

Thomas: Welcome to our 4th and final lucid dreaming retreat series. This one is going to be covering the exploration of the lucid dream world. It may happen tonight. It may happen two weeks from now. Something might trigger it. It might be caused from an absurdity or inconsistency; maybe a dream sign. Maybe it'll happen spontaneously. However or whenever it will happen, this moment of lucidity—when you look out at this vast inner landscape of your own dream world—will surely be the beginning of a great and wild adventure. It'll change the way you see dreaming.

Once lucid in a dream you are free to create, shape and influence the dream and its environment. You can walk through walls or barrel roll across moonlit clouds; breathe under water and ride a giant whale. The possibilities are literally infinite and boundless. But it's more than just fantasy fulfillment. Lucid dreaming provides an opportunity for us to really dive deep into our psyches, to overcome fears, to resolve our past and to discover a part of ourselves that we may have forgotten about.

In this series we want to cover three things about exploring the dream world. We want to talk about one of the most powerful and transformative parts of lucid dreaming, which is overcoming nightmares. We want to talk about how we can receive guidance and advice and insight in our lucid dreams. Finally we want to cover a topic that is often misconstrued: the idea that we can control the dream.

Many of us, whether consciously or unconsciously, repress our dreams. We fear them because we've had some emotionally potent or traumatic experiences centered around nightmares. Lucid dreaming provides a unique opportunity. Now, with awareness, we can face our fears head-on with poise and confidence, while getting to the bottom of what's plaguing us. Whereas in a normal dream—where we think of ourselves as separate from everything—we may be running from a scary nightmare. We feel that fear fully. But in a lucid dream we know that we are not separate from anything. We feel this intimacy. Even the air around us feels intimately connected to our own consciousness. We may be running from a nightmare but we realize we may be the one running, but we're also the one chasing. We are that nightmare. That is our shadow. It's a part of our psyche that doesn't want to harm us, necessarily. It wants to bring us into awareness of something. Really, it longs for our love and acceptance.

Lucid dreaming provides a great opportunity for us to integrate these parts of ourselves and ultimately find inner wholeness. I had this interesting lucid dream where it's a nightmare and this was a lucid dream in which I healed it. I'm running from these two dark male figures and I'm in this hallway. It occurs to me—I'm not lucid yet—it's occurring to me as I'm running that maybe I'm dreaming. I often don't run away from things in my waking life. I'm still playing this dialogue in my head thinking, "maybe I'm dreaming," but I keep running. Finally I've realized I am dreaming and decide to stop and face these pursuers.

I turn around and am still feeling complete fear in myself, though I'm lucid. These two men approach and are walking slowly to me. One of the men reaches his hand out and it's

on fire. He says, “Don’t let your flame go out.” I shake his hand and instantly I feel the surge of energy and an empowering sense of power in me. I wake up feeling renewed with a new sense of energy. So here I was running from my own power; my nightmare. We call them dark not because they’re bad, but because they need our light. They are parts of ourselves that often have great gifts, information and guidance from us. With lucidity we can face these nightmares. We can overcome them once and for all. Really, that’s the power and the transformative element of our lucid dreams.

Jared: So what we just heard in Thomas’ lucid dream, he found guidance at the end of a nightmare. But you don’t have to experience fearful elements in a dream to look for insight and guidance yourself. We find that lucid dreams are an excellent way to help solve waking world problems, as well as just bringing overall clarity to our lives. When we step back and look at what dreams actually are, they can appear to us as metaphors to our inner selves or our subconscious. Like when we work with a friend—or even a therapist—to find out information buried within us, we can do the same with lucid dreaming.

Using the tips and techniques on becoming lucid, you can actually go into a lucid dream and call upon a guide or a mentor who can help you with your inner turmoil. There are several ways to find this guidance. One thing is reframing the idea of the dream in that every element of the dream is actually part of you. Everything is alive. If you are looking at a stone bench, that stone bench might be filled with information that you could use. Even though it’s a little bit of a leap of faith, ask the stone bench a question. You’ll be surprised when it answers you.

