Thomas: Welcome to Week 3 of our lucid dreaming retreat. My name is Thomas. This week we're going to be talking about the big thing. We're going to be talking about how to become lucid in your dream. So, when I was a kid, I would carry around a totem in my pocket. This object took many forms over the years. It was originally a nine-millimeter bullet. At one point it was a fifty cent plastic monkey, and then later a compass. It could really be anything. It could even be this acorn. What it is, isn't as important as the purpose this object serves. What I was doing was every time I would see my totem or feel it in my pocket; I would stop, become present and ask myself this seemingly odd question: "am I dreaming?" I wasn't just an antsy teen with too much time on my hands. I was training myself to become a lucid dreamer. This technique was called a reality check and we'll get to that in just a moment.

So, lucid dreaming is not new. It has been around for thousands of years. Accounts of it date back all the way to ancient Egypt and Greece. But really the pioneers who really laid the groundwork for it were the Tibetan Yogis. Their work for lucid dreaming was called *dream yoga*. For them it wasn't just about becoming lucid in a dream and flying around. They had sort of an itinerary to do once they were lucid in a dream. This involved visiting various worlds, speaking to enlightened beings or masters, and shape shifting. We're going to discuss today ways in which we can become lucid. As I referred to the reality check already, this is a technique that you begin here in the waking world.

Jared: At this point you're probably wondering how you have a lucid dream. We've talked about all the benefits to it and the amazing things you can do in a lucid dream, but you want to know how you can have one yourself. So we're going to go through the most simple and successful way to have a lucid dream. While there are many ways to become lucid in your dreams, we're going to cover what we call: "Awake-Back-To-Bed" paired up with a DILD. A DILD stands for a Dream Induced Lucid Dream. Seventy-two percent of lucid dreams occur this way.

Before we jump into the actual tips, I'll tell you a little story on how I become lucid. A lot of my lucid dreams start off with me in "my home". I put it in quotes because my dream home—or the homes I visit when I'm in the dream world—is very rarely my actual waking life home. So at this point I've conditioned myself to ask the question, "Am I dreaming?" anytime I walk into a home in the dream world. Usually it's not my home. And I quickly realize this isn't my place and I must be in a dream. That trigger acts as a lucid dream.

So when we're learning how to lucid dream, it's important that we understand how sleep works. Sleep goes in several stages, but we like to break it down into just two stages: non-REM and REM. Simply put, REM is the period of time where we dream. This includes both lucid dreams and non-lucid dreams. Throughout the night we go through several cycles; including both non-REM and REM. The REM period of time in the first few cycles of our sleep tends to be very short—maybe ten to fifteen minutes. But, as we go later into the night, our REM cycles drop. Toward the end of an eight-hour sleep

cycle—the last two hours—a large portion of that time is spent in REM. So as lucid dreamers, we tried to catch that period of REM where it's the longest.

When you're going to sleep with the intention to have a lucid dream, you want to do something that we call "Awake-Back-To-Bed". This is where you go to sleep for about six hours and get through all your deep sleep and non-REM. Then you wake up for twenty minutes, maybe a little longer or maybe a little less, depending on the person. You want to start thinking about the lucid dream you want to have, or saying, "I will wake up in my dreams." Saying that intention. After those twenty minutes you want to go back to bed and think about your intention. The goal of this is to keep your physical body in a sort of tired, sleepy state; but you're beginning to wake up your mind a bit, so that you can bring that wakefulness and that consciousness into the dream world.

Now, Tom briefly mentioned earlier in this episode about reality checks. A reality check is what you do in the waking world to help condition your brain to ask the question: "Am I dreaming?" The reality check is very simple. It's basically asking the question, "Am I dreaming?" throughout your day. Usually as we ask these questions, we get "no, no, no". You can ask it to yourself now: am I dreaming? Eventually, this conditions your brain to ask the question, "Am I dreaming?" in the dream state.

Dillon: Okay, I guess I'm in a dream right now. Great, so now that I know I'm in a dream, it's time to get excited. It's time to celebrate and say: "I'm lucid in a dream. This is what I've been working on for the last few weeks. This is the moment I've waited for." But hold on, before you get too excited you're going to want to calm yourself down for just a minute. Because one of the most common problems in a lucid dream is the second you become lucid, you become so excited that you wake yourself up. You return to the waking world with that smile on your face, but the whole point of lucid dreaming is to explore this world and experience it for at least a few minutes.

So what we do right when we become lucid is try a few stabilization techniques. It's very simple. All you really want to do is ground yourself in the dream. You want to ground yourself in this present moment, curtail your excitement and really get tactile. So maybe you rub your hands together, which is a popular way to stabilize or touch the ground or spin slowly in a circle, which is a stabilization technique perfected by Stephen LeBirch, a doctor who was one of the first pioneers of lucid dreaming. You might even simply give a memo to your subconscious by shouting out the word stabilize. This sounds kind of superstitious but it's really just a way to communicate to your subconscious and yourself and say, "I really would like to find some stabilization."

Now we're lucid in our dream. We can look around and influence our environment, interact with it and experience it in the present moment, just like you'd experience the present moment of the waking world. One thing to keep in mind is that lucidity lies on a spectrum. It's not just as simple as "I'm lucid or I'm not lucid." You might have at times a very, very clear awareness and an ability to influence your environment in a very, very active way. Other times you might be able to experience the dream world but not influence it. You might find that you're more of an observer of the dream world.

Great, so now you have some tips and techniques on how to have a lucid dream. Hopefully you'll go to bed tonight and start working on some of those techniques before next week's retreat. Don't get discouraged if you don't have a lucid dream for the first few tries. Keep trying. This comes easier to some people than others. Everyone's mind is different so keep working on it for a few weeks. Keep working for a few months. It's like any hobby. If you want to start a new hobby, you need some discipline. You need some time and you need to practice. So, don't get discouraged.

One question we get asked a lot is once you have these amazing lucid dreams, you go into the dream world and have tons of adventures and then wake up. Is the waking world, the waking reality, now boring to you? Do you go to work and just get depressed? Actually for us, we found the opposite to be true. Instead of a lucid hang over, we actually have a lucid buzz. We feel good. We feel amazing after a lucid dream. I think that's because we bring some of that waking awareness—that lucidity from the dream—into this world. Now we can treat this world as sort of a present-moment experience to be had: a chance for adventure, magic and excitement in the same way that we experience that with lucid dreaming.

Jared: We brought this idea up before about a totem. The idea was about a reality check and asking ourselves in the waking world, "Am I dreaming?" Your homework this week would be to plant this seed in your own consciousness. Ask yourself throughout the day, three to five times a day, "Am I dreaming?" The idea is to plant this seed in your own consciousness so that tonight, as you find yourself in a dream, you might ask yourself, "Am I dreaming right now?"

Transcript ends 0:09:42.6