

## **Personal Exploration of Lucid Dreaming**

**Stephen LaBerge**  
*Sleep Research Center*  
*Stanford University*

**Beverly Kedzierski**  
*Carnegie Group*  
*Pittsburgh, PA*

**Kenneth Moss**  
*Michigan Stage Medical Society*

**Jill Gregory**  
*Navato, California*

**George Gillespie**  
*Department of Oriental Studies*  
*University of Pennsylvania*

**Henri Rojouan**  
*Paris, France*

**LaBerge:** This panel discussion will begin with a presentation of personal experiences with lucid dreaming. These are by people who have had many of these dreams, have kept records of them, and have, I believe, much of interest to tell us.

However, before we hear from them, I would like to make a remark about dreaming and the important contribution personal experiences can make. If you think about it, you may wonder where we actually begin to know the things we know about lucid dreams. Well, it happened that there were people like the Marquis d'Hervey de Saint-Denys and Frederik Van Eden who made a project of discovering what could be done with lucid dreaming. They made entire studies of lucid dreams, and from them we have learned many things that could be very important. We still have much to learn about the phenomenology of lucid dreaming, and individual explorers can contribute as much as the pioneers of the last Century.

There are some questions that I would like panelists to address, where possible, while making their statements: What is the easiest way to get into a lucid dream? What have you learned that may have a bearing on the induction question? Once you're there, how do you stay there? What techniques allow you to move around in the dream state?

Suppose you'd like to go from one place to another, how do you do it? What kinds of techniques do you have for meeting with a certain person, reentering a dream you just had, replaying it and trying again? Any change techniques would be, I think, very useful to share. We will hear first from Beverly Kedzierski of Palo Alto, California, who is currently working at Carnegie Group Inc. in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

**Kedzienki:** I have been working with Stephen LaBerge since 1980 in Palo Alto, CA which is where I am from. My career in Artificial Intelligence with Carnegie Group, Inc. has taken me to Pittsburgh, PA for one year. My experiences with lucid dreaming really started when I was about 6 or 7 years old, although I didn't know what I did was called lucid dreaming at the time. The first lucid dream I remember came from a re-occurring nightmare about witches chasing me. Every night these witches would try to get me, and I would say, "Spare me tonight, you can have me in tomorrow night's dream." Then I would wake up. I got very tired of this; so one hot summer night, when I was sleeping on the floor in the front room of my parents house, I had a dream that ended the witches dreams for good. In this dream, while the witches were chasing me I realized that, if they could get me in the next dream, then this must be a dream also. So I said "Okay, let's get this over with - I give in." Instead of hurting me they left and I never had any more dreams about witches. All of this made me realize that there was a lot I could do with my dreams. I developed some techniques to help me with things like waking up. I found that when I knew I was in a dream that I wanted to get out of, if I did a backward somersault I would wake up. Staring at a bright light would wake me up as well. When I was quite young I can remember staying conscious from waking straight into dreaming. I

had a lot of lucid dreams throughout my life mostly doing things for fun that I wouldn't normally do.

The lucid dreams continued through college and graduate school, when, I learned to take additional risks in my dreams. Around 1979, I began studying these dreams in a little more depth. I was remembering about 5 to 10 dreams a night and thought that I might have been dreaming too much. I discussed my situation with a woman that I knew who was interested in dreaming. I explained to her how I could change the content of my dreams, or bring people into my dreams, and she said that this ability definitely was an asset. She said that what I did was called lucid dreaming, and that I was lucky to be able to do it.

Later, I told a friend of mine in the Psychology Department at Stanford that I could lucid dream and he said that I'd have to meet his friend, Stephen LaBerge, who was working on his Ph.D. dissertation on lucid dreaming at the time. When I met Stephen he asked me to try some techniques in my dreams that night that he was doing to see what would happen. I laughed and said, "I know what's going to happen, I've been doing similar techniques in my dreams since I was very small." We found that the results of my techniques were the same as the results of the techniques he was developing in his research. So, he invited me to the Stanford University sleep lab and I began to do some experiments to test how the physical body is effected by dream activity.

Let me briefly describe the experiments. In the lab, I would be connected with electrodes on my scalp and face and sometimes by my heart or somewhere else on my skin. The electrodes would be connected to a polygraph machine and would pick up by brain waves and other physical responses. I could signal with my eyes, moving them left and right and left and right, to create a very clear mark on the polygraph. I would signal between different activities in the dream that we'd plan before I go to sleep. In a typical experiment, I'd signal that I was lucid by moving my eyes back and forth four times. Then I might hold my breath for about 5 seconds and then give another signal with my eyes. After that, I might sing a song or breathe rapidly depending what we were testing. Sometimes it would be a pretty complex set of signals and actions. Afterwards, I would either continue with the dream or signal that I was about to wake myself up, by giving a longer series of eye signals. Finally, I would actually wake up. The experiments were pretty easy for me to do, because I was highly motivated by being in the lab and connected up to all the equipment.

