

# 2. How to Lucid Dream

## Black Power Maps

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Lucid dreams hover where reality transcends into dreams.

A lucid dream is when sleepers are aware of their dreams. There's still a lot to learn about lucid dreaming, but in simple terms, it is when an alert mind gains control over dreams during sleep.

Lucid dreamers are not uncommon. A study shows an estimated 55 percent of people have experienced one lucid dream in their lifetime.

Experiencing a lucid dream is like a form of metacognition, where you are aware that you are in a dream state.

### When Does Lucid Dream Happen

Lucid dreams happen during Rapid Eye Movement (REM) sleep. The first REM sleep stage occurs about 90 minutes after falling asleep. This is the last stage of the sleep cycle when your brain is active, triggering dreams.

Adults typically experience four to six such sleep cycles, including the REM and NREM (non-Rapid Eye Movement) stages through the night, and each sleep cycle is concluded by the REM stage. The duration of the REM stage starts with 10 mins at the end of the first sleep cycle, gradually increasing with every sleep cycle. The last REM stage at the end of the last sleep cycle is typically the longest when people are more likely to experience longer dreams or longer lucid dreams.

### How Do Lucid Dreams Help

Many people experience lucid dreams spontaneously, simply because their mind is alert during that phase of sleep. Some train themselves to dream lucid, intending to harness the potential of lucid dreams and utilizing them to their advantage. Lucid dreams are known to help with anxiety, nightmares, dispelling phobias, boosting creativity, and improving motor skills. [duce Anxiety](#)

Since lucid dreams hover between reality and dreams, people can use lucid dreaming to play out real-life situations. For instance, if you are anxious about an upcoming job interview, you can run it through your mind numerous times before going to bed. Your brain gets accustomed to the scenario and chances are high of the scene playing out in your dreams, where you will have control over your actions. Playing and replaying the

scene in your dream, while being aware of what is happening helps in easing anxiety. The fear of the unknown fades away, as you experience the situation. Nightmares and PTSD

Nightmares are difficult to deal with, especially if they are repetitive. Sometimes nightmares are a manifestation of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which could lead to depression. Lucid dreams help in tackling nightmares because there is an awareness that the nightmares aren't real— it helps in distinguishing facts from dreams. Once you understand the nightmare isn't real, it eases the trauma associated with it.

If your mind is alert and you are lucid during a nightmare, then you have control and can choose how to end it. Lucid dreaming is used professionally for Imagery Rehearsal Therapy (IRT). During this procedure, therapists help you reimagine a recurring nightmare with a pleasant storyline, making it bearable and easier to handle.

Lucid dreaming also has the potential to dispel phobias. Therapists combine Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) with IRT in lucid dreams to recreate scenes that bring you face-to-face with your fears. Facing your phobia head-on in a lucid dream is easier because you are aware that it is not real. The idea stays in your conscious mind, but you don't encounter it in person. This way you learn to deal with a phobia without actually facing it. Once you learn how to deal with your phobia, it no longer has control over you.  
st Creativity

Some practice lucid dreaming consciously to enhance their creativity. They test their imagination while being conscious of their dreams. It is a sort of game to see how far your dreams take you, while you are consciously aware of it. It lays the premise for out-of-the-box thinking since anything can happen in your dreams.  
ve Motor Skills

A strong mind leads to a strong body, with lucid dreams paving the path. A ScienceDirect study discusses how mentally performing certain skills in lucid dreams can lead to its physical execution. People with physical disabilities can practice motor skills through lucid dreaming. Prolonged lucid dreaming might also improve existing motor skills.

## **How to Lucid Dream**

Sometimes lucid dreams happen spontaneously and you don't have to work towards it. But if you want to consciously make it work for you then there are certain techniques to follow:  
erform Reality Check

Performing a reality check constantly challenges your brain to differentiate a sleep state from reality. To experience lucid dreams you have to train your brain to be aware when it's dreaming.

For this to happen, your brain has to be better equipped to identify between the sleep and wake state. Lucid dream experts suggest doing certain activities to test your sense of reality at least 10 times a day, to enhance your ability to lucid dream at night.

The following exercises help in differentiating between wakefulness and sleep.

- Push the index finger of one hand against the palm of the other hand

Try to do this 10 times a day. When you are awake, your index finger will feel the resistance of your palm, but in your dreams, it is likely to pass through. You can do this activity only if you are in a lucid dream and your brain is trained to do it.

