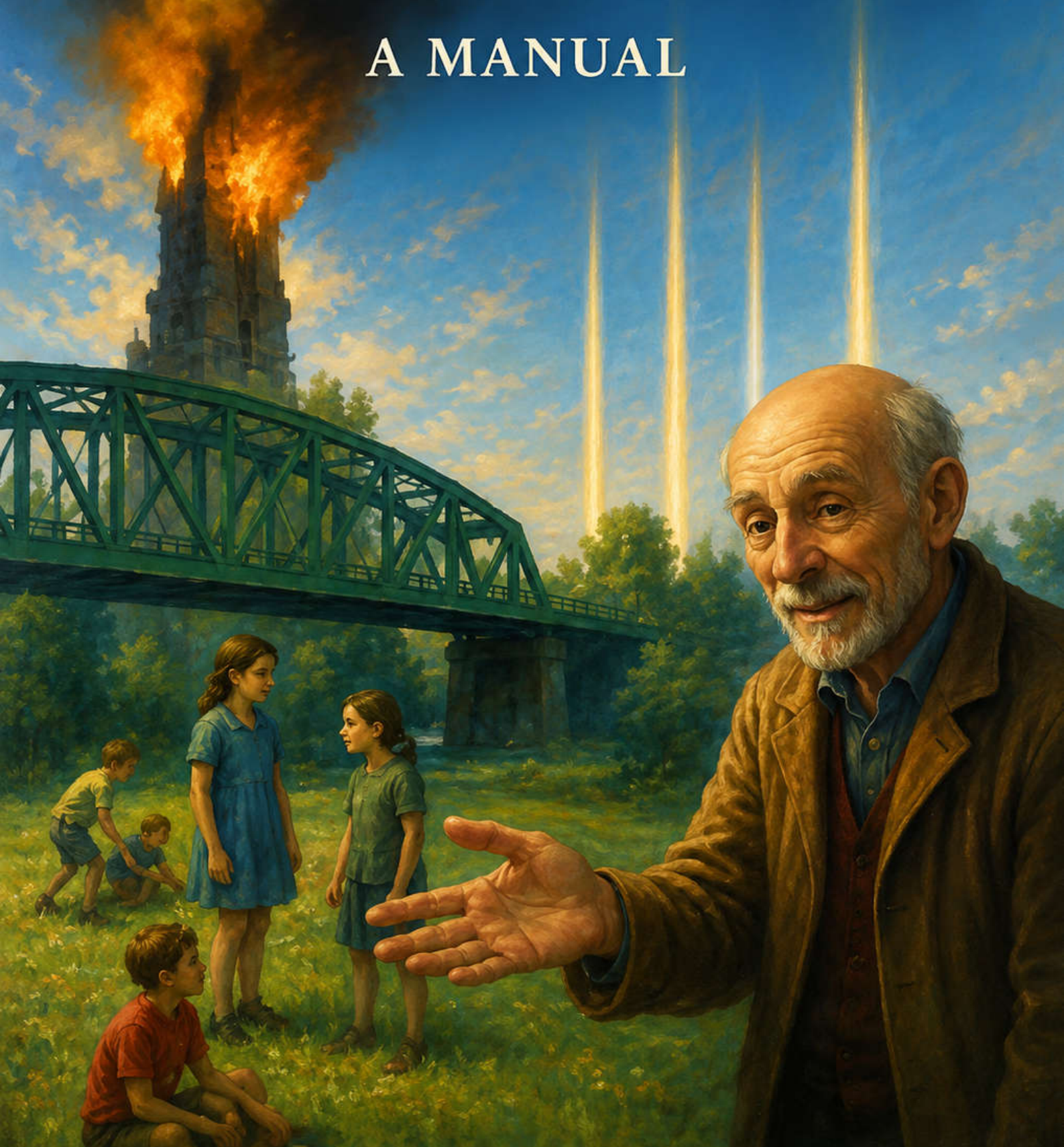


THE ART OF LUCID DREAMING

A MANUAL



CAROLUS DEN BLANKEN

The Art of Lucid Dreaming: A Manual

by

Carolus den Blanken

Dedicated to all dreamers who try to investigate the world in
which they live



Based on the Dutch edition:

De Kunst van het Lucide Dromen: Een Handleiding
Elmar Publishers, Rijswijk, The Netherlands, 1990.

©2026 English edition: Carolus den Blanken

ISBN: 978908373834

Utrecht, The Netherlands: 2026.

I would like to emphasize that I am not a professional translator.
However, for this edition I received assistance from ChatGPT.

As for that alleged clairvoyance, of which so many examples are proclaimed every day, I confess that it interests me very little. None of our greatest misfortunes are foreseen or prevented by it; no disaster has ever been averted through its intervention, no major problem solved, no significant truth revealed.

Truth is conspicuously absent from its achievements. Allow me, therefore, not to concern myself with insoluble questions raised by futile prophets and barren prophetesses.

I cannot forgive the sleepwalkers, magnetizers, prophets, and seers for never having discovered or foretold anything of real importance, either for individuals or for nations. When confronted with reality, their claims invariably fade away.

They have been lavish in their promises of miracles, yet, upon examination, even the smallest part of these wonders fails to withstand scrutiny. The most celebrated among them pass through the world like insects through the air or fish through the water: leaving neither trace nor lasting impression behind them.

D'Hervey de Saint-Denys

Maybe Time changes me, but I can't trace Time

David Bowie

Preface 2026



This book was originally released in 1990 as a comprehensive guide to lucid dreaming, aimed at bringing together the latest scientific insights for a Dutch audience. I decided to publish this enhanced 2026 edition as a document of its time. The field of lucid dreaming has changed rapidly, as everything in life does. *Lucidity Letter* ceased to exist. Friend and colleague, the dream researcher Prof. Dr. Paul Tholey, passed away.

Addresses changed; new induction techniques were developed; and the Internet became a mass medium. The initial euphoria of the 1990s has disappeared; there are few new developments or discoveries to report. Except, perhaps, for the fact that the number of popular books on lucid dreaming has skyrocketed. The proliferation of ‘Lucid Dreaming in 7 Days’ can hardly be regarded as a major scientific advance too...

Drs. Carolus den Blanken
Utrecht/2026

Preface 1990

Dreams in which you are aware that you are dreaming have become known within the scientific community as ‘lucid dreaming’. Although the phenomenon has been reported from time to time throughout history, scientific research into it is fairly recent.

This is largely due to the fact that Dr. Keith Hearne from the University of Liverpool and Dr. Stephen LaBerge from Stanford University succeeded in providing the scientific proof of the existence of the phenomenon. Other reports provide sensational results.

Practically everybody has the capacity to learn to dream lucidly. However, motivation and discipline are important prerequisites. Lucid dreams offer the opportunity to transform your fantasies into dream reality. Also lucid dreamers don't run away from menacing dream figures and situations, but start a dialogue. By this method they gain insight into themselves, because a lucid dreamer is able to interpret their dream images 'live'. The induction of physical healing processes also appears to be one of the potential applications of lucid dreaming. Those who practise their chosen sport in their lucid dreams, may notice improved performances in daily life. Creativity can also be stimulated by lucid dreaming. Various artists have been provided in their lucid dreams with basic elements for their creative expressions. There are business applications as well. There are reports of lucid dreamers who found solutions to technical problems through their lucid dreams.

That lucid dreaming is an excellent path for self-realisation seems, in my opinion, in our time where many people are looking for the meaning of life, an extra dimension to start with 'awaking in your dream'. 'The Art of Lucid Dreaming; A Manual' is based upon the findings of contemporary lucid dream research, my own experiences, and my contacts with dream pioneers. In the first part I describe how I started with my dream work and later began to dream lucidly. My first steps in the (lucid) dreamworld will be described and I will not bypass my fears and doubts. The second part reviews the history of lucid dreaming, offers techniques and tips for arriving and staying in the lucid dreamworld and provides practical applications. The third part gives a review of organizations and persons involved with the research on lucid dreaming, gives addresses of the most important magazines in the field of lucid dreaming and further you will find an extensive review on lucid dream literature.

It offers opportunity for study and provides a helicopter view what's going on the (scientific) dreamresearch nowadays. This manual was the first Dutch-language book that summarised the results of the lucid dreamresearch of the past years.

Because I wished to exclude every image of ‘fantasizing’, sometimes you’ll find between the text an *(asterisk). It means you are referred to the literature list. It offers the possibility to check my statements. Sometimes you’ll notice a ().

At the bottom of the page you read, you will find further data. I hope with this layout the readability has been maintained.

Although this manual is an introductory one, anyone who has read it is provided with sufficient information to start the own exploring journey.

A book does not arise from a vacuum. The confidence, support and information of many people has contributed to its publication. I think at the lucid dreamers who reacted on an advertisement in a national Dutch paper; the exchange of their experiences and views motivated me continuing my pioneering work.

I wish explicitly to thank Mr. Ilja Witsel and Mr. Jeroen Vos, both from Amsterdam. Further I am in debt to: Dr. Christian Bouchet (Paris/France), Prof. Dr. Jayne Gackenbach (Edmonton/Canada), Prof. Dr. J. Alan Hobson (Boston/USA), Drs. Franz Maissan (Amsterdam/Holland), Drs. Eli Meijer (Utrecht/Holland), Dr. Morton Schatzman (London/UK), Christian Stephan (Freiburg/Germany), and especially Prof. Dr. Paul Tholey (Frankfurt/ Germany).

Mr. Viktor Vos (Amsterdam) was kindly enough to review the original text and to comment on it. He also ploughed through the text with his eyes on grammatical aspects. I think he deserves for it at least a set of new contactlenses.

Whenever I was disappointed in the apathetic and defensive attitude of the Dutch scientific world, Mrs. Marion Verwer (Utrecht) was there to listen to my complaints. Almost mentioned last, her significance can't be measured by this position.

I thank my friendly dream figures every night, but it does not harm to do it explicitly at this place; in fact it were them who wrote this book.

Drs. Carolus M. den Blanken
Utrecht/1990

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Chapter 1 - The beginning of my dream work

I was past the age of thirty. My relationship had run aground on the well-known rocks, and I felt burdened by the idea that my life lacked direction. Every day seemed more boring than the last. I compared it with my student years, during which all my energy was poured into attending pop concerts, visiting exhibitions, traveling abroad, playing guitar, making audio recordings, and writing bizarre stories. All that creativity had vanished like snow in the sun.

Of course, the new era also had its influence. After the years of flower power, I suddenly found myself in the decade of business-mindedness, no-nonsense attitudes, and the end of daydreaming. After years of resistance, I had even bought my brother's colour television and subscribed to a cable service. Evening after evening I watched one programme after another. Yet when I went to bed, I could hardly remember what I had seen.

My physical condition was also getting worse. Hardly had my doctor diagnosed a thyroid disease before the next disaster seemed to be knocking at my door. I suffered from severe headaches accompanied by attacks of dizziness. Extensive medical examinations followed, and eventually I was labelled allergic to almost everything on the list.

I was advised to reorganize my household: no carpets, a synthetic duvet and pillow, no smoking, and preferably vacuum-cleaning the house twice a day while wearing a mask over my nose. I felt as if I might as well isolate myself in some sterile computer room, dressed in a space suit.

It will be obvious that I was not becoming optimistic about all this. What had happened to my youthful dreams? Had I not once envisioned wandering the world as a reporter, filing dramatic dispatches from dangerous places to the editors of major newspapers? Where was my alternative ambition of becoming a film director, adored and reviled for a controversial approach, like Jean-Luc Godard or Robert Bresson?

What had happened to my intention of becoming a psychotherapist? Had that not been the reason for studying educational psychology in the seventies? Instead, I found myself stuck in an apathetic atmosphere, wondering what to do.

Social scientists were no longer in demand, and trade and industry had regained their dominant position in society. In short, I was confused.

During that period I had a very disturbing dream. A bunch of savages is threatening me. I flee from that dark place as quickly as I can. I fight my way out and, without hesitation, smash the heads of children who block my path against a wall. My efforts are in vain. I am seized and, with one swift movement, they amputate my head with a scythe. Bathed in sweat, I awoke. By the way, for a long time I had not been able to remember a single dream. I thought of a book I had bought several years earlier. Its author, Ann Faraday (1), had described the importance of dreams and explained how everyone could work with them. We should honour her for giving the dreamer his dreams back. For decades psychiatrists and psychologists had claimed this territory and suggested that a non-professional was not capable of analyzing his own dreams. After reading her book, I had followed her suggestions for a short while, but I could hardly remember any of my nightly adventures. I must add that I wanted results quickly. One week of meditating and still not 'enlightened'? Then I would quit. After some time, still no dream recall? Stop doing it. During my student years I was also a user of hashish. Maybe that was the reason I often felt as if I had not slept at all, but had been in some kind of coma. I decided to reread the book and resume my efforts. Perhaps my dreams could provide me with insight into the causes of my uneasiness, because I suspected that some psychological conflict was provoking my headaches. What did I really know about the condition of my inner world?

So, one evening I put pencil and paper beside my bed and, in much the same way as I had once prayed the 'Our Father', I now addressed to the dream power:

'Dear dream power. I know. I have neglected you for years. Every night you visited me with your comfort and your lessons. Forgive me. I promise that in the future I will listen carefully to your voice.'

(1) See: Ann Faraday-Dreampower*

Whether it was due to this plea or not, the fact was that the following day I could work with three dreams. I was perplexed by all those images and could hardly believe that such things were happening every night.

In a book that aims to provide insight into the dream process, I cannot avoid presenting them. While writing this book and rereading these dreams, I notice that they contain more topics of interest than I realized at the time.

The Futuristic Elevator

I am walking down a broad street and have to wait for an open bridge. My gaze wanders to the left and, to my astonishment, I notice my sister, her husband, and their children behind the window of a restaurant. 'What a coincidence they are here too,' I think. They wave enthusiastically at me. Then I see my mother entering a hotel. I follow her. She steps into an elevator that takes her to the fourteenth floor. When she has gone, I want to enter the elevator myself. I notice, however, that it has changed into a very small one. You have to crawl backwards into it. The control panel has two buttons marked 14. I press the one on the right. To my amazement, the elevator moves horizontally and comes to a stop. The doors open, but two men prevent me from getting out. 'Move aside!' I scream. 'I am a karate expert!' Then there are some gaps in the dream. I am riding a moped and arrive at a bicycle shop, where I look at several models, including sports bicycles. I do not buy anything. Afterwards I head toward the sea. In the distance, the dunes loom up.

The Wedding Dresses

I am on the outskirts of Rotterdam. It must be evening or night because it is dark. In any case, I am completely unfamiliar with the surroundings. I know I am going to meet a man who answered a contact advertisement. Instead, I meet a guy I know from my student days. I am astonished; he still seems to be studying and living in a student house. By the way, he tells me that some friends are coming. Almost immediately a group of noisy hippies enters. I want to leave, but I cannot find my tobacco. I search and search and, after a while, discover that it is lying right in front of me on the table. Once outside, I meet a pleasant girl. She is the one who wrote the text for the contact advertisement. I jump onto the back of her bicycle.

Suddenly I find myself in the living room of my old family home. I remark that she can cycle very fast. She replies that we actually took a taxi, but because 'you fell asleep', I did not notice it. My brother and father, although I do not actually see them, I know they are present, are about to leave. Now I see my brother and myself dressed in long white robes. They make me think of wedding dresses. My brother moves toward the door and I shout: 'Mr Casanova is leaving! Watch out that the mob doesn't catch you!'

The naked dog

I am at some student-house; It seems I have not been here for a long time. The apartment reminds me to my present one: square and modern. A young man enters and I ask him 'How did you get in?' According to him, my brother-in-law supplied him with the key. 'What!' I exclaim. 'I don't like that fellow at all and now he gave you my key? Handle it back to me immediately!' The young man however has disappeared and the videoplayer lightens up and on a screen I perceive the same person. He undresses himself and I don't think he is very attractive. There are burns all over his body. I hear the doorbell ringing; overaged hippies are in front of it. Luckily they are arriving at my Frisian neighbor. I notice the door being painted with the names of several popgroups and intend cleaning it one of these days. Back in my room I see an old-fashioned wooden wardrobe. I open it and suddenly a big black dog with long hair appears. He bites me several times in my hand and on doing this, a thread of my sweater sticks between his teeth. From own experience I know how unpleasant this can be, so I remove it. The dog is very grateful for it. Together we walk outside and I see he is wearing a raincoat and black old-fashioned shoes from the fifties. On the street there is also a 'normal' dog. 'Do you see, dogs ought to be naked', I say and take his coat and shoes off. It seems as if I liberated him from a heavy burden. I got strongly the impression that the dog can talk.

Remembering and writing down your dreams is only one aspect of dream work. Interpretation, however, is often an obstacle, especially in the beginning. Those who have never focused on their dreams or have dismissed them as 'nonsense' will discover that their ability to understand the language of dreams is limited. However, it can be learned.

I studied my dreams carefully but could not make head nor tail of them. Nevertheless, I had the feeling they were important. I noticed that all three dreams contained an element of astonishment; something happened that I had not expected at all.

Like most beginners, I turned to a dream dictionary. Practically every book on dreams warns that such dictionaries are of little use, because every dream symbol can have a different meaning for each dreamer. Well, that is true, but despite this, it is my experience that almost every beginner reaches for a dream dictionary.

I bought a book by Tom Chetwynd* and also consulted a book of proverbs. Although the latter was of little help with my first dreams, it proved useful later on. Although you cannot instantly 'translate' the meaning of a dream with the aid of such a dictionary, it can be useful as a source of associations. In Chetwynd's book, under the entry *bridge*, I read: 'A transition between two periods in the dreamer's life.'

Following Ann Faraday's advice, I re-entered the dream and began to wonder what its theme might be. I had to wait for an answer. Was it possible that I was unable to let go of old habits and patterns? Perhaps the broad road symbolized the road of my life. Another question arose: why was I stuck in the other dreams in a student house? Could it indicate that I still carried 'complexes' from that period? And, returning to the first dream, why was I so eager to follow my mother? In this manner I wrestled with the interpretation. Meanwhile, the next morning arrived and once again I had caught some dreams. One of them again featured a dog; later the dog changed into a goose, which I tried to kill by wringing its neck. It seemed that the dog was extremely important. What did that symbol mean?

I decided to put a cassette into my tape deck and 'play' both the dog and myself in a kind of question-and-answer game. First I did some breathing exercises, which helped me enter a relaxed state of mind, something I had not done for a long time.

This led to the following 'discussion':

I: 'Hey dog, why do you hide yourself in the closet?'

Dog: 'You really don't know that, you sucker?'

I: 'No, I really don't.'

Dog: 'Because you are such an asshole, I'll lift the veil a little. I hide because you never pay any attention to me.'

I: 'I didn't even know I had a dog.'

Dog: 'Yeah, right. I noticed that. Have you ever considered the possibility that you are a little dog-like yourself?'

I: 'That's ridiculous. I am a human being and you are a dog. There is nothing dog-like about me!'

Dog: 'Oh no? Then what is hanging between your legs?'