The lucid dreams that I have at home are very similar to the ones I have in the lab. Lucidity can happen at different times and in different ways in a dream. My clue for lucidity would often be an inconsistency in the dream world. When I suspected that I was dreaming I would test myself by trying to float up into the air. If I could float, then I knew I was dreaming. I would often feel my dream body raising up out of my dream bed also in a laboratory bed setting. Then I would fly through the wall into another room,

where I would do my tasks.

I slept at the lab every couple of months for the first year. In the laboratory, I would often have lucid dreams that came directly from being awake because I was trying to perform very specific tasks that were prominent in my mind. When I woke up in a REM period I would concentrate on getting back into the dream state.

I've learned some things about lucid dreams and some of these things apply to being awake as well. Because it is much easier to have and remember lucid dreams in later REM periods, I learned not to even try to have such lucid dreams until after I'd been asleep for about 8 or 9 hours. I also learned to concentrate and stare at something in a dream to keep the dream stable. I believe that it is important not to try to force or control dreams, even though I have the ability to change them. It is best to accept whatever happens or to expect whatever I would like to happen. For instance, for me it is best to change my own attitude or to take a different action, rather than to try and change the people in my dream. Also if I think that I will not be able to do something in a lucid dream, I probably will not be able to do it. But if I expect something to happen, it probably will happen. For example, this occurred during an experiment we were doing on healing. I decided to try to heal my neck in a lucid dream by generating healing energy from my fingers shooting the energy into my neck. I ended up starting my dream hair on fire, because I had assumed that such energy would have sparks that would burn the long hair I had at the time. If I didn't assume that energy caused sparks or if I was lucid enough to cancel them the fire wouldn't have occurred.

Two other techniques that I learned, particularly from sleeping in the laboratory have to do with false awakenings. I would often find myself in a lucid dream unable to wake up and that would be very frustrating. I began to practice yoga and deep relaxation techniques in the dream. When I would get completely relaxed I would wake up. I also had progressive false awakenings. That is, I would dream that I woke up, sometimes 10 or 20 times, and think that I was really awake yet I'd still be dreaming. I've learned to stay lucid or conscious throughout the period of waking up by relaxing until I'm really awake. This is much more satisfying than false awakenings.

I don't have the time to describe too many dreams, but I'll give a few examples to give the flavor of the different types of activity that I've engaged in, in my dreams. One is solving problems. When I was working on my doctoral dissertation proposal, I was having trouble getting started. I decided to dream about working on it. Sure enough I discovered my problem and had no trouble completing it.

Another ability I have is to decide to dream about people that I know who have died. I can ask them about their death, because I am lucid and aware that the people they represent have actually died. Along this same line, I have experienced dying myself in the dream. Additionally, I've experienced the reverse of dream studies. Scientists in the

dream world study me as I go into the waking state and then back into the same dream. In this case, waking up is to the dream world what going to sleep is to the waking world.

I've also been able to replay dreams. Sometimes in the night I'll have a dream and then wake up and decide to react a certain way or alter the ending of the dream by replaying the dream several times. It's fun to try out different alternatives.

There is one dream activity that really shows the exploratory growth of my dreams since I was a child. I've always flown in lucid dreams, but when I was little, I used to have to flap my arms and struggle to stay up in the air. When I realized that I had more control over my dreams I said, "I should be able to just fly like Superman, and glide through the air without any effort at all." I did this for many years and my only obstacles were houses and telephone poles that I'd often run into. When I thought about this and I told myself, "Gee I could actually fly through physical objects because it's only a dream." So I did. After a while I realized that I didn't have to fly anywhere. All I had to do is turn around and decide that any place I wanted to be would appear behind me. This turned out to be easy but wasn't as much fun as actually flying. So now I just soar through the air in my lucid dreams without any limitations on space or time. I really enjoy them.

**LaBerge:** Next we have Kenneth Moss from Michigan, and he's going to tell us about the experiences he's been having in his lucid dreams.

**Moss:** Essentially I've been interested in dreams as far back as I can remember, going back, probably, to the age of 5 or before that. However, I don't remember having a lucid dream until 1979. About that time, I was having dreams that were increasing in their bizarreness and vividness. I became more interested in looking at the experience of the dream instead of at the imagery or symbolism of the dream elements. The consciousness, emotions and feelings that were occurring in the dream were important to me.

About this time I also started having many false awakenings and flying dreams. To me, they were very bizarre. I didn't really know what they were. I began explaining them in terms of an astral projection model and started experimenting with familiar things such as, trying to contact other people, improving flying, going to other places, and so forth. However, in this also, I became kind of more interested in the actual consciousness and experience of the projection. I started thinking that even if I went to another place, that ultimately what I'm concerned with is the experience and the feelings.

