

Awaken Your PALS

Personality Awareness Lucidity Stimulus

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Some months ago I began experimenting with a dream interpretation method after having a series of dreams in which characters would appear as some sort of helper. These helpers included a bathroom attendant, a schedule administrator, and someone passing out information on a political candidate, to name a few. In each dream these particular characters would not approach me, but they would be available to answer my questions or to assist me in some way if I approached them.

Most of the dreams in this series were non-lucid, and in each of these non-lucid cases I did not think to speak to the character during the dream. In one lucid example I had trouble running while wearing a backpack full of books. I asked a woman standing behind a table what I should do about it, and she suggested that I imagine the backpack to have a helium balloon in it instead of books. I followed her advice, felt the backpack lighten up, and still found myself having difficulty running.

Although I did not receive the result I would have expected in my lucid dream, I began to question who these characters were and what purpose they served. The interpretation method I began working with was to get myself into a relaxed state and imagine myself back in the dream. I would then go up to one of these characters and ask them the questions that I may have thought to ask had I been lucid at the time. I asked the bathroom attendant, for example, what he was doing there in the bathroom. The response that came into my mind from him was, "This isn't a bathroom. This is a restroom."

I had one of those light bulb moments where it clicked with me what this guy represented. I had been spending most days multi-tasking and the lack of personal time was catching up to me. The schedule coordinator's purpose also became obvious and this method was affective in helping me make sense of other dream characters as well, including those that were not part of the "dream helper" group.

Due to time constraints of the day, I found myself most often using this method as I turned in for the night. I would reflect back on the previous night's dreams and see what answers came up as I drifted off. Two nights prior to my writing this paragraph, I was contemplating the handful of people that I had seen each sitting alone in a school cafeteria during a dream from the night before. As I was about to mentally approach them to see what they could tell me about themselves, a thought came to mind that perhaps these characters could become lucid. What would happen if the characters in a dream were aware that it was a dream? Would they tell me? Could I induce lucid dreams this way? Is it possible for dream characters to be lucid even if the "me" in the dream is not?

In my mental exercise I went up to several characters and this time I imagined each of them telling me, in one form or another, that this was a dream. The responses I heard included, "I'm here because you put me in this dream", "I'm eating this bowl of soup because there's no other food in this dream¹" and "I'm the quarterback. Therefore I'm the leader of this dream team."

I continued to "visit" with these dream characters as I drifted off, curious if I could essentially train my dream characters to help notify me that I'm dreaming while the dream was still occurring. The following notes are the results of my experiment.

Night 1

A young lady, perhaps a teenager, was in several of my dream scenes during the night. At one point we discussed my lucid dream character experiment, but I did not become lucid.

Night 2

I recalled several dreams. An early morning dream included an elderly couple. I was viewing them as dream characters that could advise me of this being a dream. I still did not realize that I was dreaming, but rather my thoughts towards them were similar to the active imagination technique I had been using prior to falling asleep. The couple was uninterested in my experiment and was instead focused on their lives coming near the end. I also had a "person behind the counter" dream, in this case a convenience store clerk.

Night 3

I dreamt of being at a sporting event sitting next to a girl I went to high school with. She wasn't someone I knew very well and we never hung out together. She acknowledged our lack of knowing each other in the past and figured now that we're grown up it might be nice to get to know each other. I asked her if she had any tattoos. She had one on her leg and one

square-shaped one on her shoulder. I mentioned having two on my shoulder blade, along with plans to get another on my right arm. I told her that the new one will be of a tree, which is a symbol that came from a dream. Again, I failed at finding lucidity.

Night 4

Among my dreams was one in which Robert Waggoner won some kind of raffle prize. I associate Robert with lucid dreaming, but otherwise did not feel close to lucid this night.

Night 5

Recalling the dream from the previous night, I used Robert as my dream character to focus on while falling asleep. I did have a lucid dream during the night, which is recorded as follows.

July 24, 2007

White Tiger II

The dream is lucid. It did not occur just prior to waking, so part of it is missing and I do not recall how I became lucid. I have a faint memory of being inside of a castle-type building with other people. I may have flown out of there after becoming lucid. My memory of the dream is as follows.