The moment I, as the dog, said this, it was as if everything suddenly fell into place, like the pieces of a puzzle. Of course! The dog symbolized my sexuality. From that perspective, the fact that in my dream I had removed his clothes because 'dogs ought to be naked' was not surprising at all. Now the young man on my videoscreen also became understandable. He was showing me something: a damaged part of myself. I must add that for many years I was ambivalent about my sexual orientation. I was attracted to both younger and older men, but this had not had a positive influence on my life. I refused to accept that I was 'like that', and this very often hindered me, not only in the world of passion but beyond it as well. It was as if an invisible wall separated me from 'reality'. So I felt that I was on the right track in analyzing my dream about the naked dog.

I had considerably more trouble with the other two dreams. From time to time, sometimes weeks later, clues and associations would emerge. Other dreams appeared containing the same elements, though often in a somewhat transformed form. The difficulty is that dreams can be mirrors of your soul.

However, if you are unwilling to integrate their messages, they will not benefit you at all. In psychological terms, this is called resistance. This is not a plea to send you to some expert. By the way, there are few experts in dream work in the Netherlands. I believe that, with patience and a willingness to learn, you can find your own way. You must be willing to change. I will now present my final analysis of the dreams described above. Not because I am eager to expose myself, but because it serves as an example of how you can work with your dreams.

I used Ann Faraday's method.

The Futuristic Elevator

Dream theme: Dependency versus independence.

Dream figures: Me as persona (that is, how I perceived myself in the dream and how I acted). Sister and family: an expression of my feelings toward them. Starting a family is also associated with leaving the parental home.

Mother: the mother figure.

Men: rational thinking and action.

Clues:

Bridge: unable to cross; stuck in old habits and views.

Hotel: temporary lodging for travellers.

Restaurant: taking in (spiritual) nourishment.

Elevator: 'lifting off'.

Futuristic: possibilities.

Karate: fighting, self-defence.

Bicycle: a bicycle is a very personal means of transportation and symbolizes my own path through life.

Sea and dunes: water is an ancient symbol of the subconscious and refers to a process of purification in both a physical and spiritual sense. Dream content:

Finding my own path in life and acting upon it. Independence.

Dream advice:

Reflect on what I really want. Take action to 'get ma off my neck'.

The Wedding Dresses

Dream theme: Being stuck in ideas from the past.

Dream figures: Me as persona.

The man from the advertisement, who turns out to be an old fellow student.

Visitors: my former social circle.

Girl: feeling, anima.

Brother: that part of myself that does not want confrontation.

Father: the image of a father figure. Invisible, just as in reality, since my father died when I was young. No male role model present.

The Naked Dog

Dream theme: Sexuality.

Dream figures: Me as persona.

Damaged boy: denial of sexual identity. By doing so, I damage myself.

Brother-in-law: shadow. Everyone tends to project his own weaknesses onto other people.

Dog: animal instincts.

Clues:

Student house: old behavioural patterns.

Young man: not accepting my sexual identity.

Video: recorded images.

Key: the key to yourself. Accept the denied part and integrate it.

Hippies: partly positive, partly negative feelings. Transforming old values in this area.

Frisian: frozen feelings.

Dog with long hair: during my hippie years I had long hair.

Dream advice:

Get rid of your old ideas about sexuality.

Perhaps you think that by applying such a scheme you are doing an injustice to your dreams. However, you must bear in mind that dreams have to be dreamed, while their interpretation must be adapted to the possibilities of your waking life.

By the way, using such a scheme to analyze your nightly images will improve your ability to do so. Through this learning process, you will eventually no longer need such a model. Is it not true that a skill has only been fully internalized when you can apply it without consciously thinking about it? By examining your dream sentence by sentence, noticing which dream figures appear, what meanings they may have, and observing contrasts, you can learn a great deal. Be patient with this process. Associating is very important.

Deep down, you already know the meaning of all those images, since you created them yourself. It is best to do this in a relaxed state of mind. If you do not know exactly how to achieve that, I recommend reading about relaxation techniques. You can also attend a course.

With the previous dreams I had taken my first steps into dreamland. However, simply dreaming, writing dreams down, and analyzing them is not enough. You must also act in the waking world and apply the lessons your dreams have taught you. Do not try to be a perfectionist. Problems that have existed for a long time can rarely be solved in a single stroke. In the worst case, you may undermine your self-confidence. Divide your goal into smaller steps. Rome was not built in a day. There are many good books on self-management that offer practical guidance on how to coach yourself. My problems had been outlined in the previous dreams, and their common theme was fear. My entire family knew about my sexual orientation, with the exception of my mother.

I felt that she also knew the ins and outs of it, but there seemed to be an unspoken agreement: we would not discuss the subject and would pretend nothing was going on. The reason is simple. Once certain things are spoken aloud, they become irreversible.

Try it yourself. Say out loud: 'I have serious problems with ...' (fill in your own problem). Well, that is not so easy, is it? And remember, you still have not said it to another person. I said: 'I am gay.' After those three little words escaped my lips, I startled myself and quickly corrected them: 'I like women too, so I am bisexual.' That sounded less threatening, and the idea contained a certain element of expansion, and I was always someone who was 'into' expansion. In short, a human being can tell many lies, most of them to himself. I knew I had to speak openly and honestly to my mother about my sexual orientation. I had carried 'The Big Lie' with me for far too long. I could never fulfil her expectations of a successful career man, dressed in a grey three-piece suit, happily married and providing her with grandchildren. I had to follow my own path, despite the complaints and lamentations I expected. I admit that the previous sentences sound heroic, but the prospect filled me with fear. Unfortunately, my mother was a dominant person, inclined to believe that there was only one correct view of life: her own. My brothers, sisters, and I had all tried to change her attitude, but without success.

The entire family had become highly skilled at avoiding subjects that we knew did not live up to our mother's expectations. For weeks I circled around my decision.

Then I had the following dream:

I want to climb a mountain. The path is steep and dangerous. An old man shows me an alternative route. When I reach the summit, the thought arises: how am I going to get down? I discover a thick liana and Tarzan comes to mind. What he was capable of, I can do myself, can't I? I shall swing myself down. I only have to conquer my fear.

This dream helped me, and its advice was clear: no more talking, but action! At my birthday party two days later, I informed my mother. Afterwards I felt relieved. My decision to act was confirmed by the following dream:

I am in a cave. A canal runs through it. My youngest sister is wandering around there as well, but my attention is focused on a black miniature boy. Compared to the rest of his body, he has an enormously large head. I know this boy very well and have walked with him for years. To my bewilderment, his legs have been amputated and are lying on a table beside the canal. The boy is about to disappear forever into the water and drown. I see his belly rising and falling as he practises a meditation technique. He is going to disappear from my life, and that is inevitable. I feel a little sad about losing my companion. On the other hand, I am relieved. I must go my own way and can no longer take care of him. He glides into the water. People standing on an arched bridge jump in to save him. I know their efforts will be in vain. No force in this world can rescue him. The time has come. No one is capable of keeping him alive in this existence. The boy is gone. Suddenly Light is everywhere, and Buddha rises from the water. He, or perhaps I, is honoured for his courage.

It will be obvious that there was no need to schematize this dream. So far I have presented dreams whose form and content could be explained quite easily. That is not always the case. Sometimes I had dreams so complex that I could hardly put them into words. When I tried to write them down, what appeared on paper seemed only a faint impression of the impact they had made on me during the night. It was as if such dreams could only be dreamed.

Dreams can also be comical, although the humour depends largely on the character of the dreamer. In one of my dreams, a well-known Dutch cardinal says in the presence of the Pope: 'Fuck it all off,' under the motto: 'If it must be said, it must be said.' Or take the following dream. I am talking with a friend about getting headaches merely as a result of suggestion. Immediately a man appears and falls with his head against a kerbstone. 'You see,' I say, 'that is how it works.'

Some scientists regard dreams as meaningless, nothing more than speculative associations provoked by physiological processes. I do not wish to deny that the content of dreams can be influenced by internal and external stimuli. However, as far as I am concerned, I am convinced that dreams can contain meaningful messages.

During the first two weeks after I had started my dream work, my dream recall fluctuated. Sometimes I woke up every two hours during the night. Then I wrote down my impressions and associations. At other times I could remember nothing at all. It happened several times that I felt too sleepy to write anything down. I would tell myself: 'I can remember this dream so clearly and vividly that I will certainly recall it tomorrow.' I warn you against this unproductive thought. It is my experience, and that of many other dreamers, that the next morning you either remember nothing or only fragments of the dream. On a few occasions I merely jotted down some keywords during the night. The following day those words stared back at me from the paper and seemed completely meaningless. There is only one method of improving and expanding your dream recall, and that is to write your dreams down immediately after waking.

As time passed, the gaps became fewer and fewer, and it seemed as if the nightly images grew clearer. I was able to remember more details as well. The series of dreams expanded, and their number began to overwhelm me. I must admit that, in my enthusiasm, I wanted to analyze every dream. In many books on dreams you can find a saying from the Talmud: 'A dream that is not interpreted is like an unopened letter.' Perhaps that is true, but the question remains whether every letter is worth reading. On closer inspection, I began to recognize patterns. Some dreams revealed recurring themes, and I regarded these as reflecting my main problems. Others seemed to be a mixture of day residue and associated thoughts.

Some dreams, however, were 'strange'. It was as if I had entered a trance. I felt that these dreams had a different origin, although at the time it was not clear to me what their nature might be. I made lists of the people who appeared in my dreams. It will be obvious that I devoted a great deal of time and attention to my dreams. Eventually I decided not to analyze every dream in depth. I continued writing them down, but only those dreams that intuitively felt important were examined more closely. During that period I read every book on dreams that I could get my hands on: scientific studies as well as works of an esoteric and theosophical nature. I came to the conclusion that, despite all the research, we still knew very little about the ins and outs of dreaming. True, in 1953 it had been proven that everybody dreams, but in fact further research seemed to have reached a dead end.

With my scientific background, I intended to collect as many dreams as possible, with the aim of providing others with insight into the mechanisms of the dream world. I want to emphasize, however, that my starting point was, and still is, personal. I began this chapter with an extensive description of my physical and psychological condition. As you will understand, I did not do this for exhibitionist reasons. Rather, I wanted to outline the starting point of my dream work. Now I could claim that after a short time everything worked out well. That I no longer suffered from headaches and that I was once again full of energy. Well, that was not the case! I state this explicitly because I do not want to raise false expectations. Personal growth takes time. Too many popular books on dreams suggest that all you have to do is dream in order to solve your problems. You can dream until the bitter end, but if you do not act in your waking life, you will gain little from the lessons your dreams offer. In the worst case, you signal to your subconscious that you are not taking your dreams seriously. The danger is that your dream recall may begin to fade. What I gained from listening to my dreams was insight into my hidden wishes, feelings, and fears.

As I have shown, I took small steps in waking life to change my situation. Gradually, I regained my pleasure in living. I started writing stories again and returned to the theatre and the cinema. The frequency of my headaches diminished, but from time to time they still struck with full force. On such occasions I would give in and go to bed early. On one of those evenings I had the following dream:

I am cycling through the village of Maarssen. I see a group of youngsters riding beautiful sports bicycles. One boy refuses to kiss a girl. The others shout that one day they will run into him at the COC (the Dutch Association for Homosexuals). At that very moment I pass by and tell them that, with such remarks, they are insulting me because I am gay. They think I am joking, but when they realize that I am serious, they quickly explain that it was only a joke and that they did not mean to hurt me.

Together we head toward a futuristic skyscraper. We see a number of businesspeople leaving the building. I jump off my bicycle and hear someone mention 'the effects of an inheritance'. I enter the building and want to go upstairs in the elevator. The elevator is small and circular. Glass surrounds it, giving me a magnificent view.

But as the elevator rises, I become frightened. High up in the building it stops, and through a kind of airlock I enter a recreation and meeting room. I do not like it there at all. The atmosphere reeks of profit at any cost. I feel that all humanity has disappeared from this place. A child asks me for a cigarette. I refuse because I do not want to encourage him to start smoking. 'What's your problem? Can't you charge somebody for it?' he asks. I get the feeling that nowadays everything is possible, as long as it is at someone else's expense. I continue on my way and notice that, to make room for this building, an old neighbourhood has been demolished, a part of the village that had far more life in it than these sterile surroundings. To my left I see a hippie and want to talk to him, but I notice that my mouth is full of food.

Talk with my bicycle

I: 'Hi, bicycle. Where are you heading?'

Bicycle: 'Wherever you steer me.'

I: 'Whoops.'

Bicycle: 'And where are you heading?'

I: 'I don't know. Only now do I realize that I have ended up here.'

Bicycle: 'That is foolish. If you do not pay attention, you may arrive somewhere you never wanted to be. For example, now you have ended up working in this building, which you dislike. If you had thought about it beforehand, you might have chosen a more pleasant destination.'

I: 'You are right, bicycle. I need to think carefully about which road I want to travel.'

Through the above 'conversation' I became aware that I was steering through life without a clear goal. As a result, I often found myself in situations I disliked. I continued my dialogues with the other dream elements. In doing so, I gained insight into the tensions between my wishes and reality. 'Could it be that these tensions are causing my headaches?' I wondered.

Two months after starting my dream work, something happened that I had previously thought impossible.

While dreaming, I became aware that I was dreaming. Instead of waking up, I managed to retain this awareness and, by doing so, I was able to 'live' in my dream with full consciousness. Later I discovered that this phenomenon was known as 'lucid dreaming' (1).

(1) It wasn't until later that I discovered this phenomenon was known as 'lucid dreaming'

Chapter 2 - The first lucid dreams

The phenomenon described at the end of Chapter 1, in which I became aware during a dream that I was dreaming, had been mentioned in Ann Faraday's book referred to earlier. She had devoted only two pages to the subject. Besides, I had not taken those passages, entitled *The Third Existence*, very seriously. Moreover, I had read books by the American anthropologist Carlos Castaneda (1). In one of them, he was advised to look at his hands. From my own experiences I had discovered that staring at your hands provokes the opposite effect: a premature awakening. So, in my opinion, the stories became more fantastic with each new book that appeared, and I regarded them as inventions. Now the experience had happened to me spontaneously! I was 'awake' in my dream. It all started when I played a part in the Dutch television series *Zeg eens Aaa*, about the household of a Dutch doctor.

*From a bird's-eye view I see a tower exploding. I do not experience it as dangerous, because I know it is only a game. By the way, wasn't that tower blown up by accident? Suddenly I am standing on the ground. In front of me is an old building. It reminds me of Amsterdam's famous Concertgebouw. Beside me, a shabby old man is reading the notices on the wall. He mutters: 'Again, three human beings have been born.' **Suddenly I become aware, I do not know why, that I am dreaming!** It excites me enormously. Now I can do anything I want, and there is no need to be afraid, because it is my dream. Thinking about sex, I walk in the direction of Dam Square. I see a cyclist approaching and, with a movement of my hand, I make him stop. I kiss him, run my fingers through his hair, and then signal that he may continue on his way. I can still see him looking back at me with a friendly smile. Everything seems so real. I raise my hand and look into the distance. People are running about and seem to be made of light; it hurts my eyes. Suddenly I am high in the air and far below me I see the city, with its heavy traffic winding through the streets. I am so happy to be flying freely. Above a narrow street I notice some attractive young men standing against a wall. The thought of sex enters my mind again. I descend and consider doing something about it in that street. Everything seems so realistic that I begin to doubt my plan.*

(1): See: Carlos Castaneda-A Journey to Ixtlan*

'Who has sex in public? Suppose this is an objective world. Then I could get into trouble,' I say to myself. Deciding to test whether I am still dreaming, I try to fly again. Instead, I leap high into the air. I can make giant leaps. Adults gather around and stare at me in amazement. I feel embarrassed by this childish jumping at my age. Somewhat defensively, I make a movement with my hand. Then it seems as if the world has stopped; like a film frozen in a projector, a video on standby. I walk through this frozen scenery and think that I once read something about 'stopping the world', but where? (Later I realized it was in one of Castaneda's books, but by then I was already fully awake.) Still, I feel no fear. An indescribable joy fills me. All my life I had searched for some 'separate reality', and now it was here. I am flying again. Below me I see the green railway bridge where I often played as a child. Farther on I see a large lake, and I know that it does not exist in my waking life. I realize that this bridge is in Utrecht, my birthplace, and not in Amsterdam, where I am supposed to be. A couple of teenagers are riding by on their mopeds, and I want to make contact with one of them. The moment I make that decision, it seems as if they have guessed my thoughts. They make defensive gestures, but using my newly discovered 'stop technique' I freeze the entire scene, except for the young man I want to keep 'alive'. I look at him and, the moment I touch him tenderly, he screams loudly: 'NO!'

I startled awake, found myself in my bed, and thought that the entire neighbourhood must have heard that scream. This experience confused me. Had I really been awake in that dream? Was it possible that I had experienced a dream within a dream? Had it all been one great illusion? The ending of that dream did not please me at all. Not because I had failed in a sexual adventure. The question that occupied me was: 'Why had that young man screamed so loudly?' Was it possible that sex was forbidden in that other world? Could it be that I had travelled 'astrally', as esoteric people believe? My God, what had I done? Two weeks after this experience I again became aware that I was dreaming. The clarity of this dream was considerably less than that of the first one. Also, my awareness of the situation lasted only a short time. One day later, however, the clarity increased again.

I have just met my friend Abel A. I had been thinking about him. 'Do you like seeing me?' he asks. I tell him that I do and that I saw him yesterday in a dream. 'Wait a moment. I must think about what I have just dreamed.' Abel shows complete understanding. Then I realize that I must be dreaming. I am lucid! To test whether this is really the case, I jump high into the air, hand in hand with Abel. It works perfectly, and now I am convinced. Yet doubt returns. Everything seems so realistic. Suddenly I find myself in a small shopping centre. On my right is a bakery, and I enter it. I keep repeating, 'I am dreaming, I am dreaming,' to remind myself of this extraordinary state of mind. Then I realize that I must be dreaming. I am lucid! To test whether this is really the case, I jump high into the air, hand in hand with Abel. It works perfectly, and now I am convinced. Yet doubt returns. Everything seems so realistic.

Suddenly I find myself in a small shopping centre. On my right is a bakery, and I enter it. I keep repeating, 'I am dreaming, I am dreaming,' to remind myself of this extraordinary state of mind. I see some sweets and, out of sheer mischief, throw them through the shop. The saleswomen chase after me, and I know there is a great deal of jealousy between them. They shout to the supermarket next door that I am coming, which indeed I do. In that shop I knock over shelves, throw bottles onto the floor, and thoroughly enjoy creating chaos in that clean consumer world. I leave through the back door. To my astonishment I find myself at the Nieuwegracht in Utrecht. It seems as if I have just left the activity centre of some friend. My gaze wanders to the left and, in the distance, I see a green landscape, greener than any I have ever seen before. The scenery rapidly dissolves.

Some girls below me pull at my invisible legs, and I hear them say: 'He is a tall man.' Looking down, I see a paper with my name written on it. I know that a rocket departed long ago, but I cannot connect it with anything. Suddenly I realize that these girls are students of educational psychology. Unfortunately, I wake up.