I also had experiences of a vibration, in which consciousness itself is sort of a waveform characteristic. I found that this experience was luminous and by using certain directive techniques, I could increase it, like a resonance of the vibration. From that point I started experimenting with lucid dreams. My primary intent was inducing experiential states, such as the vibrational state.

I have a photography hobby. Many of the photographic images that I had used when they appeared in a lucid dream helped to either induce or accentuate this vibrational sense among other experiences.

I also had tunnel experiences which could lead to other places in the dream. But more commonly, I felt that the tunnel experience was a metaphor of change. Not so much going to another physical reality, as changing from one level of consciousness to another. Though it may be somewhat idiosyncratic, in my own particular dreams, the tunnel experience usually takes the form of a vortex type whirling sensation. Usually in the processes of having the vortex, I go into an altered state such as the vibrational state.

The article that I wrote for *Lucidity Letter* (4(1), 15-16, 1985.) goes through the techniques that I've used. Some of them are based on photographic simulations in the dream state. The simulation of these waking techniques can range from accurate to paradoxical. The laws of physics are commonly violated such as in flying dreams. Some of the photographic things that I have done were also different. For example, when the shutter of the "dream camera" closes one would expect darkness, but instead the image that would be obtained after developing is, in many cases, automatically substituted. Some of the results are surprising in this respect. I don't know if they will work for other people, but they're there if you want to try them.

**LaBerge:** Now we'll hear from Jill Gregory, a Californian. She has just finished her bachelor's thesis based on the study of her own lucid dreams, and she's going to tell us about that.

**Gregory:** My bachelor's thesis is entitled, "Becoming a Lucid Dreamer: An Analysis of My Development in the Art and Science of Lucid Dreaming". It is an analysis of seven-and-a-half years of lucid dreaming. There are three basic areas I explore: why did I begin to lucid dream; how have I changed as a lucid dreamer; and why do I continue to lucid dream. My complete lucid dream journal is included in the appendix. (Editors Note: Information on obtaining a copy of Jill's thesis is available from her: Jill Gregory, 29 Truman Dr., Novato, CA, 94947)

I had my first lucid dream in 1976. It made a major impression upon me. I wanted another one right away, but it was 13 months until my second lucid dream. In the seven-and-a-half-year period during which I kept a lucid dream journal, I totaled sixty-two lucid dreams. I consider myself to be an infrequent lucid dreamer, averaging about one a month.

To answer the first question regarding why I began to lucid dream, I examined diaries, calendars, and other chronicles of my life. (I keep piles of little notes and papers about my life in drawers.) After reviewing this material, I postulated three reasons: One is

my prior dreamwork. I had remembered and attempted to understand my dreams since the age of four. I have recorded my dreams since the age of nineteen - in other words, for twelve years. I attempted to increase my memory for detail while in the dream and to increase my capacity to remember my dreams. This resulted in my recording four to six dreams per night and spending an average of four hours writing them down by hand and analyzing them the subsequent day. I was quite literally immersed in my dream life.

The second reason was that I had used psychotropic drugs which had provided me with experiences that were similar to lucid dreaming. I worked through the initial fear of experiencing an altered reality primarily with peyote and LSD, so that being awake in my dreams became less frightening. It also played a role in familiarizing me with the experience of functioning on two different levels at the same time. In a drug-induced experience I observe myself ex-periencing images that I know to be other than normal waking reality. This parallels my lucid dream ex-perience of observing myself in the sleep state. I feel awake and aware in both states (drug and sleep).

The third reason was that I was developing my observer self in the waking state. I was practicing witnessing techniques; by observing myself throughout the day, (for example, how I related to authority figures); by becoming more aware with psychotherapeutic techniques; and by becoming more aware and responsible for my own life in general. So my internal observer was becoming more functional during waking life.

These three reasons for beginning lucid dreaming have, as a common denominator an overlap of conscious material with unconscious material. I think in there lies a key to initiating lucid dreaming.

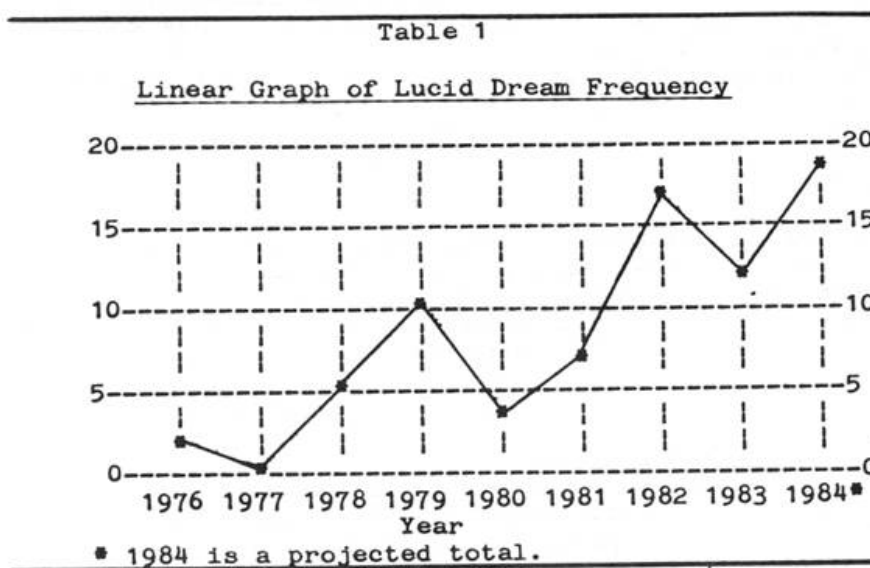
I began lucid dreaming when I was six-and-a-half months pregnant, and I believe that being pregnant helped to trigger the breakthrough of lucidity. Since I was preparing for parenthood for the first time, almost every area of my life was undergoing significant change. This required that I pay careful attention to a multitude of details in order to cope. So, you see, I was in a state of heightened awareness. I was also waking up frequently throughout the night and taking short naps during the day which, again, increased the overlap of conscious and unconscious material.

