even if it is just a colour or an emotion. As you build on this practice, you will find whole vivid streams of dreams filling your mind in the mornings. Dream journaling builds a strong connection with your dreaming mind, which is essential for having lucid dreams.
2. **Test your reality.** During the day, try asking yourself whenever you see something beautiful, shocking or unusual: "Am I dreaming right now?"

consciousness in this way is great practice for lucid dreaming, as you will become more alert and discerning. This will carry over into your dream-life so that soon enough, you should find yourself asking, "Am I dreaming now?" and discovering to your joy that the answer is, "Yes!"

3. **Make your brain chemistry work for you.** Lucid dreams are more likely to occur in the vivid, active stage of sleep called REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep. Try setting your alarm for 4-5 hours into your sleep cycle, when you will have gone through the deeper sleep stages. Wake up and set your intention to become lucid in your next dream. Heavier sleepers may need to get up, walk around or watch a lucid dreaming video on YouTube in order to fully integrate this intention. Lighter sleepers may find that it is enough to think determinedly: "In my next dream, I will recognise that I am dreaming!" Then go back to sleep, repeating a mantra in your head: "I am dreaming. This is a dream. . . ." You will fall straight into dream-rich REM sleep and soon you should find yourself saying this and realising that it is true — you are lucid in a dream.



Detailed techniques for lucid dreaming can be found at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilJlIb3NOGE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilJlIb3NOGE).

## Four Top Tips for using lucid dream healing to heal

1. Once you are lucid in a dream, simply ask your yourself in the dream: "Why do I have this illness?" or "What is the root cause of my emotional stress?" Our unconscious mind is deeply wise and knows a lot more than we consciously know. You may find that the dream scenery changes or that an "answer" of sorts booms out. If nothing happens (dreams can be unpredictable!) try one of these other actions instead.
2. If you are trying to heal a physical problem, once lucid, lay your hand on the afflicted part of your body and say, "I heal myself." Or use any other positive affirmation that fits: "The pain disappears" or "My whole body is glowing with good health." Affirmations made in the lucid dream state seem more powerful than those said while awake, because we are in direct communication with our unconscious mind.
3. If you become lucid in a nightmare, or in any dream where you are experiencing strong or difficult emotions, this is a golden opportunity for healing. Try generating a feeling of pure love and acceptance and send this out to your dream figures and imagery. Hug the dream monster or ask why the shadow man is chasing you. When we face our fears, we take the first step to freeing ourselves from them.
4. Lucid dreamers can guide and change the dream if they stay focused and direct a clear intention to the dream. Try creating a healing dream environment by saying firmly, "When I turn around, I will be in the place of healing that I need." Then turn around, step into this inner place of beauty (it might be a sparkling lake, a garden of flowers or a candlelit temple) and be open to healing on all levels.

I have heard many stories of ordinary people who have managed to heal themselves by becoming lucid in their

dreams. One shy, anxious woman faced intimidating male giants in her recurring nightmare, and when she asked them why they were chasing her, they suddenly appeared lost and defenceless. They shrank down to normal size and explained meekly: "You need us for your fear!" Sometimes we allow our dreams to feed our unconscious fears, but we can heal this negative cycle by becoming lucid and reacting without fear. Another woman healed a strained tendon in her wrist by directing a stream of starry healing energy into it when she became lucid. When she woke up, she could move her wrist in all directions without pain.

Personally, I healed myself from the psychological trauma of my baby nearly dying when she was just four weeks old when I became lucid in a recurring nightmare where I found a dead baby in a cot. As soon as I realised I was dreaming, the dead baby turned into a shabby plastic doll and I was filled with a beautiful, buzzing rainbow light. The nightmare never returned and my anxiety levels around my baby dropped dramatically, allowing me to enjoy being a new mother.

Lucid dreaming can help us to experience the pure, revitalising energy that we all have within us. It can help us to reconnect with ourselves, our hidden fears, lost hopes and secret yearnings. When we encounter these parts of ourselves with love and lucidity, we throw open the doors to healing. . . and to a more profound experience of life. €



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