As you can see from these first lucid dreams, I did not exert much influence over the course of my dreams. A friend who knew of my interest in dreams gave me a book entitled *Creative Dreaming*, written by Patricia Garfield*.

From it I learned that my experiences were not exceptional. She described a culture, the Senoi of Malaysia, who were believed to practise dream control. Anyway, from the book I learned an important principle: in your dreams, confront danger. Try to start a dialogue with threatening dream figures and situations, and transform them into dream friends. The idea behind this approach is that all parts of your dream world are creations of your own mind. If you run away from a situation or a person, you are in fact running away from yourself. I found it reassuring to be able to compare my experiences with those of others.

I am walking hand in hand with a street boy through the city. The kid picks up some fries from the street and puts them into his mouth. Ahead of us is a young woman wearing a miniskirt. To me she looks like a prostitute. The boy and I laugh at her, but suddenly she turns around and says: 'I have the strong impression that you always ridicule women.' At that moment I realize that I am dreaming and, following the advice given in Garfield's book, I ask the woman: 'Who are you?' Her answer is devastating. She replies: 'I am the image you have of women.' Before my eyes two images emerge. One is the Holy Virgin; the other is the Whore. I wake up.

The impact of this dream surprised me completely. Only later did I realize that her reproach had been justified. Had my relationship with women not always been problematic? Subconsciously, I had placed women on an unreachable pedestal, or I regarded them as sex objects. The idea of simply considering them as human beings had never crossed my mind. As I wrote before, recognizing aspects of yourself does not mean that you immediately change your situation. It does, however, help you gain insight into yourself. I forced myself, once a week, to start a conversation with an unfamiliar woman and simply listen to her. In time, this led to several friendships with women. What also excited me was the fact that I had been able to analyze my dream 'live' simply by asking a question. I admit that the result was still limited, but I knew that this method offered great therapeutic possibilities.

Until then, it had been hard work to unravel the meaning of dreams. With lucid dreaming, the key seemed to be in your own hands. The number of lucid dreams I had at that time was still rather limited; on average, I experienced them twice a month.

Some day, or rather, one night, I had a very unpleasant experience. The evening before, someone had tried to call me at half past eleven. I was no longer in the mood for conversation and had not answered the phone. In the middle of the night I woke up, or at least I was convinced that I had woken up. I sense that there are people in my bedroom, although I cannot see them. They whisper that they must inform me about something terrible. Vaguely, the image of President Gorbachev comes to mind. The telephone rings and I answer it. (P.S. I do not have a telephone in my bedroom, but I completely overlooked that fact and did not question the reality of the situation.) A man with a southern Dutch accent is on the line. He speaks very softly and I can hardly catch what the man is saying. 'There was a telephone call for you last night, wasn't there?' I hear. I admit that there was. Then he warns me about 'foreseeing something', and at that very moment I feel someone touching my knee. Suddenly I realize that I live alone in my apartment. Who has entered it? I panic and wake up.

Slowly I recovered from my confusion and realized that my first awakening had not been real. But who could tell me that I was not still dreaming? I jumped out of bed and started investigating my apartment. Everything seemed normal, and I also had the feeling that I was truly awake. I jumped into the air, but gravity still worked.

Until then I had experienced much pleasure from my dreams, but I was not eager to experience this phenomenon again. I describe it because anyone who begins experimenting extensively with dreams may encounter such an experience. Professionals speak of a 'false awakening': you think you are awake, but you are still dreaming. Often such a false awakening is accompanied by feelings of threat and fear. If you were to realize that you were still dreaming, however, it could become a doorway to lucid dreaming. An experienced dreamer asks himself after every awakening: 'Am I really awake, or am I still dreaming?' and carefully examines his surroundings. By the way, there is a test for such a situation. Turn on a light switch. If no light appears, you are *probably* dreaming. A false awakening does not always take place in your sleeping environment. To reduce your feelings of fear, bear in mind that you are not travelling through another objective world, as some esoteric traditions claim, but through a world that you create yourself.

Shortly after this false awakening experience I dream that I am walking with friends in the Lange Elisabethstraat in Utrecht. I want to return to some friends I left earlier in my dream. I think: 'I just need to close my eyes and then I will immediately be with them and there is no need for me to walk.' Probably through this thought I realize I am dreaming. Although it was not my intention to change my dream scenery as happened next, I notice, opening my (dream) eyes, that the street has remained the same, but that I have returned several centuries in time. Around me there are thick walls and in the distance I perceive a castle. There are two kids dressed in medieval clothing. I decide to head for that castle.

Immediately as I turn round the corner two men with swords come rushing toward me. For a moment I am stiffened by fear, but then I pull myself together and say: 'Carolus, it is your own dream, so there is no need to be afraid.' The battle is laborious but finally I defeat them. Immediately someone else dashes at me; he wears a beautiful garment. I know he is the court knight himself. Again a battle starts and it ends when I cleave his sword. Instantly the man invites me for dinner. His wife arrives and starts preparing the dinner table. Well, the food appears rather lavish to me.

The knight and I talk about the changing conditions concerning politics, sexuality and relationships. Two youngsters join us. One of them is about fourteen years old and does not impress me very much. The other, however, about nineteen years old, has extraordinarily beautiful long black hair. I look into his face and recognize his eyes. It's me! Another guest arrives. My host claims this fellow is a student and about thirty years old. But if you look at him, he looks much younger. It's me too! Then I awake.

The dream impressed me very much. Without asking for the meaning I knew that all persons were symbols of parts of myself. I realized I had not acted very cleverly. Instead of fighting I should have asked why they were eager to fight. Then I would have had the possibility of making extra dream-friends. Now I could claim a 'victory', but it was a meagre one.

In due time my dream recall had increased significantly. At some point, however, I noticed that the lucidity was decreasing. True, I often knew that I was dreaming, but this consciousness was not as clear as before. Other lucid dreamers report the same effect. So it can happen to you too.

In my waking life my intuition claimed a larger part. I don't believe I was developing 'extraordinary powers', but perhaps I can clarify the feeling. At the very moment that you are reading these words, much more is happening than you realize; your attention is focused on this book, but your brain registers, for example, the ticking of a clock, the sound of a passing car, or the singing of birds. Consciously you do not notice it, but your brain does. For example, you meet people and despite what they are saying you 'know' they are lying. Why? Perhaps you unconsciously registered that they looked away while making certain statements.

I remember one day meeting an acquaintance I had not seen for years. We were talking about this and that and suddenly I had the feeling/image that the man had problems. I asked: 'Are you being treated by a psychologist?' Amazed, he confirmed my feeling. That I had noticed he had problems could have been derived from his bitten nails or his nervous movements in his chair. But why did I suppose he was in therapy and, more astonishingly, why did I know it was a woman psychologist? By the way, some months before, a woman in one of my dreams had informed me that I was sensitive to what lies beneath the surface. It is possible that your dreams can emphasize aspects you have not noticed consciously? An example: an advertisement had been placed in the local newspaper concerning a vacancy for a psychology teacher. It concerned a part-time position. Because it seemed to fit my activities, I applied. I was invited for an interview, but it went laboriously.

The following night I had a dream in which a very dominant woman was loudly screaming orders at everyone around her. The people were afraid and submissive. The next day the parallels with the job interview struck me. I realized that the members of the staff had nodded 'yes' to everything the female headmistress had said. They were puppets on a string. I feared that the promised independent role would not materialize. Moreover, such an authoritarian atmosphere would only lead to quarrels, so I withdrew my application.

In Patricia Garfield's book I had read that it was possible to influence dream content. Her method was based on autosuggestion. I decided to try it. Before going to bed I put myself into a relaxed mood and evoked images concerning the topic I wanted to dream about. In principle it could be anything. One evening I imagined that I would have sex with the pop singer Prince. It was bingo that night and I can inform you that the experience was very 'satisfying'. Another time I intended to practise kenpo. Some months earlier I had ended my training because of my undetected thyroid disease and the accompanying poor physical condition. That following night I dreamed about other matters. Three days later, however, I found myself in a kenpo dream:

I am in some room where karate lessons are being given. At a certain moment I join in and jump into the air, attempting a salto and failing. I notice that I am not dressed according to the standards. Besides, my body feels stiff. Then the lesson appears to be over. My teacher adds that I still owe him money. Recently he has opened some bank account where I can find his bank number. I look at it, but realize that the number cannot be right, because it is from some rival bank.

Shortly afterwards I have another kenpo dream: The lesson is over and I am lying in my bed. I think about all my efforts and feel that my career in kenpo has never really got off the ground. I walk outside and realize that I have left my training suit behind. I re-enter the class and see the following class in progress. I search for my outfit. Suddenly I am wearing some shabby suit whereas my teacher has a marvellous suit. I cannot find my belt either. A Chinese Kung Fu Master arrives, takes a belt and writes some Chinese characters on it. The writings remind me of the Japanese kanji that I somehow master, but I cannot decipher the Chinese characters.

Both dreams reflected my connection with kenpo. Should I start my lessons again? At what cost? The first reason for starting this sport years ago was the fact that I wanted to 'move' again, something I had been lacking since my pre-university period. The second reason was the advantage that I could practise it individually.

However, the main reason was my idea that this sport would combine spiritual qualities with physical ones. I did not notice one bit of it. At the beginning I started the training with a total ban on touching each other. Years later I entered the dojo wearing protectors for my head, crotch, teeth, legs, hands, and arms. The impression was 'ready to kill', and the emphasis was mainly on technique. With the help of my dreams I knew I had to search for schools where meditation was an integral part of the lessons.

Unfortunately, the schools in my hometown could not fulfil my demands. At a demonstration evening of one school the teacher invited me to fight him with the intention of 'showing what you can do'. Throughout the years I had refused to take part in examinations and as a result I still wore a white belt. I explained this to the man, but he laughed at it. According to him there was no reason to 'hold yourself back', an advice which I followed, supposing he knew what he was doing. He 'danced' around me while I remained immobile (I am a lazy fellow by nature), and then he came in. By stepping to the left and evading him, my right fist moved toward his face, resulting in a broken nose. It had not been my intention, but I must admit that I secretly enjoyed punishing this case of haughtiness. It will be obvious that I did not join this school...

I decided I was far enough on the road and started practising by myself at home. It is amazing how you can turn your home into a dojo with a few slight adjustments. During that period I had another lucid dream:

I am swimming in a lake when I realize that I am dreaming. The idea strikes me to practise kenpo. While considering it, I am blown away by the wind. It happens rapidly, and everything becomes completely dark. I experience fear. Then it becomes light again, and I find myself in a non-Western dojo. On the wall, I perceive strokes forming kenpo characters. I notice that I am wearing my black training outfit, but I don't have my kung fu shoes. The door opens, and a Chinese Master enters. Automatically, I bow. There is no speech, but somehow there is a form of communication. Moving slowly to the middle of the room, I know it is my task to attack. I move around and want to surprise him with a rapid thrust of my right fist, a technique that is my specialty. Before I can complete this action, the Master somehow grabs me and I am flung into a paper wall.

As I get up, I hear: 'What did I teach you in former days? Have you become so forgetful?' I recognize the voice of my Chinese friend Maislung C., who trained me personally every day for a year during my student years, not only in combat techniques but also in meditation and breathing methods. Unfortunately, he had moved back to Hong Kong, and I continued my lessons at an ordinary Western Shaolin Kenpo school. 'Maislung, is that you?' I ask. There is no answer.

The Master adopts the crane position, jumps, and flies into the air, changing into a beautiful bird. The colorful bird circles around my head and the 'bird' says: 'Now it is up to you. Don't be afraid. Jump!' I can hardly believe I am dreaming. I position myself and lift off. Maislung (or whoever he is) has disappeared, and I find myself high in the sky, gliding on the wind. From the corners of my eyes, which provide a very distorted peculiar perspective. I perceive a valley below with picturesque villages. They remind me of pictures in books about native cultures. I look at my body and perceive wings. I am completely covered with white feathers. I have turned into a bird! The feeling of flying around in such a state is indescribable. Unfortunately, this experience does not last long. Slowly, the surroundings dissolve, and I find myself lying in my bed.

I jumped out of my bed. My entire body was tingling. Enthusiastically, I went to the living room, where I played Led Zeppelin's 'Stairway to Heaven' loudly out of pure joy, and it was only 6:30 A.M.!

When my lucid dreams were situated in unfamiliar surroundings, I sometimes found it difficult to recognize their illusory character. Even harder was recognizing it when I was in familiar places.

Once I dream I am in the city when I meet a former classmate. He hands me some papers about lucid dreaming because, according to him, 'I am interested in it.' I don't know exactly what happens next, but at some point I am flying aimlessly. In the distance, I see some very beautiful houses. I notice that the scenery is dissolving. I put my hands briefly in front of my (dream) eyes. Immediately, I am pushed backwards at great speed, and everything becomes completely dark. I become afraid. When the scenery stabilizes again, I find myself in the Korte Jansstraat in Utrecht.

While considering entering a shop to buy binoculars, I realize that this is pure nonsense; there is no need to buy anything. Besides, what would I do with binoculars in a lucid dream? I fly aimlessly through the air again for a while. I stroke the heads of two boys walking below me. They look at each other in amazement, wondering what is happening. I see two large statues. The spotlights focused on them are weak, and with a movement of my hand I increase the intensity of the light. Further on, there is an ice-cream vendor, and without my asking, the man gives me a tasty-looking ice lolly.

In the distance, I notice the highest point in Utrecht, the Dom Tower, magnificently contrasted against the colorful, almost magical sky. I consider flying to the top and enjoying the undoubtedly marvelous view. Doubt arises. 'What would happen if I awoke there? Then I would be sitting all night long dressed in nothing but my underwear,' I think. I decide not to take the risk and instead go to the house of a guy I recently met in a disco. 'How astonished he will be when I can provide an accurate description of his flat,' flashes through my mind. Now I am in a hurry, because who knows how long I will remain lucid? I turn a corner and a young man with a rucksack passes by. 'Hi Carolus, I have not seen you for a long time. How are you?' he asks. 'Well, neither good nor bad,' I answer. I get the impression that I am being remarkably honest with a complete stranger. Unfortunately, it does not occur to me to ask who he is, and shortly afterwards I awake.

Several times I lost my lucidity and went on with the normal dream condition and also I remember somehow being disappointed in the lucid dream state.

In a dream I am walking with my mother when we arrive at a crossroads. My mother yells to a passing vagabond that he must steal my money. On the left I see houses of ill repute. On the right there is a narrow-minded village, and I hate it. Then I realize I am dreaming. Hand in hand, my mother and I jump into the air and remain suspended there. My mother spins around, and I can see her vagina. Everything then darkens. Beautiful geometric patterns follow, yet I have the feeling: 'Is that all?'

A remarkable event takes place in another lucid dream. The scenery is not as clear as usual, and the conditions are different from those in previous lucid dreams.

I suppose I am using the above words to cover up the fact that, in this lucid dream, I have arranged a sex party with a number of people. Indeed, Prince is one of them. Of more interest is the fact that I smoke a joint in this dream. I remember very well that it is excellent Afghan hashish. It makes me super stoned and later, when I have awakened, I still feel stoned! This is not a plea for hashish. On the contrary, anyone who regularly smokes pot will notice that dream recall decreases or even completely collapses. Remarkable, however, is the fact that by smoking marijuana in a dream, my body is influenced as if I had really taken that substance. I start wondering what the correlation between body and soul is. Would it not be possible to induce healing images? After all, under hypnosis this is possible. I had also read something about dream temples in Antiquity (1). People went there, fasted and meditated, and afterwards received some kind of healing dream. Of course, these reports come from a past that is difficult to verify, but I thought it was worth trying. Perhaps I could do something about my headaches. So I intended to summon a doctor in my next lucid dream. And so it happened.

I am in my dream in my present house when I become conscious of my situation. I remember my intention and loudly scream: 'Dr. B., Dr. B.' To concentrate, I close my (dream) eyes and yell again: 'Dr. B.' For a little while it is completely dark, and suddenly I find myself on an operating table. A man enters who is definitely not our family doctor. He addresses me, saying that 'In fact, today is my day off.' However, he is willing to help me because, according to him, it will only take a short while. I feel him putting his hands into my nostrils. It is already over. An attendant enters the room and wants to accompany me to the exit. Feeling attracted to him, I decide to have sex with him. Without my uttering this wish, the man starts undressing. I do not completely like the size of his penis. Suddenly it starts growing and growing. I think that, at this rate, the room will become completely filled with it and there will be no air left to breathe. I awake.

(1) See: C.A. Meier, Antike Inkubation und moderne Psychotherapie*

I do not want to claim that the above mental image technique is a solution for every medical disease. With regard to my headaches, I can say that after this dream I did not suffer from them anymore. I also tried to cure my thyroid disease. I did not dare do it on my own, so I approached my internist. I would stop taking the medication, and he could analyze my blood samples for the amount of thyroid hormone. He did not want to cooperate because he did not believe in my method. Meanwhile, I had already decreased my medication dosage. A friend warned me in a dream a few days later that I had already once tried reducing the dosage and that it had not worked out very well. I remembered this experience and noticed that my body was retaining water, the result of insufficient amounts of thyroid hormone. That is the reason I stopped my experiment. True, I evoked some positive mental images concerning my thyroid, but I cannot claim that I cured it.

At the beginning of this chapter I described spontaneously occurring lucid dreams. Apart from some autosuggestion techniques, which I mainly used to influence the dream content, I did not induce them. Besides, how could I have known how to do so? You must bear in mind that the book by Patricia Garfield provided information about lucid dreams, but for the greater part it was a compilation of various dream cultures that were supposed to practice dream control. I was still under the impression that scientific research on lucid dreaming had reached a dead end. In the eighties, however, I discovered research on lucid dreaming and learned about several induction techniques. In Chapter 4 you will find the principles and techniques of modern lucid dream research. By applying these induction techniques, the number of lucid dreams increased and a dilemma in my dream work emerged. Until then, I had done very little with my lucid dreams. I was simply glad when I found myself in that condition and, if so, mostly wanted to have fun. Formerly, the clarity had not been optimal. Now that I was regularly living in that special world, I found myself increasingly confronted with aspects of myself. That awareness deepened through the next lucid dream and brought the process to another level.

I am getting a lift with a man when his car stops in the middle of some meadowland. 'We are driving in the wrong direction,' I say. The man answers that it is my own fault because I am responsible for my own choices. I get out of the car and head toward some scattered ruins. People behind windows cast distrustful glances at me. Some farmer directs his panther toward me. I think: 'A panther in the Netherlands. That is not possible. I must be dreaming.' The animal disappears and I decide not to change the scenery but to try to learn something. At that very moment, a young man appears beside me. Without my asking, he starts talking about my decision to discover the meaning of life. I ask: 'Who are you?' He smiles and says: 'I don't know.' That surprises me, but his monologue continues. I must not think that I will ever receive a complete answer, because the illusions are so many that my search will take a lifetime. Looking back one day, I will recognize that my efforts were not in vain. The Lord has provided human beings with sufficient luggage, and that is all right, because Man will never completely understand the Cosmic Universe. I feel satisfied with his answer, although I still have many questions. Again I ask: 'Who are you?' The sky breaks open and everywhere there is Light. A chorus repeatedly sings: 'Who are you? Who are you?' Then I know...