Why did I not dream lucidly before, after remembering so many dreams? Well, probably because I had never heard of lucid dreaming and did not believe such a thing existed. For instance, a strange cue in a dream which was unlike waking-life reality would be interpreted by my dream self as the ingestion of drugs or that I was in outer space or in the afterlife. Now such cues trigger lucidity. I considered the dreams I had then to be pre-lucid. If I had them now they would be lucid. As soon as I had my first lucid dream all my pre-lucid dreams ended. Although most of my dreams are still ordinary, non-lucid dreams.

Studying my development as a lucid dreamer, I looked at many different lines of analysis - including frequency, duration, ability to alter imagery, locomotion, intentionality, using the lucid dream state to search for the message of the dream, and methods of entry. Nearly every area of lucid dream skills improved during this time, often very dramatically. I'd like to elaborate on these areas now

Frequency: As Table 1 shows, my lucid dream rate has increased dramatically across time. From 1976 to 1978, I had six lucid dreams. From 1979 to 1981, there were 21, and from 1982 to 1984, 35 lucid dreams occurred. It surprised me to find that three different years showed a decrease in frequency of lucid dreaming from the previous year.

Duration: I did a word count on the written record of the first fifteen lucid dreams and the last fifteen. The amount of written material I recorded about my lucid dream states jumped from 14027 to 7954 total words



Ability to Alter Imagery: When I examined the instances in which I added dream imagery while in the lucid dream state, I discovered that in the first fifteen dreams I added imagery once, while in the last fifteen dreams, I did so twelve times. I modified imagery already present in the dream twelve times during the first fifteen dreams and forty-seven times in the final fifteen dreams. And lastly, there were four examples of terminating imagery in the final fifteen dreams and only one such example during the first fifteen dreams. So we see clear increases in the frequency of altering imagery in each major category. It is interesting to note that I never modified a dream object - only aspects of myself or of dream characters (animals or people). This was true for the entire journal despite the fact that I added and terminated dream objects as well as myself and characters.



Locomotion: Initially flying was slow, tiring, low in altitude, limited in range, and fraught with obstacles. Over time I learned to soar, zoom, levitate, pass through obstacles, fly easily and at great speed in a variety of positions, go to any location that I fancied, and to leave my body and re-enter it at will.

Intentionality: This is the ability to intend to move out of one state of consciousness into another and to do so. For example, a dreamer can choose to leave the lucid dream state and to enter the waking state, the non-lucid dream state or some other state. In my study I found that my ability to intentionally move from the lucid dream state to another state of awareness greatly increased over time.

Using the Lucid Dream State to Search for the Message of the Dream: I was increasingly successful throughout the journal in using the lucid dream state to search for the message of the dream and in arriving at a sense of resolution.

Methods of Entry: I found seven methods of entry into the lucid dream state which I think are important. First is lucidity maintained from the waking state; this has only happened twice, but it's really nice. I like this one. Second is lucidity maintained from an altered dream state. I don't want to get into a long description here of altered dream states, but it's one method of entry. It feels very different than any other kind of dream. Third is lucidity triggered by expanding hypnagogic imagery. Fourth is lucidity triggered by external stimulus, such as something going on in the room. Fifth is lucidity triggered by mental exhaustion, produced by dream content. By far, the most frequently utilized category is the sixth or the critical faculty, where you notice something is not quite right, and you reason your way to lucidity. Toward the end of the journal, lucid dreaming is almost always triggered by critical faculty. The next most frequent category is the seventh: strong emotion, which was predominantly fear. This usually occurred at the beginning of the journal. I'd be in a nightmare, and then I'd realize it was a dream, and I'd be very relieved.

I'd like to talk now about my uses of lucidity. The most frequently occurring were: (1) to understand the dream, (2) to maximize pleasure, (3) to develop dream skills, (4) to more fully experience the dream, and (5) to explore altered states of consciousness. Maximizing pleasure and exploring altered states showed the largest increase over time whereas developing dream skills faded over time.