I have taken a leap, realizing this is a dream. Other people are there, but I do not see them right now. I float in the air, perhaps flying just a bit. I think about becoming floating consciousness. It partially works. My body is invisible and it does not feel like a full body. I feel a shape to me that is more horizontal. I am a few feet wide or so and I am not perfectly straight. I believe the left side is a bit higher than the right. I may have a head too, or at least I'm seeing as though through normal eyes. I feel unseen arms lift me. Recalling my previous lucid dream of unseen arms lifting me, I am less afraid of falling this time. As in that previous dream, I say, "Show me what I need to see." I go over some trees that have an open circle or oval area in the middle. There is long light-brown grass and some small hills in this area. I see two white tigers² and note this mentally. I keep floating and initially I see what I think are some elephants, but then see that they are rats in a group. I go further and see two more white tigers. I have a thought beyond "Show me what I need to see." I say something like "I am love" or "I am peace³." The dream continues past lucidity. I am walking on a busy street and cross it at an intersection. I know a man there. I think it is Robert Waggoner initially but he either changes to someone else or he becomes someone in addition to Robert. This other man is a fairly young man, I'd say in his twenties. I try to tell Robert/the-other-man about my lucid dream. I feel within this dream that the lucid part was very powerful. I want him/them to hear it but they are walking fast and I have little opportunity to tell my dream. I don't think I ever get through telling all of it. The dream continues to another scene, where my memory of it fades.

A few weeks after completing my dream experiment, I had a spontaneous lucid dream in which a dream character did in fact make the confirmation to me that I was dreaming. This was my third in a series of "Show me what I need to see" lucid dreams.

August 17, 2007

The Spyglass / Clock Tower / Light House

I am in what looks like the inside of a light house, but it is made of wood almost as if it is a very large model. I refer to it mentally as a tower. There are different levels that I reach by climbing up wooden ladders. There are other people going with me but I don't see them. There are Chinese military here with berets and I know their uniforms have some orange in them. I am in the front of the group and we are going to be executed. Oddly the military is acting nice and seem to want us comfortable. As I climb, one level has a wooden structure above me that I have to push out of the way to make room for me and the others to climb through to this level of the tower.

I know that I can't try to make a break for it. These are military people and I'd never get away, and then my death would be far worse. I get to the top level, which has plywood floors and is like a room under construction. There is a horizontal ladder about waist high in which approximately the second half of it hangs over an open area. I, and I assume the others after me, are to climb onto this ladder and go over the edge falling to our deaths. I think about this, how I will get the nerve to actually go over, what it will feel like when I fall, and I assume that death will be instant as I hit the bottom. I'm not rushed to do this. I think to myself that they should have some medication to give people to calm them, but then I figure I'd rather have a clear mind.

Standing by the ladder is a large white man that looks like C. that I met at the Sonoma conference. He is just standing there as though he is doing his job. I run up to push him and he does not budge, nor does he seem bothered by this. He just continues to stand there. There is a hallway that reminds me of the hallway in the basement of my childhood home, except this is wooden as well. I stand at the front of this hallway thinking about my situation. I think that the only way I can get out of this would be if this is a dream. I think about that and everything seems so real, but I still question it.

A woman of perhaps 30 with blonde wavy hair comes around the corner to the other side of the hallway. I ask her if this is a dream. She shakes her head affirmatively. I then feel like it is a dream and I test by flying down the hallway and back. Indeed I can fly, and I now know it to be a dream. Even though none of this is real, I still feel that I need to conclude this dream. I go to the man that looks like C. and this time I can pick him up easily. There is now a kitchen sink in this wooden room and I put him upside down into the sink, where he becomes much smaller and I put him down the disposal. There is another man behind me who is facing away from me so I don't see his face. I pick him up and turn him upside down into the sink as well. He also shrinks and I put him down the disposal. I don't see any military there anymore and the place now looks clean. I jump through a window. There is no glass shatter; I just go through the window. I feel myself fall and as I'm on my way down I realize that I just did this without worry prior to the jump. I felt it but I knew I would be fine and I landed softly on my feet. On the way down this tower now looked like a city tower and I land on a sidewalk. I look at my surroundings. I see trees, or mainly the branches of trees. Through them a distance away up high I see a window. I think of this as being the neighbors and sort of brush it off, but then I take note of it briefly. The window is arched at the top and has some decor. The bottom rectangular part of the window has 3 vertical sections. It is an attractive window and I see a green glow through it. I take off and fly. I am exhilarated, both because I am lucid and also because just a few minutes ago I thought I was going to die and here I am now so totally alive. I quickly say, "Show me what I need to see. Show me what I need to see God."

I fly seeing just the sky briefly and then am falling face down towards the ground with my vision going to gray. I feel as though I am awakening and I feel the transition. I fall slowly towards a bed with my eyes closed and I feel like I land softly into the bed and then continue to sink somewhat into it.