Chapter 3 – Dream pioneers

Throughout the centuries, Oriental as well as Western documents have mentioned lucid dreaming. But don't worry, I won't drag you into some dusky past. If you are interested in it, you will find ample books in the bibliography to assist you in your search. I prefer to stay closer to home in both time and place, although the latter is relative. The first serious work on dream control appeared in 1867 as an anonymous French publication under the title *Les Rêves et les Moyens de les Diriger; Observations Pratiques V* (1). It reflects 32 years of conscientious dream research, during which attention was paid to the process of dreaming itself. The latter may sound like stating the obvious, but nobody had studied it until then.

The book in question has always been very difficult to obtain. It is known that Sigmund Freud* could not get hold of a copy, despite his efforts. Eleven years after its publication, Alfred Maury, a prominent French dream researcher, revealed that the authorship of this voluminous work should be attributed to the sinologist, ethnologist, and publicist Marie-Jean-Léon Lecoq, Marquis d'Hervey-Saint-Denys (1822–1892).

Marquis d'Hervey was born on the sixth of May 1822 in Paris as the son of an aristocratic family. Originally Baron de Juchereau, he became a marquis through adoption. D'Hervey-Saint-Denys was a prominent member of his society. At the age of nineteen, he started studying Oriental languages. Five years before his death, he published a book about the Chinese philosopher Confucius. He received the Légion d'Honneur and served as President of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. As a professor of the Chinese language, he was associated with the famous Collège de France. For that reason, it is remarkable how little biographical data are known about Saint-Denys (2). D'Hervey started writing down his dreams in exercise books at the age of thirteen; he states that within five years he possessed twenty-two of them.

(1) Translated: *Dreams and How to Guide Them; Practical Observations*

(2) See: C.M. den Blanken & E.J.G. Meijer*

He illustrated these exercise books with watercolour drawings based on his dream images. A few of these drawings are reproduced in the frontispiece of his book. Through them we can gain an impression of his artistic qualities, because the original exercise books have never been traced. His interest in dreams grew to such an extent that in later years he made an extensive study of dream theories throughout the centuries. One part of his book is devoted to them. D'Hervey could not agree with the theoretical models of his contemporary dream researchers; in his book he argues against the dream research of Alfred Maury. He also dissociated himself from Albert Lemoine, another contemporary. Bearing the above-mentioned perspective in mind, you need not wonder why the Marquis published his book anonymously. He probably had no desire to damage his scientific reputation. Don't think that such things do not happen nowadays.... The scientific evidence concerning lucid dreaming had already been established for several years when, in 1987, an article in a Dutch newspaper (1) was published about the Dutch lucid dreamer Franz Maissan*. The authors, two psychologists, used pen names. They too were afraid of damaging their professional status.

After 207 nights, the Marquis developed the awareness that he was dreaming. He writes how, after one year, this ability had grown into an almost permanent one. This lucid dream ability apparently never left him. How did the Marquis explain his dream images? Well, he said that, when one regards the phenomenon logically, there appears to be a dilemma. Either you attribute it to some supernatural force, or you accept that the dreamer possesses, deep within his memory, everything needed to bring these remarkable visions into being. D'Hervey believed in the latter option and defined dreams as representations of a person's thoughts. According to him, memory was capable of renewing itself. Surprisingly, D'Hervey's theory bears a close resemblance to the activation-synthesis model of the contemporary neurophysiologist and psychiatrist J. Alan Hobson* of Harvard University.

Saint-Denys describes how, in one of his dreams, he finds himself in the city of Brussels, a town that, according to him, he had never visited before.

(1) See: T. Buitenweg & I. Brouwer*

Leisurely, he walks through a crowded street. On both sides there are many shops, and he notices colourful signs above the heads of the passers-by. He is amazed that his memory can create such details. In the distance, the famous church of Sainte-Gudule looms up; he recognizes it from pictures. D'Hervey starts studying the street thoroughly in order to be able to recognize it later. Some months after this dream, he visited Brussels with his family. He searched for the street from his dream, but his efforts were in vain. Finally, he gave up and abandoned his quest. In his book, he says that he was relieved as well, because if he had found the street, he would have been forced to revise his theory about dreams. Saint-Denys now stated that he was dealing with some psychological phenomenon. However, at that moment he did not know how it worked. Several years passed, and d'Hervey forgot the dream from his adolescence. One day he had to visit Germany and arrived in Frankfurt. He had visited the city before when he was young. After lunch, he took a walk and came to the Judengasse. He recognized it immediately as the street from his dream. During that dream he had paid particular attention to a certain shop, and now he started looking for it. To his surprise, he found it. D'Hervey writes that it is reasonable to assume that he had walked through the same Judengasse some three or four years before the dream. He had simply forgotten the experience. In his lucid dream, two memories, the Judengasse and Sainte-Gudule, had become linked together. Incidentally, this does not explain why these two images were connected in his dream. Although largely self-taught in the field of dreams, d'Hervey studied the dream world in a scientific manner. Nevertheless, he reported several mystical experiences in his dreams:

'Then I saw some sort of embryo, half black and half white, struggling within a semi-transparent wrapping that had the shape of an egg. I placed my hand upon this moving membrane. A child appeared. He placed his hands in mine. His body was covered with a kind of amorphous shadow, while his head was radiant.'

After awakening, d'Hervey felt deeply touched. Despite the fact that he told himself that his dream was nothing but the product of an unorganized imagination, he could not rid himself of the thought that this child embodied the dual principle of Good and Evil. He writes that it is impossible not to be filled with the presence of God, the Intelligence who Knows, after such an experience.

It is not only hard to lay hands on the original work of 'Les Rêves', but, due to its old-fashioned and rather woolly French, it is not easily accessible either. The reader of the shortened English adaptation* that appeared in 1982 encounters fewer difficulties.

The Dutch writer and psychiatrist Frederik van Eeden occupied himself with lucid dreams as well. He had many lucid dreams and gave a presentation about them in 1913 to the Society for Psychical Research. This society tried to study paranormal phenomena in a scientific manner. The presentation, entitled *A Study of Dreams*, together with the 352 dreams on which it was based, was published posthumously in Dutch as *Dromenboek*. In it, Van Eeden describes his experiences and experiments with lucid dreams. Although he prided himself on his strictly scientific approach, Van Eeden allowed himself to be carried away by occult explanations. You can read about his frequent encounters with demons, which he battled time after time. In (lucid) dreams, this behaviour is ineffective and sometimes even dangerous. On further reading his accounts, you will notice that Van Eeden was greatly troubled by his sensual dreams. You must bear in mind that Van Eeden lived in a rather prudish era.

Van Eeden occupied himself with extrasensory experiments. For example, in one of his lucid dreams he tried, by telepathic means, to establish contact with a medium in England, a certain Mrs. Thompson. Like every lucid dreamer who is able to call forth desired persons and situations, he wondered about the possibility of 'awakening' the awareness of Mrs. Thompson and sending her a message. It is amusing to read about his efforts, but honesty compels me to say that his claim does not meet scientific standards. However, I do not want to give you the impression that Van Eeden used his lucid dreams only for his ESP experiments. He also investigated the world of his dreams systematically. One account follows:

On 9 September 1904, Van Eeden dreams that he is standing at a table. He is conscious that he is dreaming. On the table there are several objects, and Van Eeden considers what experiments he can perform. He begins by attempting to break a glass with a brick. He places a small glass on two stones and strikes it. However, it does not break. Then he takes a wine glass and hits it with his fist with full force.

Simultaneously, he reflects on how dangerous that would be in waking life. A little while later, Van Eeden looks at the glass and sees it breaking in slow motion. Van Eeden describes how this gave him the impression of living in a kind of 'fake world': very cleverly imitated, but with slight imperfections. He picks up the broken glass and throws the fragments into the street to test whether he will hear the jingling sound. The sound arrives, and he notices two dogs running away because of it. It is probably superfluous to mention that the next day the glass remained completely intact on the table beside his bed. Considering Van Eeden's conclusion that he was living in a kind of illusory world, it is remarkable that he could not free himself from the esoteric belief in astral travel. Nevertheless, we have to honour him for preparing the road on which later dream pioneers could build.

A contemporary of Frederik van Eeden was the Russian mystic and psychologist Ouspensky*. My esteem for his mystical works is low, but his experiments with lucid dreams are worth mentioning. Already in his childhood, Ouspensky hit upon the idea of testing whether it would be possible to maintain consciousness in dreams and to be able to think while dreaming. What was extraordinary about Ouspensky was that he entered the lucid dream state directly from wakefulness. How this technique works, you will discover in Chapter 4.

Ouspensky described his lucid dreams as 'half-dream states'. He wanted to use his dreams only to study the origin and structure of 'normal' dreams. He did not concern himself with controlling his dreams. Unfortunately, whenever he developed consciousness in his dreams, he simultaneously altered the dream content. This was not his intention. Let us see what he wrote about it:

'Originally, my aim was to be conscious in my dreams. Soon 'falsified' perceptions occurred, that is to say, only new dreams. I remember once seeing myself standing in a large empty room without windows. Apart from me, there was only a little black cat. 'I am dreaming,' I said to myself. 'How do I know whether I am truly asleep or not? Let me do it this way. I am going to change that black cat into a huge white dog. In waking life this is impossible, and if I succeed, well, that means I am sleeping.'

At the very moment I said this to myself, the wall in front of me disappeared and a mountainous landscape became visible. It showed a river meandering through the countryside. 'That is strange,' I said to myself. 'I did not order that. Where could it have come from?' A faint memory came to mind, the impression that I had seen this landscape before and that it was somehow connected with that white dog. However, I was aware that I would lose the main point if I continued this introspection, namely the fact that I was sleeping and that I was conscious of myself.'

Ouspensky concluded that dreams are evoked by physical experiences or by ordinary reminiscences from waking life. He acknowledged the possibility that impressions may derive from childhood. At the onset of his dream work, Ouspensky was not familiar with psychoanalytic theory.

Until now, I have presented three lucid dream pioneers. They approached their lucid dreams from their own points of view. It is striking that they described the phenomenon, yet developed no practical applications. The same can be observed in the work of other pioneers in this field, such as Mary Arnold-Forster*, Oliver Fox*, J.H.M. Whiteman*, J.H.W. Myers*, Ernst Mach*, Yves Delage*, and many others. Their books are interesting to read, but contribute little to our understanding of lucid dreaming. The results of the past years have been more fruitful. That is the reason why I refrain from discussing all these pioneers. Their books are, however, included in the bibliography. My choice does not imply that we are not indebted to them.

Undoubtedly, you will have wondered by now: 'How did scientists react to these reports of consciousness in dreams?' Well, they developed a very sceptical attitude. Alfred Maury stated that lucid dreaming was impossible. Another prominent dream researcher, Havelock Ellis, bluntly declared that it could not be done. Freud, who was indirectly familiar with Saint-Denys' work, devoted several lines to it in his *Traumdeutung* and reiterated his position. To my knowledge, until well into the 1960s only five articles were published in scientific journals (1).

(1) See: H.E. Brown*; H. von Moers-Messmer*; Z. Havlicek*, N. Rapport* & W. von Schriever*

They evoked little response. There was, and still is, some tendency to categorize lucid dreaming under the heading of 'esoteric'. For the 'serious' scientist, this was a sign not to become involved; at least not if you wanted to preserve your scientific career and status. The lack of familiarity with the subject is considerable in the Netherlands. If you read this book from beginning to end, you will know more about lucid dreaming than the average psychologist or psychiatrist. In the 1960s, the topic of the expansion of awareness came into the picture. I suppose you know that for many people this search ended in the (mis)use of drugs. In the Netherlands, the 'coffee shop', where you cannot buy a cup of coffee but can buy hashish, was one of the results.

In that period of flower power, Carlos Castaneda seemed to emerge out of nowhere. As a student of cultural anthropology, Castaneda became interested in the hallucinogenic effects of the peyote plant. Combining pleasure with usefulness, he decided to complete his doctoral studies by travelling to Mexico to do fieldwork. There he met an old Yaqui Indian who appeared to know a great deal about the effects of plants. This man, named Don Juan, wanted to teach Castaneda, but only on the condition that Carlos became his apprentice. Don Juan claimed to be a *brujo*, a man of Knowledge. Thus the apprenticeship of our Carlos began. The course of these meetings is described in several books, which enjoyed enormous commercial success. After all, a whole generation was searching for a separate reality. Carlos claimed that these descriptions were based on true events. Later, doubts arose about this claim (1).

Although you can read in Castaneda's books about non-ordinary states of consciousness, there are some objections. First, you have to be chosen by a teacher, which makes access to these exceptional states of consciousness seem available only to a few. Second, you have to use specific drugs to arouse these states. Third, these travels are presented as taking place in another objective reality, which is not without danger, because there is always the risk of not being able to return to your physical world. When you read these reports, you do not really feel invited to repeat these experiments.

(1) See: R. de Mille*

However, when bearing in mind the results of modern lucid dream research, which presents your journeys as travelling through your own mental world, you can still learn a lot from Castaneda's books.

Carlos got from his teacher the assignment to learn to dream lucidly. As a clue, he was instructed to put his hands in front of his face in a dream. On doing this, he would realize that he was dreaming. Castaneda relates that he had great difficulty developing lucidity. That is not surprising. Recent research shows that the above method is excellent for prolonging lucid dreams, but it is not effective in inducing them. By the way, if you focus your attention on your hands for too long, there is a great chance of leaving the lucid dream state prematurely.

In 1969, the English parapsychologist Celia Green published her book *Lucid Dreams**. In it, she reviews the books of several lucid dreamers and formulates a number of postulates. She also describes characteristics of situations that can lead to lucidity: emotional tensions, absurdities, analytical thinking, and insight into the dreamlike nature of the experience. However, these conditions are not an automatic road to lucidity. As long as someone is dreaming, he mostly accepts dream reality as 'real'. There are many dream reports describing fantastic-looking persons without this leading to the awareness of being in a dream. The point is that, while dreaming, you generally do not exercise critical reflection concerning it. In Chapter 4 you will see how this critical reflection is the heart of the matter.

Green summarized models for the experimental study of the lucid dream. For a better understanding, and in order to understand the scientific proof of the existence of the lucid dream, I must now take a side road. In dream research, two devices are important. First, the electroencephalograph (EEG), an instrument that measures and records the electrical activity of the brain. In combination with the electro-oculograph (EOG), which registers eye movements, these are the tools of the dream researcher. For us it is important to know that, in a sleeping person, regular physiological patterns can be observed. Back to the models of Celia Green. She stated that the first task of experimental dream research should be to establish how the EEG of a lucid dreamer corresponds to that of a normal dreamer. Her other propositions concern the investigation of whether a lucid dreamer is not more sensitive to external stimuli than a normal dreamer.

The condition, however, is that the experimenter knows that his subject is dreaming. By the way, based on this last suggestion, dream-induction devices were developed in later years (see Chapter 4).

Charles T. Tart, an American who wrote a book in the 1960s (1) about altered states of consciousness, also formulated propositions for the scientific study of the phenomenon. He asked: 'In what way would it be possible to establish a two-way communication system through which the experimenter could instruct his subject while he is dreaming to do this or that, while the subject, in carrying out these commands, would report on his dream experiences?' Tart, however, did not provide practical methods. Celia Green did. She suggested training several subjects to develop lucid dreaming. These persons should fall asleep without losing consciousness. This method for inducing lucid dreams had been used by Ouspensky, and Tibetan yogis also mention it (2). If the subjects, after some time, would awaken and state that they had had a lucid dream, the EEG should be different from that of a normal dreamer. You see that Green's proposal misses at some point the connection with Tart's. He had suggested reporting 'live' during the dream. Despite these well-meant attempts to provide a scientific basis, these proposals did not seem feasible. The ordinary public did not care much about scientific experiments. Carlos Castaneda's books were read anyway. Fiction, however, became science....

Another person who contributed much to spreading the knowledge that it is possible to develop consciousness in dreams and also to benefit from them was the American Patricia Garfield*. As a psychology student, she became interested in lucid dreams after hearing about a tribe in Malaysia. This tribe, named the Senoï, was said to practise dream control. The information about them was published by the anthropologist Kilton Stewart. In later years, doubts arose about the authenticity of his reports (3).

(1) See: C.T. Tart, *Altered States of Consciousness**

(2) See: W.Y. Evans-Wentz* & G.C. Chang*

(3) See: G.W. Domhoff – *The mystique of dreams**

According to Stewart, the parents of the Senoï tribe taught their children to apply the following principles in their dreams: strive for agreeable experiences, make sure that your dreams end positively, and also gain some creative product.

Garfield's book is a mixture of several dream cultures, such as those of the Senoï, Tibetan yogis, American Indian dreamers, and many dreamers from Antiquity. The work is readable enough and was reprinted recently. The principles from the book have, in retrospect, been confirmed by modern lucid dream research.

Years went by and scientific research came to a dead end. Besides that, after the hangover of the hippie era, it was not 'done' to occupy oneself with research on consciousness. For scientists with career ambitions, economics offered more prospects.... Fortunately for you and me, others grimly carried on with their efforts. And look, at the end of the seventies the scientific proof of the existence of lucid dreaming became a fact. In America, Dr. Stephen LaBerge was heavily involved in providing a scientific basis for lucid dreaming. In his book *Lucid Dreaming** he states:

'I knew that lucid dreamers are able to look freely in all directions from the simple fact that I had done so myself. I thought that by moving my (dream) eyes according to some recognizable fixed pattern, I could signal the outer world whenever I had a lucid dream. I tried it in the first lucid dream I recorded; I moved my dream eyes up, down, up, down, five times in total. As far as I was concerned, this was the first intentional signal from the world of dreams. The problem, however, was that there was nobody in the outer world to register it.'

Later he contacted the prominent sleep researcher Dr. William C. Dement. The latter doubted the possibility of lucid dreaming. Nevertheless, permission was granted to conduct research at the Stanford University Sleep Research Center. The first night in the laboratory was not very successful. LaBerge had agreed with his assistant, Dr. Lynn Nagel, that she would wake him during the night to remind him to dream lucidly. The result was very little sleep and no lucid dreams. One month later they planned the next recording session, and this time it worked out fine.

'Because I now had a dream body, I decided to make the agreed eye movements. I moved my finger along a vertical line in front of my face and followed it with my eyes. I became very excited by the fact that I could finally do it. My excitement disturbed my dream, and after a while it began to blur. Later we discovered, on the polygraph recording, two large eye movements just before awakening from a 13-minute REM dream. Now we had objective evidence that at least one lucid dream had occurred during an obvious REM sleep period.'

