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THE OMNI EXPERIENCE

POWER TRIPS: CONTROLLING YOUR DREAMS

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A number of techniques facilitate lucid dreaming. One of the simplest is asking yourself many times during the day whether you are dreaming. Each time you ask the question, you should look for evidence proving you are not dreaming. The most reliable test: Read something, look away for a moment, and then read it again. If it reads the same way twice, it is unlikely that you are dreaming. After you have proved to yourself that you are not presently dreaming, visualize yourself doing what it is you'd like. Also, tell yourself that you want to recognize a nighttime dream the next time it occurs. The mechanism at work here is simple; it's much the same as picking up milk at the grocery store after reminding yourself to do so an hour before.

At night people usually realize they are dreaming when they experience unusual or bizarre occurrences. For instance, if you find yourself flying without visible means of support, you should realize that this happens only in dreams and that you must therefore be dreaming.

If you awaken from a dream in the middle of the night, it is very helpful to return to the dream immediately, in your imagination. Now envision yourself recognizing the dream as such. Tell yourself, "The next time I am dreaming, I

want to remember to recognize that I am dreaming." If your intention is strong and clear enough, you may find yourself in a lucid dream when you return to sleep.

Even if you're a frequent lucid dreamer, you may not be able to stop yourself from waking up in mid-dream. And even if your dreams do reach a satisfying end, you may not be able to focus them exactly as you please.

During our years of research, however, we have found that spinning your dream body can sustain the period of sleep and give you greater dream control. In fact, many subjects at Stanford University have used the spinning technique as an effective means of staying in a lucid dream. The task outlined below will help you use spinning as a means of staying asleep and, more exciting, as a means of traveling to whatever dream world you desire.

Before retiring, decide on a person, time, and place you would like to visit in your lucid dream. The target person and place can be either real or imaginary, past, present, or future. Write down and memorize your target person and place, then visualize yourself visiting your target and firmly resolve to do so in a dream that night.

To gain lucidity, repeat the phrase describing your target in your dream, and spin your whole dream body in a standing position with your arms outstretched. You can pirouette or spin like a top, as long as you vividly feel your body in motion.

The same spinning technique will help when, in the middle of a lucid dream, you feel the dream imagery beginning to fade. To avoid waking up, spin as you

repeat your target phrase again and again. With practice, you'll return to your target person, time, and place.

When spinning, try to notice whether you're moving in a clockwise or counter-clockwise direction.

- Stephen LaBerge and Jayne Gackenbach

Stephen LaBerge, Ph.D., of the Stanford University Sleep Research Center, is also the author of LUCID DREAMING, Ballantine Books, New York, (C) 1985. LUCID DREAMING is a 305 page book which costs \$3.95 and is available in the "Psychiatry" or "Self-Help" section of most major bookstores.