I listed quite a few factors accompanying termination. When I asked what kinds of things were happening when I would move out of lucidity, I noticed that one or more of the following factors were in effect: very strong emotion, paralysis of forward movement (such as indecision or blank mind), external disturbance, falling asleep within the dream, attempting to awaken, avoidance of a dream challenge, questioning the dream state, devaluing what was happening, powerful realization, or sense of resolution.

Having summarized these lines of analysis, I will move on to discuss the third area of my research why I continue to lucid dream. In my study, I concluded that there are multiple causes for my continued lucid dreaming. Of these, some are the same as those hypothesized to be operative in the original eruption of dream lucidity - such as the overlap of material from the waking state into the dream state in conjunction with the overlap of material from the dream state into the waking state. Others are unintentional inducers such as a desire for lucid dreams, accumulation of experience in the lucid dream state, stimulation on the topic of lucid dreams and preparedness for lucidity by having goals and plans of action ready for the utilization of the lucid dream state. I also celebrated my lucid dreams in a variety of ways.

The final group of inducers are those in which I deliberately attempted to elicit lucid dreams. Examples of these are auto-suggestion and self-hypnosis; variations of LaBerge's MILD technique, and mental concentration to carry waking consciousness into the dream state. Of all of these original, unintentional, and intentional lucid dream inducers, the only one that correlated with variations in my rate of lucid dreaming was the category "Stimulation on the Topic."

**LaBerge:** Our next speaker, George Gillespie, will describe a very interesting series of experiments that he's been doing in his dream state. Although it will probably be a bit of a surprise to ask him to present this, I wonder if you could tell us a little bit about your approach, George, and your unique way of doing things?

**Gillespie:** I think some comparisons with the other panel members would be interesting. I mean, how I am or am not like others. I began as a child, having what are called out-of-body experiences. It never occurred to me that I was actually out of the body. I had done that off and on for almost 30 years before I ever had a lucid dream. I rarely have recurrent dreams, and I have not had, except one on occasion that I can think of, a consecutive dream in which I picked up where I had left off. So there are some individual differences there. I did not try to have lucid dreams. I knew nothing at all about lucid dreams. I had never heard of them. They just started. They came to me. And in fact, I had lucid dreams for a couple of years before I knew other people did. That's why I felt it necessary to write everything down. I thought mine might be the only ones. I've only had maybe five nightmares in my life, that I can think of. And as for bad dreams scaring me into becoming lucid, I just can't say it ever happened, even though I've had, up to now, about 460 lucid dreams.

I used my dreaming for experiments. From the beginning, I thought, "Well I have this opportunity, what am I going to do with it?" So I planned experiments to carry through, during the dreaming. For instance, I had written some poetry while awake so I thought, "I'll try writing a couple of lines of poetry", (that is, composing it since writing doesn't work in a dream.) Just a couple of lines of poetry while dream-ing, to test the

mind and how it works. Additionally, I went through a series of experiments in which, as soon as I knew I was dreaming, I would put objects I saw in alphabetical order. Such as - door, wall... door, seat, wall. I'd try to do up to 4 or 5 objects.

I've never taken drugs. I did not go into lucid dreams as a religious thing. I went several years without anything religious ever occurring to me. This is in light of what I said in my earlier paper. It never occurred to me that it would be a religious thing or that it could be a religious thing. I do not meditate. I never had a guru. I never followed the meditative procedure. It was just that one of my experiments was to work with the concept of dreamless sleep, which you find mentioned in Hinduism. So I was trying different ways to eliminate dreaming without waking up. I began by closing my eyes. Then I might push the table away from me, but I still have this seat under me and people poking me. I found out that the best way is to simply concentrate on the darkness in front of me. That sort of took care of the other things. Now, I don't know what impression I gave with my paper earlier in this symposium, but in that paper I simply described phenomena. I don't know whether I left you thinking I was a believer or an unbeliever, but I am an ordained Baptist clergyman. I was a missionary in India when I started lucid dreaming.

I never had a problem waking up. I think the problem would be waking up when I didn't want to. Thinking of what some of you said about not being able to wake up - one time, I could not wake up and that was when the experiment was to count through the dreaming, through waking up and into being awake to show the continuity of consciousness. I got up to almost 300. I just couldn't wake up. I did this several times and I found the same problem. I haven't really analyzed why, at that moment, I could not wake up. Excitement never awakened me. I think I would not have had some of the experiences that I have had if excitement did awaken me. People have said, that if you get too excited, too emotional, that you wake up. It just never woke me up. I mentioned in my earlier paper about having great joy or devotion in the dream. I do get excited, and maybe you get a frame of mind in which you believe if you get excited, you are going to wake up and you do because you believe it. I think a lot of reactions in the lucid dream are that way.