At a later stage, LaBerge was also capable of transmitting his initials by means of his hand, using Morse signals. Stephen and his associates involved others in the research, and repeatedly the results proved positive. In 1981 they were able to present their findings at a meeting of the Association for the Psychophysiological Study of Sleep (1). Practically every professional sleep researcher is associated with this worldwide organization. During this meeting, the majority accepted the lucid dream as a genuine product of sleep.

Already in 1975, the Englishman Keith Hearne* had described in his dissertation at Liverpool University his experiments with lucid dreaming involving his test subject, Mr. Alan Worsley. Hearne too had been able to signal the outer world. Not much attention was paid to this publication, so Dr. LaBerge received the credit, but unjustly. Let's return to the lucid dream research at Stanford University. Not only was the existence of the lucid dream established, but also that dreams are not the products of inactive brains. On the contrary, during lucid dreaming the brain is very active. According to the dream content, which can be directed, similar physical changes occur. For example, test subjects were asked to sing during a lucid dream. Whenever these subjects did so, the brain activity showed the same patterns as if they were actually singing. The same happened with mathematical exercises. In short, dreaming of doing something resembles reality more than imagination. Another experiment concerned the withholding of breath. The lucid dreamer's respiration influenced the actual breathing pattern.

(1) A few years ago, the name was changed to *the Association for the Study of Dreams*. You will find the addresses at the back of this book

Test subjects who consciously dreamed about sex also provided evidence of the correlation between the dream world and reality. They described their experiences as extremely vivid and satisfying. The studies in the dream laboratory showed the same physical changes as if they were making love in the real world; respiration increased, as well as the blood flow to the sexual organs. Only the heartbeat differed from that of the waking condition, and there was no ejaculation.

With these findings the body-soul relationship was placed in a new perspective. LaBerge writes in his book:

'I think our research implies exciting perspectives. The most exciting seem to lie in the domains of philosophy, psychophysiology, and neurology. Whatever details may prove to be false in the end, our model seems to exclude dualistic views of dreaming, such as the traditional belief that the soul (or 'astral' body) flies around in the dream world completely separated from the brain and body. Our results should urge psychologists, neurologists, and psychophysicists to look for similarities between objectively measured physiology and subjective experiences. Maybe our work at Stanford University has brought us closer to the day when we will discover the structure of our mind in the microcosm of the human mind.'

With the experiments of Stephen LaBerge, research on lucid dreaming received a new impulse. It has recently become nearly impossible to keep track of all the publications in this field. A review of the lucid dream literature that I compiled in 1988 contained 400 titles. One year later, this number had increased to 500! Honesty forces me to say that this research is carried out in only a few centres. If you study the bibliography, you will notice which names keep appearing.

For example, Stephen LaBerge founded, in collaboration with Dr. Jayne Gackenbach of Iowa University, the Lucidity Association. This organization focuses on the research of lucid dreaming and publishes the magazine *Lucidity Letter* twice a year. Until now it has been the platform for scientists and non-professionals. In 1987 LaBerge founded his Lucidity Institute. This organization publishes a newsletter. For the non-professional there is, in America, the *Dream Network Bulletin*; it informs readers about the latest news, presents interviews, reviews books, and organizes workshops.

In harmony with the American tradition, there is even a comic strip, *Lou Cid, the All-American Dreamer*.

Closer to home there is also an important research centre. At the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt, Professor Dr. Paul Tholey* has occupied himself with lucid dreaming for more than thirty years. The results of his experiments are very important for the ordinary lucid dreamer. Tholey examines practical applications extensively. While the Americans have recently been quarrelling about whether meditation stimulates lucid dreaming or whether lucid dreams are 'female' by nature, Tholey travels the inner world of the mind; he and his students report on its (im)possibilities. In October 1987, Tholey and others organized the First European Symposium on Lucid Dreaming. Two years later, Tholey started the magazine *Bewusst Sein*.

Between the lines I have pointed several times to the arrears and the neglect of the field in the Netherlands. What was/is the situation here? About Frederik van Eeden I wrote before. The network of lucid dream researchers regards him as an important pioneer. In the Netherlands, however, he is not held in high esteem. The reason is that he was involved in spiritualist experiments.

In the 1920s, the Dutchman W. Leertouwer* published a book about dreams. In it he reviewed prominent dream researchers and dedicated an entire chapter to the 'father' of modern lucid dream research, the French Marquis Saint-Denys. We have to wait until the mid-eighties before the topic appears again. In 1985, two publications appeared at Amsterdam University (1).

The Dutch scientific world keeps itself aloof, however. I contacted several psychologists, but they reacted sceptically. I discovered that there are several dream labs here. They are, however, completely focused on the physiological process of sleep and not on the psychological aspects of (lucid) dreams. A prominent researcher with whom I spoke on the telephone told me bluntly that 'this lucid dreaming stuff seems nonsense,' and he practically ordered me to 'put something on paper and send it to him.' I did not reply to this arrogance! I think the time has arrived to found a Dutch Dream Research Centre.

(1) See: F. Maissan* & J. Vos*

Professor Tholey told me that he too met heavy resistance from his scientific environment. He was even forbidden to publish his results! Fortunately, he did not obey. Anyway, you have the advantage of benefiting from modern research. The induction techniques and applications that I describe in the next chapters are based on recent scientific investigations.

For a complete understanding, it is necessary that I examine the term 'lucid dream'. In my Preface I described it as a condition in which, during dreaming, there is awareness of the fact that one is dreaming. There are, however, many people who end their nightmares by saying to themselves: 'It is only a dream,' after which they awaken. I would hardly label such a dream as 'lucid'.

Professor Tholey defined lucid dreaming as follows:

Definition of a Lucid Dream

A lucid dream is a state of awareness in which you are dreaming, while simultaneously perceiving everything as real as in the waking state, and in which you are free to act; even more freely than in the waking state, because you will survive all dangers, since:

- One is completely aware of the fact that one is dreaming;
- One is completely aware of the possibility of acting;
- This state is not clouded in any way;
- All senses function just as they do in the waking state;
- There is a complete memory of waking life;
- In both the waking and lucid states there is a complete memory of lucid dream life;
- There is insight into what the dream symbolizes.

Not all conditions are fully present in every lucid dream. The latter one is even limited to experienced lucid dreamers. You will remember that in Chapter 2 I described some lucid dreams in which I made errors in my thinking and acting processes.

I mentioned the fact that in a lucid dream I did not fly to the Dom Tower because I was afraid of 'waking up there in my underwear.'

The English psychiatrist Morton Schatzman writes in his introductory comments to the English adaptation of Saint-Denys' book* that he feared theft (!). For that reason he locked his bicycle in a lucid dream. You too will make 'thinking errors'. However, as you gain more experience in lucid dreaming, the visual and mental clarity will increase. Even very experienced lucid dreamers are not free from 'distortions' in the thinking process during dreaming.

In Chapter 5, I hope it will become clear how the above characteristics are linked to the applications and why it was necessary to mention them.

(1) See: D'Hervey-Saint_Denys - Dreams and How to Guide Them*

Chapter 4 - Learning to dream lucidly

Recent research proves that practically everybody can learn to dream lucidly. Motivation and discipline are, however, the keys to the lucid dream world. All methods mentioned in this and the next chapter have been scientifically examined and have proved their practical value. If you follow the instructions, you will eventually experience your first lucid dream. If you are lucky, you will 'awaken' in your dream tonight; in the worst case, it may take several months. On average, you may need about five weeks. I encourage you to persist in your efforts. Individuals to whom I have explained the induction techniques have already complained after three weeks that they still were not dreaming lucidly. It is a pity that for this reason they often abandon their efforts.

Apart from the fact that motivation and discipline play an important role, I must say that the use of certain drugs influences dream recall in a negative way. For example, sleeping tablets and tranquilizers are not favourable for your dreams, nor is the smoking of hashish. In the first chapter I pointed out that smoking pot impairs your dream recall. By the way, alcohol does not seem beneficial either. Some medicines reduce the dream process. Your doctor can inform you about this subject. If you start your dream work, you will soon find out what you have to do and what you have to give up in order to keep your dream recall at a good level. If you stop paying attention to your dreams, the recovery of your dream recall will take a while.

There are reports that some people who begin dream work start suffering from headaches. Marquis d'Hervey-Saint-Denys mentioned this phenomenon too. He supposed that you could describe it as a sort of 'mental muscular pain'. Just as you can expect muscle pain after neglecting your body for years and then starting to exercise again, the mind may produce a similar effect. Whether this explanation is correct or not, experience shows that when dream work is resumed this phenomenon does not occur again (1).

I advise persons who are very fearful and/or have difficulties distinguishing between fantasy and reality not to engage in lucid dreaming without professional guidance!

(1) See: H. Irwin* and A. Comfort*

Like you could read in the previous chapter, the dream pioneer Marquis d'Hervey-Saint-Denys developed lucidity by increasing his dream recall. For that reason he wrote down his dreams. At first he noticed the ups and downs of this memory, but also that it improved in due course. For example, he wrote:

'14 June. Last night I did not dream, or rather, I do not recall anything, because it seems impossible that I passed a whole night without dreaming.'

'7 July. Suddenly I remember a dream that I had some weeks ago on a Thursday, but which I could not remember then...'

After two months of recording my dreams I discovered that I was dreaming. I can confirm the fluctuations in dream recall. My first dreams were rather clear. Two weeks later, however, I wrote in my dream diary:

'13/14 February. Dream about corpses. I have forgotten practically everything about it. I only know that it dealt with the burying of dead people. The remains lay in two rows of three persons. The question arose whether these bodies had been properly cared for. No feelings of fear.'

An improved dream recall can not only lead to lucid dreams, but is also a basic condition for the induction techniques! This book focuses on the topic of the lucid dream. Much information on how to deal with your dream memory and techniques for analyzing your dreams can be found in the previously mentioned book by Ann Faraday*. Prepare yourself for your dreams. Beware of going to bed exhausted and full of stress. Take time for your sleep; an average of about eight hours is usually sufficient. Intend to recall your dreams tonight. Maybe a 'prayer', like the one I described in Chapter 1, will do fine. With it you suggest to your dreaming mind that you will take your dreams seriously. Put a pen, paper, and a flashlight beside your bed. Of course, you can also use a recorder. Experiences with it differ. Some people mumble unintelligibly into it; others swear at such a device. Make sure that you are not awakened abruptly by the radio, alarm clock, telephone, or by your children or partner. Often your dream images disappear like snow in the sun. If you awaken, keep your eyes closed. Start by remembering your last dream image and think backwards. If you cannot remember anything, start reflecting on your activities of the previous day. Which persons did you meet?

What activities did you engage in and what feelings did you have? Sometimes images arise spontaneously through this process.

Do not spend too much time trying to revive your dream images; five or six minutes is enough. If you persist too long, there is a danger that you will fall asleep again prematurely. Whatever happens, write down your dream images and associations! Do not censor anything. Do not make the mistake of thinking that you will remember them the next morning. You won't!

Let's assume you succeeded in catching some of your dreams and that you wrote them down during the night. Now we write them out in the dream diary. Examples of how to deal with this can be found in Chapter 1. The method is from Ann Faraday. By occupying yourself with the dream title, content, clues, etc., you participate in an active manner and stimulate your dream recall. Consider your dream power as a good friend who needs attention.

The next step is the process of unraveling your dream messages, which is hard work at first for the novice. The analyzing techniques relate to the theoretical ideas from which you start, for example, psychoanalytic, Jungian, Rogerian, Gestalt, etc. With lucid dreams you have an excellent tool for analyzing your dream images 'live'. How it works, you will find in the next chapter. Nevertheless, I would advise you to make yourself familiar with the 'conventional' methods and refer you to Chapter 1 and Ann Faraday's book. 'Why use a dream diary if you can interpret your dream images live?' I hear you say. The first argument I have already suggested, but I want to emphasize it again. By recording your dreams, you stimulate your dream recall, and this is an absolute must for lucid dreaming!

Secondly, by studying your diary, it will become clear which themes, persons, and situations repeatedly occur. If you become more acquainted with lucid dreams, you can evoke these subjects and learn what they mean for your personal life.

I will not deprive you of another important argument: being able to direct lucid dreams to a certain extent, there is a danger that you will show resistance by evading essential aspects of yourself and changing unpleasant images into pleasant ones. Your normal dreams will function as a feedback tool and inform you about this.

They can also advise you whether the interventions you made in your lucid dreams are beneficial. The condition, however, is that you understand your dream language. So learn it! For learning to dream lucidly there are two different approaches. There are methods that focus on becoming lucid during a dream. Others offer techniques for entering the lucid dream state directly from the waking condition. You have to explore which method you like best. Some are not easy ones.

Techniques for becoming lucid during a normal dream:

1. Critical Reflection

Professor Tholey of the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University developed his Critical Reflection Technique. The principle is based on the following thought:

In your dreams you generally accept dream reality as 'real'. If you were to examine it thoroughly, you would probably recognize its illusory character and become lucid. By critically examining your surroundings during the day for one minute, asking yourself the critical question, 'Am I awake now or am I dreaming?', and pretending not to know whether you are awake or asleep, this attitude will sooner or later be transferred to the dream state.

The mistake with this technique is that you perform the critical reflection superficially because you are already sure that you are not dreaming. Ask yourself whether there are remarkable or incongruous things. Are you still living in this house? Are there unfamiliar persons near you? What were you doing fifteen minutes ago? With this last question you can check whether it is possible for you to be in that place. In dreams, scenery and time can change rapidly.

In one of my dreams, I raised the critical question and found out that I had just travelled through Morocco and that a little while later I was in my home town. By this I realized that I was dreaming. In another dream I applied the critical reflection while being in a student house. I thought: 'It has been years since I graduated and I do not live here anymore.' I became lucid.

By the way, dream reality can deceive you, so that you assume you are awake while you are still dreaming. Even very experienced lucid dreamers sometimes fall into this trap.

The critical question has to be asked about ten times a day for one minute. Personally, I experience this method as an agreeable one. You can do it anytime, anywhere. Some people told me that they experienced difficulties in remembering their intention. A simple solution is to write an 'L' on the palm of your hand. You use your hand so often that you will be reminded to ask the critical question. It is important to practise systematically. Not 24 times on one day and not at all for the next two days.

2. Linking of Situations

If you have discovered that in your ordinary dreams you are afraid of, for example, dogs, you can link the critical question to that subject. Every time you see a dog while awake, ask yourself whether you are dreaming or not. In fact, any recurring situation is suitable. Limit yourself, however, to one link. Consult your dream diary to see which images pop up regularly.

I told you that Carlos Castaneda was advised to put his hands in front of his eyes. It took great effort on his part. Now, even if you manage to bring your hands in front of your face while dreaming, it will not help you much if you do not ask yourself the critical question. If you do not, you will probably not realize that you are dreaming!

3. Autosuggestion/Hypnosis

As I wrote before, Patricia Garfield uses an autosuggestion technique. She said to herself that she would have a lucid dream, and according to her she had one. Research proves that this technique works well at the onset (1), but its power gradually decreases. I would not advise you to use only this method, but to combine it with others. Instead of suggesting to yourself that you will dream lucidly tonight, it is better to suggest that you will ask the critical question, 'Am I awake or am I dreaming?'

The power of autosuggestion increases if you first bring yourself into a relaxed state. For example, put on some quiet music. Lie down on the couch. Follow the movement of your breath.

(1) See: D. Wallin*

Whenever you feel completely relaxed, give yourself the suggestion. If you are familiar with the principles of self-hypnosis, then give yourself the post-hypnotic suggestion that tonight you will ask the critical question. In general, women seem to respond better than men to hypnotic suggestions (1).

4. The MILD method

First, before falling asleep, you set the intention to wake up early in the morning. Whenever you wake up, mentally review the dream you have just had (or another dream, if you cannot remember the last one) until you know it completely by heart. Second, replay the dream in your mind, but this time imagine that you realize you are dreaming. In other words, act as if you had become lucid during that dream. Third, get out of bed and engage in some activity for about ten minutes. Fourth, return to bed and repeat the above steps until you fall asleep.

5. Making an Appointment with a Dream Figure

This method is not intended to induce your first lucid dream. Rather, it is meant for people who already experience lucid dreams on a regular basis and wish to have them more often.

During a lucid dream, make an appointment with a friendly dream figure and ask him or her to remind you, the next time you meet in a dream, that you are dreaming. Dream figures tend to honor such agreements. In my own experience, this technique can greatly increase the number of lucid dreams during a single night. I should add that, for special reasons which I do not wish to disclose, you should choose as your 'dream guard' a person who has been friendly toward you from the very first moment he or she appeared in your dreams.

(1) See: H. Klippstein*

Techniques for transitioning directly from waking consciousness to the dream state:

1. Image Technique

As I mentioned before, Ouspensky and Tibetan yogis claimed to be able to transfer themselves. Esoteric literature often contains references to this ability.

All such methods are aimed at maintaining consciousness while allowing the body to fall asleep. I use the following technique. While lying in bed, I begin counting: ‘One, I am dreaming; two, I am dreaming; three, I am dreaming,’ and so on. Gradually, I notice the fading of impressions from the outside world and the growing heaviness and immobility of my body.

The next stage is the appearance of purple-red geometric patterns. The trick is not to focus on these forms, nor on any internal thoughts. Incidentally, this experience differs from person to person. You may not perceive geometric patterns at all, but rather colors, images, sounds, voices, or other phenomena.

After this phase, a clear white ‘screen’ appears before my inner eye. On it, brief images flash by: the face of a friend, a vase, a piece of candy, my computer, a bicycle—in short, whatever my unorganized mind happens to produce. Slowly these isolated images develop into short sequences, which may eventually stabilize into a coherent scene, such as a street or landscape. Once such a scene becomes stable, the challenge is to allow yourself to ‘glide’ into it.

For example, the beach of Al Hoceima may gradually crystallize before my eyes. I see the sea, the clouds, and seagulls soaring overhead. To my left, a man is riding a donkey. I allow myself to become absorbed in the scene, and in the next moment I find myself sitting on the animal.

It sounds easy, but I can assure you that it is a difficult technique. More often than not, I simply fall asleep without managing to maintain consciousness.

2. Body Technique

I have described how I transfer myself into an image. It is also possible to evoke an 'out-of-body' experience. The variations are numerous. The beginning is the same as in the image technique. At the moment your body has become completely immobile, you begin to move it again, but only in your imagination.

First move your toes, then your hands. The next step is to get out of bed with your 'dream body'. You may also imagine your dream body floating upward into the air or sinking through the bed. Another possibility is to let it 'awaken' in a completely different room, city, world, or even solar system. It is possible that you will see your physical body lying in bed and that your dream body appears to be connected to it by a golden cord. I must emphasize that you have not actually left your physical body. Both the body lying in bed and the golden cord are elements of the dream. You are not entering another objective reality. Esoteric writers have warned people not to break this 'astral' cord. According to them, if the cord is severed, you will be unable to return to your physical body. You may safely discard this piece of mystical baggage. Scientific research has provided no evidence that such beliefs are valid.

Prof. Tholey, many other lucid dreamers, and I myself have deliberately broken this cord without any consequences whatsoever. There is never any difficulty in waking up, because you never left your body in the first place.