Another thing we like to do is actually seek out an expert. Let’s say you’re having some physics homework that is really stumping you. Perhaps go into the dream world and call upon Albert Einstein and see what he has to say. Lastly, if you really don’t have a particular question you want to ask, just throw it out to the dream world that you want to know something. You can even say, “Dream world, show me what I need to know.” Keep in mind that everything in the dream world is malleable and has a life to it. It is you. So don’t be afraid to interact with these dream elements or characters because it is very surprising how much they have to say about you.

Dillon: Okay the retreat’s almost over. We just want to leave you with this last idea, which is about control. A lot of first time lucid dreamers enter the dream. They become lucid, look around and say, “Great I can control everything. I can control the color of the sky and how people look. I can control what time period and location I’m in.” Yes, you can influence these aspects. You can pretty much influence whatever you put your mind to in the dream. But before you start going crazy with the God complex and start becoming the Napoleon of the dream world, we do want to say that you’re not controlling everything. So the dream is actually much bigger than ourselves.

The dream is larger than our egos; than our sort of conscious minds are. It contains our subconscious—something that’s really much larger. We’re just the ego. It is just the tip of the iceberg, and we’re the entire iceberg in general. So when you enter the dream, just

keep this in mind. While you're influencing the dream and steering it, you are not controlling every single aspect.

I actually have a story that illustrates this idea about controlling the dream. It comes from Carl Jung. Jung had a friend named Richard Wilhelm. Wilhelm told him about this story. Wilhelm lived in a place that was not getting rain. There was no rain and a huge drought for months. Everything was dry and the crops were drying up. Everyone was freaking out and trying to figure out a way to bring rain to this place. Of course the Catholics were praying. The Protestants were praying. The Chinese were burning incense and saying prayers. No one could figure out what to do. Nothing was working.

Finally the Chinese said, "We're going to call the rain-maker." They brought in this guy from another province. When he arrived he was this withered old man. All the rainmaker asked for was a little cottage in the countryside to himself. They gave him that, and off the rainmaker went to this little cottage. He locked himself up for three days. For three days he didn't see anyone. He didn't come out. He didn't make a noise. Everyone was sitting there wondering what the rainmaker was doing to bring about rain. They were skeptical but their skepticism was put aside when a giant snowstorm came upon the village. It wasn't the right season for a snowstorm. There had never been snow at this time of the year. This sort of miracle occurred.

Water was brought back to the province and Wilhelm went to the rainmaker to find out how he created this miracle. The rainmaker said, "I did not make the snow. I am not responsible." Wilhelm said, "But what have you been doing for these three days?" The rainmaker said, "Oh, I could explain that. I come from another country where the things are in order. Here they are out of order and not as they should be by the ordinance of heaven. Therefore the whole country is not endowed and I am not in the natural order of things because I am in a disordered country. I had to wait three days until I was back in the Tao and naturally the rain came."

So the rainmaker was not directly responsible for bringing this miracle about. All he was responsible for was getting himself back into the Tao and into his natural state. Then the rain came. It's similar in a dream where we're not responsible for every detail. We don't create everything with our conscious minds, but we can influence ourselves in the dream state. We can control our direction or influence upon the dream. So, as dream author Robert Wagner says, "The sailor does not control the sea, nor does the lucid dreamer control the dream. Like a sailor, lucid dreamers manipulate or direct themselves in the larger expanse of dreaming. However, they do not control it. Lucid dreaming appears to be a co-created experience."

When we spend a little time in the dream world roaming around and having adventures, what we end up realizing: the best way for the outside world to change the dream world is to change our own thoughts, emotions and expectations. When we change those inner things, the outer things end up changing. That's a lesson we could also bring back to the waking world: that it's through changing our thoughts, emotions and experiences—as well as our perception of this world—that the outside world begins to change. Thanks so

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much for joining us on this retreat. You can check out more about lucid dreaming in our book, *A Field Guide to Lucid Dreaming*, which is available pretty much everywhere. We hope you have some adventures of your own. Check us out on facebook and tell us how your lucid dreams are going—and have sweet dreams. Thanks a lot.

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