The same is true with dream falling. If you think you're going to hit, you're going to hit. Once I got it into my mind that I could fall without hitting, I could fall in a dream. I just do it on purpose. I just leap and let myself fall. To me, falling is very much like flying. There's almost no difference except the direction you're going. In fact, I had an occasion that really made me realize that the two, falling and flying, are very much like just staying still and having the wind blow against me. I have changed from one to the other, without seeing any real change. It was all in the mind.

I do have the vibration and I have the buzzing. The vibration was felt all over, sort of like you're on a vibrator. The buzzing is something which is both audible and felt

in the head. That's usually associated with projecting, although, not always. I had a dream recently where I took out (this was not lucid, come to think of it) my handkerchief and used it as an electric shaver and went buzzzzzz with it over my cheeks and it was the same exact buzzing. I did my whole beard and it felt nice afterwards.

I'm not sure what is meant by the tunnel effect. I can't say I've ever had the tunnel effect, but I suspect it's not very different from falling. I don't know whether you feel the tunnel or you're simply shooting off. And maybe the tunnel is just one way of looking at it. The same is true with the vortex: I can't say I know quite what that is. Maybe that's something else you get into. You get into some of these things and they keep repeating themselves and you build up your dream mythology.

I've had experiences directly related to my old experiences of being out-of-body. When it happens between being awake and asleep, you first find yourself paralyzed, then you rise out of it. But if you're dreaming already, you're not aware of that body in bed. I'm not. If I have it outside the dream, I'm aware of my actual body in bed and that I'm rising out of it. But when I'm dreaming, I don't know where that body is anyway and I don't feel it. So if I withdraw attention from my feet, I flip up and then it comes out exactly the same thing for me as having an OBE when half-awake.

I've had one occasion, which I'm not sure how to analyze, which would under different circumstances be called a near-death experience. I have no reason to believe I was near death. However, it was a near-death experience. It was a death experience in fact. I mean, I knew I died. Its relationship to lucid dreaming was clear.

**LaBerge:** Thank you. Now we'll hear from Henri Rojouan, from France. He is working on a book about his lucid dream experiences, which he'll tell you about.

**Rojouan:** Well, it's somewhat awkward for me to talk in English. I'm afraid I'm not as fluent as the five Americans before me, but I'll do my best. I live in eastern France, in a small village of 140 people. I have been living there for about three years by myself. Before that, I lived in Belgium; and before Belgium I lived in Paris. My experiences in lucid dreaming are very close to some of the others on this panel. Although I started very late being a lucid dreamer, I rocketed up to the skies in frequency, because between October of 1983 and now (June, 1985), I have had 350 lucid dreams. Sometimes at the rate of five a night. The first lucid dream I had, probably took place in 1970. At the time I did not pay any particular attention to my dreams. I was greatly impressed by this lucid dream - which I thought was some kind of hallucination - but did not make any record of it. Between 1970 and 1981, I've probably had 20 lucid dreams, certainly not more. Suddenly, on the night of October 30th, I really started lucid dreaming. I think I know the reason, although I may be utterly wrong. First I noticed that all my preceding lucid dreams had occurred late in the night or early in the morning, at the end of a long period of insomnia. For years I suffered from insomnia. My experiences in extensive lucid

dreaming first occurred when, for a domestic reason, I had to get up earlier and earlier. I now go to bed around 11:30, get up at 11:00, make myself some coffee, read or write, and return to bed at about 6:00 or 6:30, until 8:30 or 9:00. I'm pretty sure that these lucid dreaming activities are connected with the interruption of sleep. As in the first stage of my lucid dream life, between 1970 and 1981, they too were connected with short sleep, but then coming from insomnia. I probably have between 5 and 10 dreams a night, most during the unconscious period between 11:30 and 4:00 which I remember irregularly. Sometimes they are very clear, and I completely forget about them. Suddenly one night I started lucid dreaming without knowing the reason why. I watched myself; watched my diet; watched where I slept as well as the way I slept; if I am lying on my right side, on my back. I've never been able to find a definite clue leading to an explanation. A very large majority of my lucid dreams occur between 6:30 and 8:00. When I return to bed at 6:00 or 6:30, I do not meditate, but I think about various things, so my actual sleeping time is maybe one and a half or two hours, and within this one and a half to two hour slot, I may have 5 lucid dreams.