I have a feeling in my chest of transition between asleep and awake. As I settle into the bed I believe I wake up, but it is a false awakening. I am in a hotel room with Chris and it is early in the morning, perhaps 4:00 a.m. I tell Chris that I just had the most amazing lucid dream. I begin to tell her about it. As I'm telling her about it I refer to the tower as a spyglass or a clock tower⁴. I know this isn't quite the right terminology but I'm having trouble remembering the word lighthouse. Eventually I do, telling her rather accurately a description of it including all the wood and the wooden structure which I had to move in order to get to the next level. The exception to my accuracy is that I describe it as a lighthouse so that she'd get the idea that it has a spiral staircase. Chris uses another word to describe it. I can't remember what and it isn't totally accurate, but it is close enough that I know she has a good visual image.

The phone rings and it is CVS pharmacy calling her. This interrupts my telling of the dream and Chris talks for a minute. I'm tired too and would like to get back to sleep. It seems awfully early for the pharmacy to call. She talks for a minute and then abruptly ends the call. I now hear what seems like arguing outside of our room in the hallway. This is a big room and the bed now faces a different direction. I think there is a large quilt on the bed. We are now house guests staying in a guest room at M. and B.'s house. I realize now that they aren't arguing. The dogs have to go outside and B. is trying to get them to go. The door opens and M. comes in wearing pink pajamas like the ones Amanda sometimes wears, but adult sized. There is a mattress on the floor and I know there is another in the house. A dog comes in. It is their dog but looks like my dog Sadie. I hear B. but he and the other dog, who I think of as looking like my dog Jenna, don't come into the room. This is all keeping me awake. I then actually do wake up and I wonder why I hadn't written down this dream, realizing after a few moments that I had been sleeping this whole time.

Conclusions

The two basic questions I had asked myself are;

1. Is it possible to use active imagination with dream characters as a lucid dream induction technique?
2. How affective is this method compared to other induction techniques?

To answer question 1, within the limited scope of this personal study, I certainly believe that the answer is yes. Active imagination with dream characters can work as a successful means of achieving lucidity. As for question 2, I believe it would require a lengthier period of time and perhaps more specific experiment parameters to determine the effectiveness compared to other methods. It is possible that my lucid dream was the result of simply trying a new method, and that any new method could have been as successful - essentially a placebo. Of course there is nothing wrong with a placebo if it is affective, and one could argue that any lucid dream induction technique is essentially a placebo of one form or another. Narrowing this down to my personal belief, I feel that this can be a fairly affective method of increasing lucid dream frequency. By paying more attention to the purpose of your dream characters

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while awake, sooner or later you may begin to question their purpose while still asleep. This method is also a way of keeping your dream active after you wake up, looking at possible other alternatives for your own actions in the dream, and keeping the topic of lucid dreaming on your mind as you drift off to sleep. There are many good tools out there to induce lucid dreaming. This one may be worth keeping in your toolbox alongside your others.

1 The dream character eating the bowl of soup was my father. The day following this dream, I was in my father's presence when he made a phone call to my mother. He called to tell her that he was just beginning to feel like he was getting a cold, and that he planned to stop to pick up some soup on the way home. He wanted only soup for dinner, nothing else. Simultaneous to working on this paper for The Lucid Dream Exchange, I was also working on a precognitive dreaming paper for the IASD Psiber Conference. I had been looking for lucid dream results on this particular night, but ended up having precognitive results.

2 Two days prior I had picked up a deck of Feng Shui tarot cards, having found some interest after attending the Dreams & Tarot workshop at the IASD conference at Sonoma State University a few weeks prior. The White Tiger II is a card in this deck. In the evening following this lucid dream, I unexpectedly ended up at a pharmacy that I would not normally go to as one closer to my home did not have the product I was looking for in stock. As I walked into the pharmacy, someone was walking out carrying a very large stuffed white tiger.

3 I had just finished a book the night before. A line near the ending of the book was, "Love just is." I felt a connection between that line and my statement of "I am love" or "I am peace" in my lucid dream. While about halfway through the book, I had a dream in which a friend gave me a half-read book as a gift. The real-life friend and the main character in the book have the same name, which is not a very common name. I did not meet this friend until after I had purchased the book. I awoke from that dream with the feeling that the gift to me was something in the remaining pages of the book.

4 In my first "Show me what I need to see" dream, I was shown a silhouette of a tree in a sunset which looked like the wallpaper I had used for months on my computer screen. After the dream I noticed something very small on the image that I'd never seen before and I zoomed in on it. It was a grave stone next to the tree. Some days after this third "Show me what I need to see" dream, I was looking at photos from my trip to Sonoma State University for the IASD conference. Among those photos was one of the clock tower on campus. I zoomed in on it using the computer magnifying glass (spyglass?) tool. I noticed that the image of the clock had a very odd reflection in the window. The window had similarity to the window in my dream, except that it wasn't curved. However, the image shows a part of the clock that is curved in the reflection, but not on the actual clock. I'm still not sure how the image came out that way.

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