- Look at the clock to check the time and look away, then look again

In reality, the time won't change, but in your dreams, the time will likely jump forward or backward.

- Look at the page of text in a book, then look away, then turn back again to the page

In reality, it will not change, but in your dreams, it will most likely show a different page or an illustration.

- Observe your hands and feet closely

In reality, they will look normal, but in your dreams, they will most likely appear distorted. into a Comfortable Bedroom

A night of peaceful sleep is a pathway to dreaming. Make your bedroom a cozy, comfortable haven where you de-stress at the end of the day. Set the room temperature, keep your bedroom dark, and have a comfortable, high-quality mattress to sleep on, to invite dreaming. Like any dream, even lucid dreams need a foundation for good sleep.

This is the first step to syncing up with your dreams. Get into the habit of writing down every minute detail of your dream immediately as you wake, and make it a habit. It helps you to understand your dreams better —understanding your dreams and thoughts are steps that will lead you to lucid dreams.

Once you get into the habit of maintaining a detailed dream journal, review it often. Doing so will help you identify a pattern in your dreams. You will recognize if there is a trend of themes, people, or subjects that crop up in your dreams. This will give you an insight into your inner psyche and help you understand what plays in your subconscious mind. Moreover reviewing details of your dreams will also help you pick up signs, teaching your brain how to identify a dream while being conscious of the dreaming state. Mnemonic Induction of Lucid Dreams) Technique

The MILD technique helps in reinforcing facts to your brain. Before falling asleep, tell yourself every night something like “I will know when I dream.” This is referred to as Mnemonic Induction, which helps in asserting facts and tells your brain to be aware and conscious of your dream, increasing your chances of a lucid dream. o Bed (WBTB)

In this technique, you set an alarm five or six hours after you fall asleep. When the alarm clock rings you wake up during the REM stage of your sleep, when your brain is most active, leading to longer dreams. If you wake up during this stage and then go back to

sleep, chances are high that you will re-enter your dream phase and be more conscious of it. [Click to Sleep](#)

If you wake up during a dream, get up and write down all the details then try to go back to sleep while focusing on your dream. This way your brain is thinking about your dream as you sleep, increasing your chances of being aware of your dream the next time it happens. [the WILD \(Wake Induced Lucid Dreaming\) Technique](#)

In this technique, you don't bother writing down the details of your dreams. If you wake up in between dreams, chances are you were still in the REM stage of sleep. Try to keep your eyes closed and go back to sleep, focusing your thoughts on your dream. This enhances your chances of experiencing a lucid dream.

However, during this phase you may experience "sleep paralysis" before a lucid dream. Sleep paralysis is a feeling of being conscious but unable to move because your mind is alert while your muscles are resting. If you wake during the REM stage of sleep, you are likely to experience sleep paralysis. The feeling may be unsettling and intimidating for some, but remember, it's a normal, temporary phase.

### **Concerns Related to Lucid Dreaming**

Experiencing a lucid dream can be entertaining and at times have some advantages, but training your brain into doing something may lead to some disadvantages, including sleep paralysis, sleep disruptions, and worsening existing mental health conditions. [Sleep Paralysis](#)

Waking up to a feeling of immobility in the middle of the night can be unpleasant. Sleep paralysis catches you unaware when you wake while still in REM sleep. Through the night your body alternates between NREM and REM sleep cycles, with NREM taking up 75 percent of sleep time. During NREM your body relaxes and rejuvenates itself, but during REM your eyes rapidly move with dreaming most likely to occur. By chance, if you happen to wake before completing the REM stage of your sleep, you are likely to experience sleep paralysis.

If you are training your brain for lucid dreams, you may wake up before completing the REM stage of sleep, increasing your chances of experiencing sleep paralysis. Remind yourself that sleep paralysis is a temporary phase experienced while preparing your brain for a lucid dream.

Training your brain to stay alert to experience a lucid dream may hinder your regular sleep cycle. Waking up to an alarm purposely timed during your last cycle of REM and then trying to fall asleep again, disrupts sleep by not letting your body complete the regular cycles of sleep it needs to feel rested. Following the MILD technique to assert to your brain, "you will know when you dream," hampers your regular peaceful sleep because you are trying to stay alert while sleeping. We recommend being mindful of your rest and sleeping patterns.

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