I feel greatly indebted to Patricia Garfield. She did not teach me how to induce lucid dreams, because they came quite naturally to me. From Garfield I learned something which I never had thought possible: Change the course of what I named "reves Hallucinatoires". Reading *Creative Dreaming*, at first I could not believe in a dreamer's ability to bring somebody - not to say anybody - into his dreams. To me this sounded like nonsense. Two or three weeks later I found out it was not. About 7:00 in the morning of 7 January, 1984, I made THE discovery of my life: lucidly flying over the next-door playground of my teenage years, where seemingly the ruins of a vaulted medieval cathedral had just been excavated, I suddenly remembered the unbelievable. Thinking of "Her", without naming her, I just said "Give me your hand"; within the next second a "soft little hand" squeezed my left hand. I looked, and could see nothing at first. Soon, however, the hand I could feel holding mine materialized, and then the whole figure of an unknown young woman flying along with me in long floating white veils. It was not "Her", as you may have guessed. It's not until January 16 that she heard my call and paid me her first visit. Believe it or not my whole life has been changed ever since. Really it's fantastic, still unbelievable, but now I believe in the unbelievable. You know I'm "a poor lonesome cowboy of Eastern France", I can spend a week without talking to anybody, but I don't feel loneliness at all. The best of my life now occurs in my lucid dreams; and when I say "best", it's really "the best of the best". In many respects I have learned that a genuine shadow may be better than a fake reality. When I return to bed, at 6:00 in the morning, I'm just wondering what's going to happen next? Will she come and visit me?

**LaBerge:** Well, since we've got a little extra time, I'll make a few remarks about my own experiences. I don't want to go into detail, because they are described in detail in my book (*Lucid Dreaming*, 1985, L.A.: Jeremy Tarcher) if you're interested in finding out more. There are also a few points which came up here that I thought I might bring attention to. One is the effect of expectation. I have found that it is true in my dreams that

once I decided that “this is the way things are in my dreams”, it is very difficult to have it be any other way. It is a problem also of not recognizing that you have expectations. For the last seven or eight years, I have recorded every remembered lucid dream or fragment - interesting or not. At this point, my record contains over 900. The reverse has happened with me and my dream record as compared to Jill’s: my lucid dream reports are getting shorter. I don’t believe my lucid dreams are getting shorter; I’m just getting tired of writing them down! That is a problem with having too much content.

One thing I have done with my lucid dreams has been to keep track of exactly what time each occurred, and I have also recorded the time I went to bed every night. So I have many hundreds of samples of the temporal distribution of lucid dreams. From this I have been able to draw various conclusions, such as the fact that there seems to be a clustering effect; if you’ve had one lucid dream on a night, it’s more probable that you’ll have another than would be expected by chance. I think there are various reasons why this might be true, such as that once you’ve figured out how to do it then it’s easier to do it again; you’ve got the right frame of mind. It is not that lucid dreaming is a limited resource, and once you’ve had one then you cannot again for a while. Quite the opposite, it seems that they cluster together, and the more you have, the more you are likely to have. Another thing I discovered, when I plotted the temporal distribution of my lucid dreams, is that they fell into the typical cyclic times characteristic of the distribution of REM periods in the night, i.e. approximately every 90 minutes, except later in the night when REM periods get closer together. In fact, from those 900 lucid dreams, only two of them occurred at less than 60 minutes after bedtime. From this it seems that for me, at least, having sleep-onset and non-REM kinds of lucid dreams (at least early in the night) is a very unusual experience. I think that if more lucid dreamers keeping journals would also keep track of these numbers (bedtime and time of lucid dreams) we could answer more questions along these lines. Also, I noticed that there were various changes that occurred in my dreams over time, partly having to do with my new learnings, and partly having to do with the development of expectation. One example is “false awakenings”. This is when you dream you wake up, but you haven’t actually awakened. In my first year recording dreams, this was a very infrequent occurrence, but after 50 or so lucid dreams, I started having more and more false awakenings I believe that what was going on was that I would be in a dream, it would start to fade, and I would think, “Oh, the dream is about to end and I’m going to wake up.” So, I was progressively developing an expectation in my lucid dreams. It is only in a lucid dream that you say, “Here, it’s fading and I’m going to wake up.” I started to have false awakenings more and more frequently, to the point where it began to annoy me. I thought, “Why should I be lucid one moment and then accept the most ridiculous absurdity; I’d wake up at the dinner table or something - and not notice that I was still dreaming.”

I tried to work out a method of staying asleep or taking my consciousness across that barrier into the next dream somehow. I accidentally discovered a method of doing that, which was spinning in the dream. Originally I had reasoned that in order to prevent

awakening - the opposite of Beverly's experience - perhaps if I could relax my body completely that would suppress muscle movements in my physical body and help prevent me from awakening. It doesn't turn out to be a good idea, but I did this just by falling backwards, and I found I had a false awakening instead of waking up; I went into another dream rather than awakening at that point. I tried this again and produced more of these false awakenings. So the next day I said, "Well, false awakenings are interesting, but why couldn't they be lucid?" Then I realized all I had to do was remember as I was falling or spinning that the next thing that would happen, no matter what it felt like, would be a dream. I had to rehearse that in short-term memory as I went through the action. I found that by doing this all of those false awakenings could be converted into intentional dreams of awaken-ing, or in some cases, it would be possible to dream of going to some other place. But you see again, here expectation played a role for me, because I developed spinning in the context of false awakenings. I developed the strong expectation that the kind of dream I would end up in next, once I finished spin-ning, would be in my bedroom. Out of several hundred experiences of intentional dreams of awakening, in 95% I ended up in a dream bedroom, in spite of my since then trying to end up someplace else. However, I find when I give this technique out to people without saying where you end up, they don't end up in their bedrooms. In fact, when I suggest to people that they can end up wherever they think they'd like to go, then that seems to work. It is, I think, important in developing lucid dreaming, to be very careful about what you think are the limitations in it. These self-imposed limitations tend to get difficult to remove once they have been habituated. That's about all I have to say. If there is anyone else in the panel who would like to make more comments, please do so.