If you wish to leave a lucid dream (though I cannot imagine why you would), focus your dream eyes on a single point. After about ten seconds, the dream scene will begin to blur and you will awaken.

An 'Astral' Report by Oliver Fox (1)

February 6, 1916. Foundry Lane, Southampton.

'On this occasion I experimented with a definite objective: to visit Mrs. X at her house in Lumsden Avenue, Southampton. On retiring for the night, I lay on my right side, keeping as still as possible and taking deep, rhythmic breaths.

(1) See: O. Fox - Astral Projection*.

I did not concentrate on Mrs. X, but on the preliminary stages of the experiment, as I wished to pass into the trance condition without losing consciousness for even a moment. In this I was quite successful. After the breathing had continued for some time, I noticed a curious sensation in my physical eyes, as though they were rolled upwards and squinting slightly. At the same time, all my consciousness seemed to be focused upon a point situated in the middle of my brain, perhaps in the region of the pineal gland. It occurred to me that I was 'concentrating inwardly', as some occult students term it.

For some time I continued this concentration, and more and more it seemed to me that my entire incorporeal self was being condensed about this central point within my physical brain. Soon I began to feel a numbness stealing over my body, extending from my feet upwards and gradually stiffening into a painful rigidity. I now seemed to be in a state resembling catalepsy, even my jaws being bound together, as though the muscles had changed into iron clamps. I was still in darkness, my physical eyes being tightly closed and rolled upwards; but now I had the sensation of possessing another pair, and these non-physical, or astral, eyes I opened. It will thus be seen that I actually passed from waking life into the proper trance condition without any break in consciousness.'

'Magical' literature often mentions this technique. The method is aimed at stimulating an 'out-of-the-body' experience. The German researcher Klaus Stich* conducted extensive research on this method. It works as follows:

Position yourself in front of a mirror. Whether the mirror is small or large, you should stand at such a distance that you can see your entire reflection. Study that reflection for several minutes. Then close your eyes and imagine seeing your mirror image. Continue your efforts until you succeed.

Pay special attention to the characteristics of your face. If you succeed in creating an exact copy of your actual image, transfer your consciousness into this mirror image. You are then prepared to observe your 'original' body from the perspective of the mirror image, or to begin your journey (1).

(1) See also: B. Nossack* d.J. Hillman*

4. F.A.S.T. Technique

Dr. Keith Hearne* developed the F.A.S.T. method, which is based on the phenomenon of the 'false awakening'. The technique attempts to induce such an experience deliberately.

This method requires the assistance of another person. You make an arrangement with a helper that, beginning two hours before you actually intend to get up, he or she will enter your bedroom every half hour and either whisper a few words or gently call your name.

I might almost add: 'Who would be willing to do this for you without becoming annoyed?' Because you have implanted in your mind the expectation that you are about to wake up, several things may happen:

- You do not wake up at all.
- You really wake up.
- You wake up, but drift back into the dream state without realizing that you had briefly awakened.
- You wake up and come to the realization that you are not really awake.

Only the last option can lead to lucidity. It is important that after each awakening you ask yourself the critical question: Am I really awake? Does my bedroom look exactly as it does in reality? Do I hear any strange sounds? Is the person who woke me really the person with whom I made the agreement? I do not think that this method is very suitable for someone who has never experienced a lucid dream. Not because I consider the method ineffective, but because false awakenings are often accompanied by feelings of fear and threat.

The following report comes from someone who experimented with this method (1):

(1) See: K. Hearne - The Dream Machine*

'With the help of my girlfriend, I tried your technique several times. On one occasion, however, a friend acted as my helper. I dreamed that I was discussing the experiment with him. Everything seemed perfectly realistic, but suddenly I realized that something was wrong with my bedroom; its shape was not quite right. I said to myself that I was dreaming. Excited, I tried to switch on the light, but it would not work. That was the proof that I was really dreaming. I carefully examined several objects and then I awoke.'

Lucid Dreaming with the Aid of Dream Devices

Scientists conducting lucid dream research depended on lucid dreamers for their experiments. These subjects were connected to EEG and EOG equipment in sleep laboratories. Unfortunately, a test subject did not become lucid every time, and the process required considerable time, money, and manpower. As a result, researchers began to wonder whether the probability of achieving lucidity could be increased. Thus began the search for a 'dream induction device.' Dr. Stephen LaBerge* recently developed the 'DreamLight', a small mask to be worn on the face before sleeping. Indeed, it makes the wearer look somewhat like Zorro! When the eyes move rapidly at night (scientifically associated with the REM phase, during which dreaming occurs), the mask emits a red light. This light appears in the dream, but it does not automatically induce lucidity; the dreamer must still link it with the critical question: 'Am I dreaming?' In Germany, Dr. Jack Reiss* developed a compact dream induction device. At present, it is unclear how far his machine has progressed beyond the experimental phase. The same applies to acoustic dream induction devices created by his colleagues K. Stich* and H. Kern*. All these devices operate as biofeedback mechanisms: they give a signal to the dreamer during the REM phase, which may help him recognize that he is dreaming. To date, I have not seen any of these devices available on the bedside tables of Dutch consumers. Interested readers are referred to an article by Jack Reiss (1) in the magazine *Bewußt Sein*, which briefly explains the basic principles of his machine.

(1) See: J. Reiss – Entwicklung einer Biofeedback-Technik zur Induktion von Klarträumen*

Patented and fully operational for the consumer is the 'Dream Machine' developed by the Englishman Keith Hearne (1). As early as 1978 he introduced his experimental version, which later resulted in a very compact model about the size of an amplifier. The device received enormous publicity in England and in the rest of the world, and it astonishes me that I have been unable to find any mention of it in the Dutch media. With this book, at least, that omission is corrected.

By means of an electrode attached to the nose, the Dream Machine registers the dreamer's breathing. It is known that certain breathing patterns occur during the REM phase, in which dreams take place. When the dreamer enters this phase, the Dream Machine delivers weak electrical impulses through an electrode attached to the arm, enabling the dreamer to realize that he is dreaming.

The machine is fully adjustable to the individual user and includes, for example, a 'nightmare mode', so that the dreamer is awakened whenever signs of fear are detected. According to Hearne, people who suffer from nightmares can be treated in this way. I wonder whether it would not be more sensible to explain to such a person the principles of the dialogue method for dealing with hostile dream figures instead of having him awakened by the machine (see Chapter 5). By accident it was discovered that the Dream Machine can play an important role for people who suffer from severe asthma. This group often experiences its most serious attacks during the night. Because the machine awakens the person concerned before the crisis develops, he or she can ward off the attack by using an inhaler. It will be obvious that, when used in this way, the device can function as a source of reassurance for both the person involved and those close to him or her. Many asthma patients are terrified of going to sleep, and the psychological burden on both themselves and their families is considerable. When the Dream Machine is connected to a telephone or computer, it becomes possible to transmit signals directly to the outside world, for example to a doctor or partner. One only has to breathe in and out several times in a particular way to activate the alarm system. This is an option that may provide peace of mind for people who suffer from catalepsy.

(1) See: S. Venus – Early results with Hearne's dream machine*
& K. Hearne – The dreammachine*

More applications for the Dream Machine will probably be discovered, and I foresee that, in the near future, the electrodes that currently have to be attached to the body will disappear. In his book, Hearne outlines the possibility that lucid dreamers may also benefit greatly from this means of communication. He wonders what might happen if you became lucid and were able to communicate this fact during your dream to someone else, who then also became lucid, allowing both of you to be lucid together. In contrast to other dream researchers involved with 'dream induction devices', Hearne claims highly favourable results. Seven out of ten people who had never even heard of lucid dreaming reportedly experienced their first lucid dream during the very first night after being connected to the Dream Machine.

As you have learned from this book I had achieved it through my own efforts. I wonder what the psychological implications might be for someone who induces lucid dreams by means of such dream devices. And ... what are the long-term effects? What do the dream figures think of it? Moreover, the challenge is not merely to become lucid, but also to function effectively within the dream world. *To be clear: Lucid dreams can enhance both psychological and physical well-being, but misuse may produce the opposite effect.* I guess it is not without reason that the dream-induction techniques of the Tibetan yogis were reserved for advanced students; initiates who entered the lucid dream world with a particular mental attitude. There is a danger that people without such a mental attitude, and without sufficient background knowledge, may enter the dream state and encounter emotional experiences that are inadequately or insufficiently integrated. Traumatic experiences that negatively affect waking life may be the result. There is also the danger of addiction if lucid dreams become easy to induce with the aid of such devices. Cases are known of people who remained in bed for days because they longed to continue lucid dreaming. These people were not even using dream-induction devices! Prof. Tholey and others claim that lucid dreams contain a certain self-regulating capacity. Does this, however, also apply to lucid dreams that are induced by machines? So, I would advise you to be cautious. Nevertheless, for the sake of completeness I have included the existence of such dream devices in this book. By the way, until now I have not seen Hearne's Dream Machine in the Netherlands, so I request that you do not address me with the question of where it is available.

Prof. Tholey and others assert that lucid dreams possess a self-regulating mechanism. But does this also apply to lucid dreams induced with the aid of devices? In short, caution is certainly warranted. Nevertheless, for the sake of completeness, I felt it important to mention the existence of these devices. As far as I know, Hearne's Dream Machine has not yet been imported into the Netherlands, so I advise readers not to contact me asking where it can be obtained.

In any case, dream research using the aforementioned biofeedback equipment has entered an entirely new phase. The last ten years have produced more progress than all previous decades combined. Using the newly developed equipment, dream researchers can test introspective theories of dreams. It has already been established that dream content is constrained and determined, among other factors, by neurophysiological principles. As a result, the validity of certain psychological explanatory models is now under discussion. While it is beyond the scope of this book to go into detail, it is certainly an exciting time for dream researchers.

With the introduction of the above-mentioned biofeedback devices, dream research has entered a new phase. In any case, the past ten years have produced more results than all previous years together. Dream researchers have been given the opportunity to test certain dream theories introspectively with the aid of such devices. It has already been established that dream content is limited by, among other things, neurophysiological principles. It is beyond the scope of this book to discuss this matter in detail. For dream researchers, it is an exciting time.

Tests - Am I Dreaming or Am I Awake?

I have already mentioned the phenomenon of the 'false awakening'. Mr. Franz Maissan, who produced a doctoral thesis* on lucid dreams in 1985, wrote the following:

'I awoke and saw that it was 08:30. I was too late, and lifted myself to go to the kitchen, and ... I awoke again. I looked at my alarm clock and noticed it was 08:36, so I concluded that I was truly awake. I got out of bed again, but remembered that I had set the alarm for 07:00, so it was supposed to ring then. I awoke again, but this time the clock showed 04:00, and my awakening proved to be real.'

To determine whether you are truly awake, there are some tests that can help. For 'false awakenings', there is a simple method: turn on the light switch. If no light appears, you are *probably* dreaming. During a (lucid) dream, you can test gravity, because in the lucid dream state it does not behave normally. Jump into the air: if you notice that you can jump very high, you know you are dreaming.

Another test involves rotating your body 180 degrees; in a lucid dream, you continue spinning. I must, however, add that the dream can fool you, so these tests are not foolproof. I remember meeting a psychologist and suddenly feeling as if I were dreaming. I was not entirely convinced. I jumped into the air, but felt gravity. My host asked what I was doing, and I mumbled something silly to save my 'honor', and fell back into normal dream images, convinced that I was not dreaming.

It will be obvious that you cannot safely jump or spin whenever you like, especially in a vulnerable position. In such cases, a mental test seems more appropriate. Ask yourself what you did a few minutes ago. Inconsequential details may appear, revealing that you are dreaming. Another method is to close your eyes; if new images appear, you are dreaming. By the way, this is an excellent technique for changing the dream scenery into a desired one. Some researchers claim that you must be able to read the same words again when rereading them. If you cannot, you are dreaming. In my experience, however, this test is very weak.

Dream researcher Charles McCreery* wrote that you can assume you are dreaming if you are not sure whether you are dreaming or awake. Although this remark may be true in a theoretical sense, it has little practical value in the lucid dream state. In a lucid dream, the same psychological mechanisms that protect us from performing dangerous actions exist as in waking life. Practically nobody would jump from a skyscraper with the intention of flying—an activity that is marvelous in dreams. In short, basic instincts are transferred to the dream state. Therefore, you must verify the character of your awareness and the nature of your state.

Prolongation of the Lucid Dream State

I described the technique for stopping a lucid dream by focusing your gaze on a single point. I suspect most readers are more interested in techniques for prolonging their lucid dreams. There are two methods, which do not always work:

The first technique involves rapid movement of your dream body. Personally, I drop myself backward whenever I feel that I am about to exit a lucid dream. Any rapid movement of your dream body is acceptable.

The second method involves rapid movement of your dream eyes. Personally, I focus on one hand and let my gaze wander to the other. It is possible that you will be carried to another dream scene by some 'wind'. Inexperienced lucid dreamers are usually frightened by this.

Meditation

Scott Sparrow*, an American psychotherapist who described his experiences with lucid dreaming, was the first to write about the connection between meditation and lucid dreaming. He reported that he could expect a lucid dream after deep meditation. Research by Prof. Dr. J. Gackenbach* and others (1) confirmed the positive correlation between meditation and lucid dreams. Some researchers claim that lucid dreams are a form of meditation. I must, however, remark that these scientists are Transcendental Meditation practitioners, and their wishes could have influenced their conclusions.

Nevertheless, the topic goes beyond the scope of this book. Meditation is not a strict requirement for lucid dreaming. If you practice the induction techniques described in this book, you will eventually have lucid dreams.

(1) See: H. Reed*; H. Hunt* and C. Alexander*

Warning About Smoking in Bed

From this chair, I want to warn you about smoking in bed. Smoking is dangerous anyway, but doing so in bed while occupying yourself with dreaming is even more risky.

One night I awoke and wrote down my dream. Afterwards, I lit a cigarette and switched off my flashlight. I felt myself slowly drifting away and extinguished my cigarette, placing it in the ashtray beside my bed.

Some time later I awoke again and discovered that a great part of the above had been dreamed. Instead of lying in the ashtray, the cigarette had been placed beside my pillow and had burned a large hole in my duvet. It could have been much worse. So let my experience not become yours...

Chapter 5 – Practical Applications

Chapter 3 mentions the characteristic features of the lucid dream, and I showed that these elements are not always fulfilled. Especially when you are starting your dream work, you will notice this. Lucid dreaming is a learning process. Although the first lucid dreams differ from person to person, there are, however, some common elements. Generally, they don't last long, and there is not much 'structure' in the storyline. The images can be clear, but it often happens that you know you are dreaming; however, this consciousness is (somehow) 'clouded'.

Starting dreamers are often completely absorbed by the 'realness' of the lucid dream world. In this world, however, a delicate balance between 'creating' and 'participating' exists. The loss of lucidity often finds its grounds in too much emotional involvement. One aspect you must pay attention to is the fact of not focusing your gaze too long at one point, because doing so can make you awaken from your lucid dream prematurely. The dream world is a mental one in which thoughts and expectations determine, to a great deal, its content. By means of that mechanism, you get the opportunity to transform fantasies into dream reality: a good talk with Albert Einstein or Marilyn Monroe, the exploration of faraway solar systems, motocross riding in Africa? The choice is yours.

You could create a dream scenery by transforming the existing one before your very eyes. It is, however, possible to close your eyes in the dream and concentrate on the desired surroundings. You could say to yourself: 'I step through that door, and behind it I will find my fantasy.' I must add that there is a great possibility that elements are added to your fantasy that you did not 'order'.

After having experienced several lucid dreams, and having recognized the illusory character of the dream world, starting dreamers often head toward seeking pleasure or acting out. By the way, this aspect is not exclusive to starting dreamers. I still like to use my lucid dreams for fun. Recently, after seeing the movie Batman, I entered that dream scenery to create, in my view, a better ending to it. Let's review some lucid dreams in which fun was the leading element.

(1) See: F. Maissan - Lucide Dromen

I am a passenger in a bus, and because some young women to the left of me are washing themselves in a tub, I realize that this must be a dream; instantly I become fully lucid. I let the bus move on and examine the architecture of the buildings outside; futuristic. I decide that the bus must at least drive for one hour to the next station, because I don't want to bypass anything of those washing girls. Not being able to decide on the next step, I change the bus into an old-fashioned train and the dream scenery into a jungle. I judge the jungle as too close, and I transform it into a dune landscape. Native Indians appear, and I wish to dissolve them, because I did not order them. To increase the adventure, I decide they must attack. However, it gets too exciting, and I flee into the train and change the door so that they can't get in. By a toilet and shower, I arrive at the train's locomotive. I transform it into a super modern one and I let reappear the young woman whom I had completely forgotten. I change the dream scenery into some space land and the locomotive into a spaceship. With her I fly to a flower planet with the intention of making love to her. Somehow I enter too deeply into the events and lose my lucidity. By an attack of some meat-eating plant, I wake up.

Probably it would not surprise you that looking for sexual adventures is high-ranked. Sex in the dream world is a pleasant affair indeed. It does not, however, always work out as you planned. Evidence you will find in the next dream, quoted by Prof. Tholey (1):

In his lucid dream, a man tries to take off his underpants with the intention of having sex with some young woman. Each time he thinks he is naked, he discovers another pair of underpants in a different color...

A German student visited a land of marihuana:

'When I arrive in a very large marihuana field, I gather some leaves from the plants and make a fine joint. I notice gliding back into some 'dizzy' awareness. The Jamaicans seem to move away from me and out of my picture. I start getting interested in the plants that surround me. I inspect them thoroughly, because their colors, with all kinds of nuances of green, fascinate me deeply. I ramble a while through the field and discover details, which I examine thoroughly.

(1) P. Tholey & K. Utecht –Schopferische Traume*

Besides that, all kinds of thoughts about the size of this field come to mind, and still I can remember the slightest details. Generally, my experience resembles my experiences in waking life with marijuana, but everything seems more intense, catchier, and 'dreamy'.

The following dream clearly illustrates how the dreamer refused to let anything spoil his fun (1):

'I wanted to go find a dream girlfriend. At that very moment, my mother, whom I hadn't noticed at first, stood in my way with an angry look on her face. I simply asked if she could help me find a dream girlfriend. Now she got really angry. She said I was only interested in having fun and scolded me terribly. When I didn't seem very impressed by that, she transformed herself into a witch who wanted to grab me with her claw-like hands. I, however, grabbed her by the hair and hurled her in a wide arc into the nearby thicket. There she turned into a predatory monster, which pounced on me with lightning speed. In response to that attack, I struck the beast with all my might. It shrank, lost its menacing nature, and finally crawled back into the bushes. A feeling of triumph took hold of me.'

Patricia Garfield's dream (2) proves that flying provides lucid dreamers with much pleasure. For a good understanding, you must know that she stays in this lucid dream in her living room.

'...I take off with my feet against the floor, like at the bottom of a swimming pool, and float into the air. It is a marvellous feeling. Higher and higher I go. I am a little afraid and very excited. I feel all kinesthetic bodily responses, as if it is really happening. Still I am floating upwards. I raise my hands above my head and start pushing with my fingertips against the ceiling. I clearly perceive the white ceiling and the fitting of the lamp. I repeat it several times. It is an amazing experience...'

