

Control Your Dreams

- 1 The secret of controlling the hidden powers of sleep lies in lucid dreams. A lucid dream is a special type of dream in which the dreamer is consciously aware of himself and of the fact that he is dreaming. Studies have shown that while only one in ten of us has regular lucid dreams, most of us experience them sporadically and almost all of us can, with patience and practice, discover how to produce and control them.
- 2 Lucid dreaming is a powerful research tool in scientific explorations of the dream state. It might also be helpful in increasing self-confidence, improving mental health and facilitating creative problem solving. Moreover, lucid dreaming could be extremely beneficial to nightmare* sufferers, giving them the chance to overcome their fears. Thus, they could reduce their nightmare problems, and by doing so, increase their self-confidence and self-esteem. Lucid dreaming could also provide the handicapped and other disadvantaged people with the possibility of realizing their impossible dreams. Paralytics could walk again in their dreams, for example.
- 3 In the last twenty years, lucid dreaming has attracted serious attention from researchers. An early breakthrough in dream studies came during the mid-50s when two American scientists noticed that, at certain times during the night, a sleeper's eyeballs moved rapidly beneath closed eyelids as if watching moving images. If they were woken up at this point, most people reported that they had been dreaming. By monitoring the eye-movements electronically, researchers found that most of us dream every ninety minutes during our sleep.
- 4 So, how can you become a lucid dreamer and make dreams work for you while you rest? You must first train yourself to wake up towards the end of the last vivid dream of the night as lucid dreams are most likely to occur just before we wake up. Using an alarm clock is not a good idea –it will wake you too abruptly to remember your dream. The trick is to train yourself to wake up naturally. Once you are awake, think carefully about your dream and try to remember as many details

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as you can. Next, devote five minutes to a mentally stimulating task such as reading a book. Finally, turn over in bed again and say something like this: "The next time I dream I will be aware of the fact that I am dreaming". Now, relax, close your eyelids and begin moving your eyeballs gently as if you were in REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep. After a while you will fall asleep once again, and if all goes according to plan, pick up the dream you just left. But this time you should know you are dreaming and be able to decide what happens next.

- 5 With practice, it is no longer necessary to wake up and go to sleep again. Each time you enter a lucid dream, and these can last from between two and ten minutes, you will know that you are dreaming and be able to create whatever images you like. Don't be disappointed if learning to control lucid dreaming proves a lot more difficult than you imagined. Although lucid dreaming is a learnable skill, currently available methods, all of which involve mental concentration, require a considerable amount of time and effort. However, the effort is usually well worth it. After all, when you consider that even the liveliest and most energetic of us spends around 20 years of life asleep, it seems a dreadful waste not to make better use of the time!

* *a bad dream*

A. Fill in each gap using the information in the text.

* (1) _____ can be scientifically explored by using lucid dreaming as a powerful research tool.

* Lucid dreaming can help nightmare sufferers to (2) _____. This will enable them to have more (3a) _____ and (3b) _____.

* If a sleeper's eyeballs are (4) _____ behind his eyelids, it is very likely that the person is (5) _____.

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* (6) _____ may not be as easy as you expected because it requires mental concentration, and a lot of time and effort.

B. Answer the following questions.

7. How is a lucid dream different from other dreams?

8. How long does it take most people to have another dream after one dream is finished?

9. When do people usually have lucid dreams?

C. Mark the best choice.

10. Which of the following is NOT TRUE according to **paragraph 4**?

- Reading a book before going back to sleep increases the chances of dreaming.
- It might be possible to stop lucid dreaming by moving eyeballs gently.
- A person is more likely to remember a dream upon waking up naturally.
- Through training, dreamers could learn to go back to the dream which they just left.

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