(1) P. Tholey & K. Utecht –Schopferische Traume*

(2) P. Garfield – Creative Dreaming

In a lucid dream, complex tasks are feasible. While watching television, the experienced lucid dreamer and scientist Alan Worsley (1) instructs the television to display certain images. His experiments resulted in projected dream images on a film screen, as if they were takes for a movie. You don't need much imagination to see how a director could 'shoot' his movie in his lucid dream and, by watching the results, decide how the shots must be taken in real life.

An American writer told me that, in his lucid dreams, his dream girlfriend provides him with complete plots for his scripts. He includes these remarks in his scenario and tests them by letting dream figures act out the scenes. So he can evaluate the fulfilment of his intentions. According to him, it is usually an improvement.

I would advise you to keep your adventures simple initially. In the above-quoted dreams, you saw how unordered elements were introduced into the dream fantasy. Learning to deal with your dreams is now more important than complicated forms of dream control.

For example, Mr. Franz Maissan created his scenery, became afraid, and lost his lucidity because he became too involved in his own dream images. The dreamer longing for sex was not 'satisfied' at all, and the last dreamer met an aggressive mother instead of a pleasant young woman. In short, pleasure can at first be spoiled by the loss of lucidity, or worse, pleasure may turn into fear because you might arrive in a terrifying scenery.

For the above reasons, you must learn to deal with dream situations and dream figures. We shall consider them now. There are two scenarios: first, the encounter with a friendly dream figure, and second, the meeting with a hostile one. I say 'figures', but you can apply this to 'situations' too, e.g., a threatening sea.

(1) Alan Worsley, *Personal Experiences in Lucid Dreaming*. In: J. Gackenbach & S. LaBerge (eds.), *Conscious Mind, Sleeping Brain*.

Scenario for Meeting a Friendly Dream Figure

1. Ask the following questions or make the following proposals according to the course of the conversation: 'Who are you?', 'What are you?', 'Who am I?', 'What do you want from me?', 'What does that mean?', 'Can you help me?', 'Can I help you?' Concrete personal questions are possible and often even necessary for gaining insight into the dream figure.
2. Stay in the conversation as long as necessary until it is completely clear what the meaning of the dream figure is for you. Some figures at first seem uninterested or even reluctant to speak. Keep steady in your intentions.
3. Ask the dream figure for help in the future.
4. Ask for a gift.
5. Make an appointment with the dream figure for the next dream.

Scenario for Meeting a Hostile Dream Figure

1. DON'T RUN AWAY. Keep steady and ask, in a friendly manner, these questions/proposals:
 'Who are you?', 'What are you?', 'Who am I?', 'Can't we agree with each other?'
2. If the latter succeeds, let yourself be helped by continuing with the 'Scenario for Meeting a Friendly Dream Figure'.
3. If an agreement is not possible, don't let yourself become involved in using abusive language; start an open exchange.
4. Respond to justified claims, but ignore insults and threats.
5. If any agreement is out of the question, don't pay any attention anymore. If the person/situation starts threatening you, show by your body position that you are prepared to fight. Call for the help of your dream friends.
6. If there is a fight, continue until the person/situation is weakened, has fled, or is killed.

The next dream indicates how waking life can be influenced positively (1).

A 28-year-old female student complained of recurrent nightmares. A few days after the lucid dream technique had been explained to her, she had the following dream:

'She found herself in the house she had lived in as a child and was expecting a group of people who intended to do something harmful to her. She remembered that this situation often occurred in her dreams, so she became lucid. Despite the fact that she was struck with fear and wanted to flee, she overcame this fear and courageously stood her ground. People in long robes approached. She looked at the first figure, a gigantic man with a cold, blue face and glowing eyes, and asked him, 'What are you doing here? What do you want from me?' The man looked at her sadly. His expression became helpless as he said, 'Why? You called us. You need us for your anxiety.' Then the man shrank to normal size. His face became normal and his eyes stopped glowing.'

You will have noticed that this young woman did not interpret her dream. Nevertheless, her actions worked effectively. According to Dr. Stephen LaBerge, it is not necessary to discover the meaning of the images in order to achieve positive effects.

The next dream, which occurred shortly after Elvis Presley's death, showed the dreamer, a 41-year-old teacher who consumed alcohol and drugs, exactly the meaning of his dream (1):

While being in a lucid state, he met Elvis, who seemed to be completely high and drunk. He asked Elvis, 'Who are you?', whereupon Elvis answered, 'I belong to you, and you will soon be with me.' He offered the dreamer a bottle of whiskey, which he refused. Elvis transformed into a monster, which approached him threateningly. The teacher defended himself by stabbing at the monster with a knife, but it had no effect. Laughing cynically, the monster said: 'No one can conquer me! I will destroy anyone who comes near me!' Thereupon, the dreamer fled to the protection of some dream friends, where the monster could do him no harm.

(1) See: P. Tholey - Model for Lucidity Training.

In: J. Gackenbach & S. LaBerge (eds.): Conscious Mind, Sleeping Brain*

The teacher was so terrified by the personalized form of his drinking problem that he decided to enroll in a clinic to free himself from alcohol.

From the literature, I know that there are drug addicts who learn to dream lucidly with the aim of using the lucid dream state for taking their daily quantum of dope in it. By doing this, they try to limit the increase of drug use in waking life. Not much research has been done on this subject, but it is already known that being high, evoked by taking drugs in lucid dreams, is more intense than taking the substance in waking life (1). Personally, I don't really understand how a human being can become lucid after taking drugs. In the past, after taking hashish, I could hardly remember my normal dreams! By the way, now I know that taking drugs is, in most cases, an attempt to fill the emptiness, the hole, within yourself. Prof. Tholey handed me a manuscript in which I could read what happened to him when he did not apply the 'Scenario for Meeting a Hostile Dream Figure' (2).

'In a closed room I knocked down some dream figure for the mere reason of finding out whether I would be punished. I was suddenly gripped by the feeling that I would be confronted with something unpleasant, as had happened on previous occasions. Tense, but calm, I waited, but nothing happened. Triumphantly I wanted to leave the room. However, in front of the door there was a frightening person with a cap on his head, and immediately he moved toward me and filled me with terror.'

I must add that in lucid dreams expectations play an important role. Prof. Tholey expected to be punished and it is for that reason not surprising that he induced a threatening figure. This effect happens often.

(1) See: M. Roos – Vergleichsstudie zwischen Klarträumerfahrungen und Erlebnissen unter dem Einfluß psychedelischer Drogen*

(2) P. Tholey – Overview of the Development of Lucid Dream Research in Germany. Not published manuscript.

For example, I had found out that it was possible to float through walls. However, in one of my lucid dreams I started doubting, and immediately my attempt did not succeed!

Whenever you read about the experiments of other lucid dreamers, you must bear in mind that you are indoctrinated to some extent. So, what works out fine for somebody else does not necessarily apply to you, and vice versa, of course.

With the 'Scenarios' in the back of our minds, I wish to return to the pleasure dreams that I described at the beginning of this chapter.

Regarding Mr. Maissan's dream, we notice a sexual undertone. At the end of his dream he was attacked by some *meat-eating* plant. Unfortunately, he had lost his lucidity, because otherwise he might have been able to find out the meaning of his dream symbol by asking questions. By doing this, his dream might have been changed into a dream of knowledge. The dreamer in search of sexual entertainment had the chance to interview his underpants. The dreamer with an aggressive mother figure seemed to have acted effectively. True, he did not ask questions, but within that framework it seems out of the question. After he had awakened from his dream, he identified the mother-witch-predator as a symbol of his sexuality, and he developed a more harmonious attitude toward this subject.

So, there is a possibility that you will not always gain direct insight during dreaming, but that the significance of a dream symbol may strike you later in waking life.

If you are moving along the path of reconciliation with dream figures, you will notice the gradual changing of your (lucid) dreams. Dream friends will appear spontaneously. In this respect, lucid dreaming seems like computer games. You must solve the first stage before entering the next level. Although this comparison is not completely accurate, because with a computer game you can cheat. With your dreams, however, it won't work. Everyone has one or more Helpers. It is possible to keep in touch with them by suggesting to yourself before sleeping that you will meet him or her. If you succeed, don't forget to make an appointment for the next time. Helpers can provide you with valuable information. In many cases there is much light around the Helper.

This Helper correlates with the dreamer's spiritual convictions; thus, the person might be a priest, monk, guru, Death, or a psychotherapist. Jack Reis* gives us some examples in his doctoral thesis:

'I dreamed I had to break my way through some grey, slimy mass. I did not know what it was. Anyway, it was not a pleasant experience. Somehow I managed to get along. Suddenly I saw a person in the middle of that slimy mass. I noticed it was Dr. Spock, the scientist from the Enterprise. He told me: 'Don't worry, you are dreaming!' I did not believe it and asked him what it was I was breaking through. He answered that I was wandering through my own mind. Still I did not believe him, but he seemed so much wiser than myself. He announced that he was about to jump into the air and, by remaining suspended there, I would see that we were part of a dream. Only after performing that action did I become convinced that I was in a dream. I told him that it had not occurred to me that I was dreaming. He replied that he knew that and that this was the reason he was here. He claimed to know so much more than I did, and that was fine. He discussed some matters with me and showed me things I did not want to believe immediately. I think it is fantastic to meet somebody in a dream who knows more than I do.'

Usually it is you who becomes lucid, and often you have to convince other persons that they are in a dream. In the above dream, it was the opposite. Dream figures are 'real-like'. They talk logically, have feelings, and show remarkable cognitive characteristics, such as mathematical and drawing capabilities. The question arises as to how far they possess a consciousness of their own. Within this context, the next fragment is interesting (1). *The dreamer finds himself in a restaurant. When he wants to pay, the waiter adds angrily: 'Don't you see this is an invalid coin?' I thought: 'Well, the dream has succeeded again in putting an obstacle in my way. Because everything is derived from my own mind, I must be creating this blockage myself.' During this reflection, I notice the waiter smiling arrogantly and I tell him that I will leave without paying, because everything is just a dream. The waiter answers: 'I knew that all the time.'*

(1) See: P. Tholey – Consciousness and Abilities of Dream Characters Observed During Lucid Dreaming

I wish to emphasize that these dream figures seem to possess a consciousness of their own, but that it does not exist independently of the dreamer's existence, as esoteric people believe. All dream elements derive from the dreamer's mind and represent parts of his personality.

You could notice that Frederik van Eeden did not benefit very much from his lucid dreams because of the assumption that 'demons' had their own objective existence. It has already been established that dream figures regard the dream scenery from their own perspective (1). They have access to domains of knowledge of which the dreamer knows nothing, and they can evoke the dreamer's memory. By doing so, they can remind you of events you have forgotten ever happened. Dream figures can be creative, act independently, and think independently. Regarding the former, questions have been raised about ethical implications (2). A dreamer, for example, beat a dream figure. You could say that this may have had a liberating effect.

When the same dream figure appeared in another dream and the dreamer requested it to come closer, this dream figure reacted very shyly. You could say that dream figures are 'learning' from previous encounters. Sometimes those dream figures outmanoeuvre you through this learning process. There are reports that dreamers wanted to pin their dream figures down with their gaze. The dream figure evaded that look by strenuous eye movements, by putting on a hat, or by switching off the light. If you had already pinned down such a dream figure in a previous dream, chances are great that he will appear already wearing a hat in your next dream! Personally, I cannot report such behavior. On the occasions when I wished my dream figure to remain at a particular spot, I 'froze' him or her with a movement of my hand. Anyway, this technique, which I discovered spontaneously in my first lucid dream (see Chapter 2), is independent of the evasive behavior of dream figures. From a practical point of view, I advise you to take them seriously and regard them as completely independent beings with a consciousness of their own.

(1) See: P. Tholey - Consciousness and Abilities of Dream Characters Observed During Lucid Dreaming

(2) See: A. Worsley - Lucid Dreaming: Ethical Issues and J. Dane & E. Craig

In the previous chapter you could read about a dream-induction device constructed by the German Jack Reis. They use this machine to enable dream figures to signal to the waking world, making direct communication possible. I emphasize that this can be done as long as the dreamer is dreaming and the dream figures 'exist'. Maybe it sounds a little like science fiction, but it is not!

Prof. Tholey's research group had not yet finished the experiments, and we have to wait for future publications about them. Anyway, it gives you an impression of how exciting research can be.

Taking Possession of a Dream Body

A technique that makes it possible to experience the intentions, feelings, and thoughts of dream figures derives from Prof. Tholey's research into the consciousness of dream characters. This method is not very suitable for beginning lucid dreamers, because it demands experience in dreaming. The results, however, are more effective than the described 'Scenario', which is mainly based on conversation. The developed method consists of leaving your dream body and entering another one.

Let's look at the following example, in which a young woman had fallen in love and was now asking herself before going to sleep why the boy was so distant from her (1): At first the young woman was disappointed by the fact that 'it would not work out between them' At first the young woman was disappointed by the fact that 'it would not work out between them'

'Immediately I knew I was dreaming. I asked myself why he did not react to my feelings and wanted to have an answer in my dream. I became aware of my mind, which is to say that part of me that I consider to be 'me'. It disconnected from my dream body and floated toward his body. In this formless condition I was capable of using all my senses to orient myself, which is to say seeing, hearing, feeling, etc. I noticed it still standing there, making ridiculous movements and talking. You would not have said that 'I' was no longer in it. I drifted toward the boy and entered his body. By doing this, I had the impression of taking over all his bodily and motor skills... I saw through his eyes and he was engaged in some activity.

(1) See: P. Tholey - Consciousness and Abilities of Dream Characters Observed During Lucid Dreaming

I was also aware of his mind, his consciousness. I saw him thinking, without exactly remembering how this mechanism worked. I saw how he perceived me, what kind of effect I had on him, and the feelings he had for me. On noticing his thoughts and seeing myself through his eyes, I understood why he was so reserved toward me, and I realized he would never live up to my feelings.

She dropped her exaggerated expectations, and the boy felt this. I awoke. Later, she was glad that she now knew how the cards lay. She dropped her exaggerated expectations, and the boy felt this. The tension between them disappeared and their friendship deepened.

Whenever you wish to enter a dream body, it is effective to look directly at the dream character. You are transported by the line of your gaze to the dream figure. It is possible to have your consciousness in various dream figures at the same time.

The German psychotherapist Mr. Norbert Sattler, who uses this technique as part of his treatment, discovered that when a part of the dream body is cut off, consciousness is transferred as well.

You will notice that the description of the lucid dream as 'being conscious in your dream' does not completely cover it. Research, however, is still in its early stages. Who knows what exciting things we will discover in the future.

(Lucid) dreaming means that you are stimulated to change your behavior in waking life. Humans are, however, inclined to stick to their often rusted thoughts and habits. For that reason, you must take into account that you will meet resistance both in waking life and in your dreams. For example, lucidity decreases; you start minimizing the importance of your dreams; or you start using drugs again. In fact, everything is possible when it comes to evading the consequences of the inner journey. In your dreams, this resistance might appear in personalized forms. I call them the 'Threateners'. In esoteric literature you will often find descriptions of these 'Guardians'. For example, Carlos Castaneda's books contain blood-stirring stories. In one of my lucid dreams I met a frightening figure. He guarded a room I wanted to enter.

He yelled at me that until then nobody had succeeded in passing him alive and that, in the event that I would, which he doubted very much, I would linger forever in some inferno. I let myself be intimidated and left. Immediately I could forget my lucid dreams and, worse, upon waking up I could not even remember my ordinary dreams! After some time I used my dialogue method with a tape (see Chapter 1).

That same night I experienced a lucid dream and found the same figure on my way. This time I did not let myself be scared off and entered the room. This room turned out to be a true dream of Knowledge. After it, it was as if I had entered another level.

Regarding resistance, it can be useful to contact an experienced lucid dreamer who can help you as a teacher. Unfortunately, experienced lucid dreamers are few. An alternative might be to join a dream group.

The option of tapping your dreams for creative aspects is described in many books on dreams.

Charles Dickens, Charlotte Brontë, and R. L. Stevenson, to mention some, said that their dreams supplied them with the plots of their stories. Repeatedly you can read the claims that Tartini heard his 'Devil's Sonata' in a dream and that Kekulé discovered the formula for benzol in a dream. Dr. J. H. Wotiz suggested in The New York Times of August 1988 that Kekulé made up his dream to avoid being forced to share his discovery with foreign researchers. I remember hearing in my dream some march, which was attributed to a composition by Lenin. I am not a musician, so in waking life I did not work it out in musical notation.

Patricia Garfield (1) describes how she was stimulated by her publisher to find a catchy title for her latest book. In her dream, a woman says that 'Your Child's Dreams' is suitable. After awakening, it did not entirely fulfil Garfield's expectations. The publisher becomes restless and proposes 'Children's Dreams'. Then Garfield makes a list of possible titles and reads it to her publisher. At 'Your Child's Dreams' he yells: 'This one is perfect. Every title with 'Your' in it sells well.'

(1) See: P. Garfield - Creative Lucid Dreams. In: J. Gackenbach & S. LaBerge (eds.): Conscious Mind, Sleeping Brain

So, you may guess which title was chosen.

Dr. Stephen LaBerge relates (1) how he sometimes projects a blank painting in his lucid dreams. Then he asks his creativity to fill it with images.

Artist F. Bogzaran* described how she was supplied in her lucid dreams with basic elements for her paintings. By the next dream, there was a profound change in her style of working (1):

'I stand by the door in a gallery, staring at a painting on the wall. It is my painting.... As I step forward to look at the detail of my work, I become aware that I am dreaming..... The painting, approximately six by seven feet in size, displays an image of a wall destroyed in the middle, but with the four corners still intact. An imprint of a triangle and circle is inside it. Inside the circle, a figure of a nude man and woman stands.'

Probably you will have noticed that Bogzaran perceived the painting before becoming lucid.

Another artist, S. E. Brewer, had been commissioned to design a stained-glass window (1). Some days later she was lying in bed and got an idea about the design. She got out of bed and made some sketches. However, she struggled with a specific detail. She suggested to herself that she would find a solution in her dreams, and it happened. After awakening, she sketched the design she had dreamed about again, and when it was completely finished she presented it to her client, who was nearly speechless, saying only, 'I usually don't like anything the first time, but this is perfect.' Garfield (2) relates how she was hired by an advertising agency to help executives in 'dreaming up' a new product name. According to her, it was very successful. I think that the lucid dream offers possibilities to many enterprises.

I was considering how to cope with the work resulting from my increasing contacts. In a lucid dream I called for my business counsellor and presented him with my problem. According to him, computerizing was the solution.

(1) See: J. Gackenbach & J. Bosveld - Control Your Dreams

(2) See: P. Garfield - Creative Lucid Dreams. In: J. Gackenbach & S. LaBerge (eds.): Conscious Mind, Sleeping Brain

At my question of what kind of machine I should buy, also considering the financial aspects, he looked at me disdainfully. Without speaking a word, he entered an amusement hall. I followed him. I saw a Commodore 64 and noticed how you could do word processing and database work on it. The next day I made inquiries here and there in waking life, because my knowledge of computers was absolutely zero. It appeared that the Commodore 64 was mainly famous for its game capabilities, but eventually it turned out that business applications had been designed for this machine. Many computer users, however, were in those days infected by the 'new, newer, newest' virus of advertising slogans and had bought a 'real' (DOS) computer, and one of them sold me his old Commodore 64 for practically nothing. I worked on it with pleasure, and the manuscript of this book was written on it. Some time after I had started working with my machine, I experienced problems saving data. Whatever I tried, complete pages on which I had worked disappeared like snow in the sun. In an (ordinary) dream, the young man who had sold me the device appeared and informed me that I had to close files before I could save them. I reread the manual and, indeed, when working in 'direct mode' you had to close your files first. The problem was solved.

American Bob Rosengren, who had problems with an electronic circuit, relates something similar (1). *'I was working on a very tight timeline before the exhibit opened last December 26, and ran into a problem with a circuit design. I could not solve it, and time was running out. About a week before the opening day, I had a lucid dream in which I was in my small town, in a waterfront restaurant with my dream associates. I told them my predicament, as they saw I was upset. They told me to just 'slow things down', and made some references to certain things not being ready at the same time other things were. None of that made much sense to me, but the words kept popping into my head that morning at work. On a hunch, I decided to search through the data books on a couple of the integrated circuits I was working on, and suddenly realized that in my design I had neglected to allow for a twenty-two nanosecond 'setup time'. After including a small delay, my circuit design worked perfectly.'*

(1) See: J. Gackenbach & J. Bosveld – Control Your Dreams*

I don't know what a nanosecond 'setup time' is, but the more technically minded among you will probably understand the purpose of such a device.

Paul Tholey (1) writes about a man who has an important appointment with a government institution. The person in question has until now not displayed much perseverance, as a result of which his life has not been very successful. The man shrinks from his task. In a lucid dream he arrives in a government building. A woman gives him a paper on which is written: 'Act bold as brass'. The man did not follow this advice literally, but, full of self-confidence, he went to the meeting and it turned out positively.

I could completely fill this book with similar reports. A skeptic could say that all those reports are fake. Indeed, direct control is not possible. But why would thousands of people, disconnected from each other in time and place, make it all up...? I can appreciate, however, a critical attitude and consider it even desirable. Further scientific research must show what value the lucid dream has for problem solving.

Doctors use the placebo principle with their patients, and hypnosis is based on the same effect. Experiments by, among others, Dr. Stephen LaBerge indicate the physiological reaction to dream images. Questions are raised as to how far lucid dreaming, through a mental regroupment, can evoke bodily healing. That question is an important one, because it has become obvious that the same process proves to be effective in psychological healing processes. I remember hearing some time ago on the radio the story of a young man who was hospitalized with AIDS: *'I repeatedly dream that I am lying on the ward. My fellow patients have disappeared. Then the beds return, but they are all completely empty.'* I could not get rid of the impression that the boy had already abandoned his struggle for life, and I had to think of articles by Mr. Brylowski*. This scientist investigated the influence of lucid dreaming on immunocompetence. 'What would have happened if this boy had been dreaming lucidly and had changed his negative images into positive ones?' I wondered. Still, I ask myself whether the process of his illness could not have been delayed.

(1) See: P. Tholey & K. Utecht – Schöpferische Träume*

I wish, however, not to evoke false expectations. rue, I got rid of my headaches by positive mental images (see Chapters 1 and 2), but it did not work very well with my thyroid disease. Prof. Jayne Gackenbach (1) and Dr. Stephen LaBerge (2) are truly convinced of the beneficial effects of lucid dreams. Personally, I believe that images can evoke powers that have the potential to work with and support healing processes. Under hypnosis (3), people can control several bodily functions, such as stopping bleeding and suppressing allergic reactions. True, only a small percentage glide into a deep trance state. With lucid dreams you are continually in a mental world. However, I do not want to present the lucid dream as a panacea and emphasize that many medical experiments will be needed to establish the exact influence of the lucid dream on the bodily healing process. Anyway, there is no need to wait, because trying does not harm you. Regularly I regard my dream body in front of a mirror or leave it. Then I imagine that my body is completely healthy. The next two reports give an impression of how other lucid dreamers tried to cure themselves. The first dream is from the lucid dreamer Mr. Carl Paoli (3):

'About a year ago, I sprained my ankle.... It was very swollen, and it was very difficult to walk. In a dream I remember running; for what reason, I don't remember. Suddenly I realized I couldn't possibly be running with this ankle, so I must be dreaming. At this point I began to come out of my dream. The pain in my ankle started to fade in, but then I reached for my ankle with my dream hands, which caused me to tumble in my dream. As I held my ankle, I felt a vibration similar to electricity. Amazed, I decided to throw lightning bolts around in my dream.

(1) See: J. Gackenbach – The potential of lucid dreaming for bodily healing* and J.Gackenbach & J. Bosveld – Control yours dreams*

(2) See: S. LaBerge -Healing through lucid dreams* and Lucid Dreaming*

(3) See: R. Udolf - Handbook of Hypnosis for Professionals. Van Nostrand Reinhold Company Inc., New York; 1981

That's all I remember of my dream, but I awoke with next to no pain in my swollen ankle and was able to walk on it with considerable ease.'

The next dream of a young woman from Texas, who had a pulled muscle in her chest, reminds one of the rituals in the dream temples of Antiquity (1).

I was reading a book one night before going to sleep about an Indian medicine man who had performed a healing ritual.

I turned out the light and began fantasizing about going to Nevada and meeting the medicine man. This moved into a dream in which I saw myself walking into a small desert town and down a road to the medicine man's house. I don't remember much else except that the medicine man kept repeating over and over, 'Believe in me and you will be healed.' I remember thinking that I was dreaming and that it was silly to believe that a medicine man could come to me in a dream, but I decided to go with the flow and relaxed as he kept repeating the sentence. I woke about an hour and a half after I had turned out the light and sat up in bed. I moved my arms and body around. The pain was gone.'

If the above sounds too fantastic to your ears, bear in mind that many psychotherapeutic programs work with images, such as the treatment of a phobia. Such a therapy consists of introducing, in an imaginary condition, step by step, the fear-provoking situation. With lucid dreams the same process is possible, because the dreamer knows he is dreaming and for that reason there is no need for fear. I read somewhere (forgive me, I forget where and I can't find the source) that a woman with an exaggerated fear of insects transported herself in a lucid dream into the body of such an animal. Just like the young woman who entered the body of her love, this woman experienced everything from the insect's perspective. By doing this, she experienced it as a non-threatening situation, and this feeling transferred to waking life, by which her fear completely disappeared. I encourage therapists to examine this possibility. Research announced that she was conducting research on the healing function of the lucid dream. A publication on the subject will appear in the future.

(1) See: C. A. Meier - Antike Inkubation und moderne Psychotherapie

Let's take a look at how another author, namely Maissan (1), has described the meaning of lucid dreaming.

The Meaning of Lucid Dreaming

1. Assimilation of Fear.

The lucid dreamer knows that everything in his dream is at a mental level, and by this knowledge he can control his fear.

2. Gratification of Impulses.

The lucid dream offers the possibility of fulfilling every wish or impulse, because the dreamer is more or less capable of controlling the dream's content.

3. Catharsis.

Unaccepted impulses can be acted out in the dream with the justification that it is 'only a dream'.

4. Synthesis.

Lucidity can increase the psychosynthetic functions through the acceptance and integration of formerly rejected aspects of the dreamer's personality.

5. Mastery.

The self-confidence that lucidity can produce is positively influenced because the lucid dreamer gets the feeling of being able to influence his life and not being a mere plaything of life.

6. Repetition.

Lucid dreams offer the possibility of repeating certain conditions or situations and thus examining alternatives in the quasi-reality of the dream, by which a motivated choice becomes possible.

(1) See: F. Maissan – Lucide Dromen*

7. Educational.

Dreams are part of cultural values. By directing dreams, we stimulate creative processes by, for example, asking for a solution to a problem, or for a poem or dance, and by doing this, making a contribution to the educational process of the individual and the community.

It seems that the use of the lucid dream as a simulator offers great potential. My mind wanders to the preparation of an interview, testing a role in a film or play, the improvement of active control of a foreign language, etc., etc.

Prof. Dr. Paul Tholey already researched the influence of sports practice in lucid dreams. The results are amazing. Because you can evoke a quasi-reality in a lucid dream, you get the opportunity to train yourself and to test alternative movements without fear of injuries, losing face, or wasting time and money. The attitude developed in the lucid dream transfers to waking life. Mr. Tholey reports on the experience of a fighter.

This man had switched from karate to aikido (1):

'That night I had fallen hard on the floor during a dream instead of rolling further in such a situation. During waking life, I had imprinted on myself the habit of asking the critical question during such a situation. Immediately it became obvious! Without much thinking I knew what to do. I went instantly to the school where I started practicing with a dream partner, defending myself against attacks with sticks. Repeatedly I practiced this special technique in a relaxed manner and without forcing anything. Every time it went better and better. The next evening I went to bed full of expectations. This time I also reached the state of lucidity and continued my exercise. The whole week I was able to repeat this process. On Wednesday I went to my real training session.'

(1) See: P. Tholey & K. Utecht – Schöpferische Träume (Edition 1989)

Although I was tense and excited, my teacher was surprised by the high level of my defensive performance. The tempo of the attacks was increased, but I did not make any serious mistakes anymore. From that moment on I learned quickly, and after one year I succeeded in obtaining my instructor's license.'

There are similar reports from football players and skiers. Prof. Tholey, now a man in his fifties, started practicing skateboarding some years ago. He also did it in his lucid dreams. Some time ago, he belonged to the top competitors at the European Championship! Being a Shaolin Kenpo practitioner myself, I can endorse the statement that dream training has positive effects. In a personal communication, Paul Tholey informed me that top athletes approach him to learn the principles of lucid dreaming.

Manual for Sport Practicing in Lucid Dreams

Practice first the movements you already control for the greater part. Keep doing this until you reach a state of perfection.

Switch now to techniques that are new to you or cause you difficulties. Think of the lucid dream of our aikido man. Continue until you perform the movements perfectly.

Create now the playing field/conditions in which you have to deliver your skills, e.g., track, ring, football field, dojo, and start practicing within this scenery.

Test movements that are not possible in waking life because of risks or financial costs to yourself or others.

Drop control sometimes and let yourself 'have an accident'. Experience what it is like to crash off the road with your racing car or to receive a heavy mawashi-geri. By doing this, you learn to respond to rapidly changing situations.

Test aspects that are impossible in waking life. For example, let one dream body do the exercises and let another observe them. In this way you get direct feedback.

In waking life you meet frontiers. In lucid dreams such limits hardly exist. So, strain yourself to your utmost limits and you will see that it will influence your waking life positively.

Split movements into their parts and practice every aspect. You have the possibility of doing this in slow motion, accelerated, or repeated.

Try to become completely fluid in your movements, so that there is no distinction anymore between you and the movement.

Try to crawl into the 'skin' of your car or football. Experience what it is like to be such an object. Listen to the voices of these experiences.

'I was climbing a mountain, and it became harder and harder. My legs were like lead, a familiar feeling which I sometimes experience in my dreams. A strong weakness spread throughout my weakening body. My feelings of fatigue increased mercilessly until I was only able to crawl. Eventually it became too much. I was overwhelmed by the certain feeling that I was on the very edge of death. At this realization of my death, with remarkable clarity I focused my attention on what I wanted to express with a last deed: complete acceptance. While I was happily embracing death, I breathed for the last time, but to my astonishment and joy a rainbow meandered from my heart and I awoke.'

This dream of Dr. Stephen LaBerge (1) impressed him very much, and he writes that it has influenced his belief about what will happen to us when we die ever since. Every experienced lucid dreamer inevitably mentions mystical experiences and encounters with the Light (2). I would like to add a note of caution. (Lucid) dreams can provide highly inspiring experiences and explanations. From such experiences, you may conclude that God exists, that after death you will be united with 'the Light', or whatever else you believe will happen. However, these experiences arise from your own consciousness. What you think and believe shapes the way you experience the world. Your consciousness can create powerful images, insights, convictions, and feelings of certainty. It cannot provide direct knowledge of what lies beyond, because that is a reality you have not experienced yet.

(1) See: S. LaBerge – *Lucid Dreaming**

(2) Patricia Garfield's *Pathway to Ecstasy** and Kenneth Kelzer's *The Sun and the Shadow** provide impressions of the lucid dream as a spiritual path.

For that reason, your consciousness is not capable of telling you what lies beyond death, if anything. A (lucid) dream may inspire a belief, but it cannot prove that belief. It may lead you to faith, hope, or a particular spiritual conviction, and there is nothing wrong with that. Problems only arise when a personal experience is presented as a universal truth. There are enough false prophets. In short, lucid dreams can be spiritually meaningful, but we should be careful not to confuse personal conviction with objective knowledge.

American Mr. George Gillespie describes his experience (1):

'I dreamed that I was in front of my childhood home. I wanted to show some people a high jump. When I jumped high in front of the house, I realized I was dreaming. I was far above the people. I descended. It became a fall. I remembered that I can fall in a dream without fear. I fell, not expecting to land on the ground. I just stopped below. Then I was flying again. I remembered to close my eyes and eliminate the visual environment. I did not remember to do anything more. I remained floating with body awareness. I saw a bright light to my left. I remembered that a bright light does not mean that I am waking up. I was then surrounded by light. I seemed to float in the light and began to contemplate prayerfully what I was doing and what I might see. I called 'Father' spontaneously, meaning God. I remained for some time in this attitude and then woke up.'

You probably remember that Marquis d'Hervey de Saint-Denys was impressed by mystical experiences in his dreams as well. Concerning reports of unification with the Light, there are surprisingly many parallels with writings from the East (2).

Some researchers, such as Dr. Jayne Gackenbach, claim that the lucid dream is only a step toward an expanding consciousness of mankind. I too got the realization of being only a small part of something much bigger. How it operates? I can't explain.

(1) Gillespie, G. – Without a Guru; An Account of My Lucid Dreaming. In: J. Gackenbach & S. LaBerge: Conscious Mind, Sleeping Brain*

(2) See: G. C. Chang*, W. Y. Evans-Wentz*, Narayama*

Maybe it is not important after all. I emphasize that the lucid dream vehicle is not an escape route from reality, but that it is an excellent path to becoming more 'awake' in this life. Much too often I have met people who claimed to possess 'Knowledge', while their daily lives showed only narrow-mindedness and/or egoism. With the above I do not want to say that the lucid dream could not be an excellent spiritual path. It is simply not a topic for an introductory manual. By the way, beginning dreamers already have enough work with inducing lucidity and increasing clarity. Because whenever you know that you are dreaming, but are not fully aware of your recollections of waking life, it will be very hard to fulfill your intentions in your lucid dreams. Our society is extremely focused on quick results, and you are a product of it. So, there is a danger that you may become disappointed if lucid dreams do not arrive within a short time frame. But you do not learn a foreign language overnight either, do you?

To summarize, initially the number of lucid dreams will not be overwhelming. The clarity of your lucid dream images will not be optimal, and you will be confronted with resistance. Within the lucid dream state there are several 'levels'. Do not expect to enter the spiritual path before you have solved your daily problems. I hope it is very clear that you have to put energy and time into your dream work. However, if you persist, the flower will unfold. Research on lucid dreaming is still in its early stages. Everyone who starts with lucid dreaming can be considered a pioneer. A book cannot, of course, replace personal experience. I hope I have presented enough information for you to start your own journey. I wish you all the wisdom you can get.

Chapter 6 - Vintage Lucid Dream Research

The following material reflects the state of lucid dream research at the time of the original publication in 1990. It has been preserved in its original form as a historical document. Some journals, organizations, and publications mentioned here no longer exist, while many authors continued their work in directions that could not yet be foreseen at the time. The review on literature was published on the internet in those days.

Addresses Organisations/Individuals

Association for the Study of Dreams (ASD)
P.O. Box 3121M
Falls Church, VA 22043
U.S.A.

European Association for the Study of Dreams
Johann Wolfgang Goethe University
Institut für Psychologie
Mertonstraße 17
6000 Frankfurt am Main
Germany

K. Hearne's Research Organization
P.O. Box 180
Hull
North Humberside HU1 2EW
U.K.

Institute of Psychophysical Research
Dr. C. Green
113 Banbury Road
Oxford OX2 6JU
U.K.

Carolus M. den Blanken
Jan van Zutphenlaan 25/3
3555 SM Utrecht
The Netherlands

International Association
for Consciousness Research and its Applications (CORA)
Steinkleestraße 54
D-6000 Frankfurt am Main
Germany

Lucidity Association
8703 109th Street
Edmonton, Alberta
Canada T6G 2L5

Lucidity Institute
Dr. S. LaBerge
P.O. Box 2364
Stanford, CA 94309
U.S.A.

Prof. Dr. Paul Tholey
Kapellenweg 31
D-6690 St. Wendel
Germany

Oniros
Dr. R. Ripert
B.P. 30
93451 Île de St. Denis
Cedex
France

Dr. J. Reis
Uhlandstraße 48
D-6000 Frankfurt am Main
Germany

Magazines

ASD Newsletter
P.O. Box 1600
Vienna, VA 22180
U.S.A.

Bewusst Sein
Dr. W. Giott
Steinkleestraße 54
D-6000 Frankfurt am Main
Germany

Dream Network Bulletin
1083 Harvest Meadow Court
San Jose, CA 95136
U.S.A.

Journal of Lucid Dream Research
Hearne Research Organization
P.O. Box 180
Hull
North Humberside HU1 2EW
U.K.

Lucidity & Beyond
P.O. Box 746
Maywood, NJ 07607
U.S.A.

Lucidity Institute Newsletter
Dr. S. LaBerge
P.O. Box 2364
Stanford, CA 94309
U.S.A.

Lucidity Letter
Dr. J. Gackenbach
8703 109th Street
Edmonton, Alberta
Canada T6G 2L5

Oniros
Dr. R. Ripert
B.P. 30
93451 Île de St. Denis
Cedex
France

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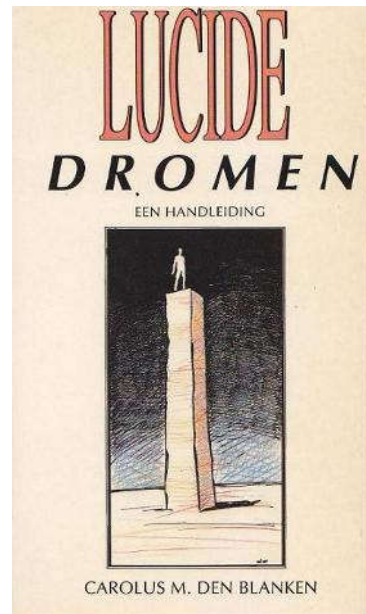
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Cover Dutch
Edition 1990