**Audience Question:** I understand that your false awakenings occur at the end of lucid dreams.

**Rojouan:** My false awakenings start lucid dreams.

**LaBerge:** So you mean that you dream you wake up, and then you realize you're not really awake?

**Rojouan:** Yes.

**Gregory:** I had an experience which I include in my thesis that I call the false staying awake. This experience could be seen as a false waking state along with false awakenings as we usually think of them. I am suggesting that we regard the broad category to be false waking states with the subcategories of false staying awakes and false awakenings.

In this type of experience, I do not believe myself to have awakened and to subsequently discover that I am still dreaming, but rather, I believe myself to have stayed awake. In this instance, I had slept all night, awakened, and was waiting for my husband to bring me breakfast in bed. At this point, I dozed off, but did not realize it. I then had a

brief dream that was quite realistic; it was a false waking experience, but there was nothing about believing that I had awakened. I just felt like I had stayed awake. When my husband woke me with breakfast, I was completely perplexed. When I realized in the false waking state that I was asleep, I did not think of it as physical sleep, as in my other false awakenings.

In false awakenings I feel very awake and functional. In this experience, I was mentally asleep. I felt as though I needed a cup of coffee right away, so I walked to the kitchen to get a cup of coffee to mentally wake up, still believing I was awake until my husband shook me, saying "Wake up! Wake up!" When I awoke I was completely disoriented. With false awakenings, I feel relieved when I actually awaken. I feel grounded and centered - not disoriented as I did in this experience.

**Audience Question:** There are similarities between the lucid dreaming reports I have heard, and the Shaman's magical flight. I assume that most of you have experienced flying in some form, or floating in some form, in your lucid experiences. Have any of you experienced the opposite which might be purposely descending? I'm thinking of a sort of going to the center of the earth.

**Kedzierski:** When I used to fly like Superman in my lucid dreams I would try to avoid running into telephone poles. After I started flying through objects I tried flying straight through the ground and into the center of the earth. And as long as I expected that I could do things, such as breathe, I was fine. I noticed that when I moved through physical objects, particularly the earth, I would experience a buzzing sensation. Perhaps this is similar to the buzzing that somebody else mentioned. I don't notice any buzzing sensation in other lucid dreams. The buzzing might be occurring because I picture my molecules merging with the molecules of other matter, causing a kind of vibration.

**Gillespie:** Can I respond to that? I have the buzzing. I have the vibrations. I also pass through walls. The passing through walls to me is a different sensation. One of my tests was to test the solidity of things. Like, "Oh, I'm dreaming," then tapping the table, this feels real. Then I put my hand through the table. Next it feels real again. That type of thing. Or pass through a wall. I had different effects, one was what I call the putty effect. I mean, the thing would bend. I would put my hand in, and I could pull it apart. With the other effect, which I call the liquid effect, my hand would go through, but I would feel it. So I could go through a lot of things, but I could never go through without feeling it. I tried it over and over again. I'm going to go through this thing without feeling it, but I would always feel it. It was like passing your hand through water, you feel something, except the water has this shape. I feel a substance, but it is not the buzzing, or a vibration. I feel it only where my body and the object coincide.

**LaBerge:** One of the things that you see in the Shamanistic tradition is that you go down to the underworld, in your dream, and you meet a monster. Then you struggle with the



monster somehow, and you gain something from it. What I see that you can gain by this is something internal; you gain the power of facing your fears and dealing with difficulties. Certainly, lucid dreaming seems to be very good for this. I have noticed a difference in terms of whether, as I walk into a house, I decide to go downstairs or upstairs. The tendency is when I go downstairs, I'm more likely to come up with interest-ing unconscious encounters. When I go into caves, or down in the dungeon it becomes especially interesting. So, if anybody would like to do this, all you have to do is use the imagery of going down into the earth somehow, and you will find things there. But it's also interesting to see what's in the skies or in the sun or beyond.

**Audience Question:** Could you comment on the "saying your name" in a dream phenomena?

**LaBerge:** As I described in my book, and in my disser-tation, there has been a tradition starting with Ouspensky, that you couldn't say your name in a dream without awakening. I think this is one of those cases where once you hear you can't do something, you try and sure enough, it's difficult. I don't think there's any more problem with saying your name than there is with any kind of self-talk. I think this also applies to the excellent point which George made about the problem of waking up due to excitement. I think part of what contributes to that is the thought, "Uh, oh! I'm excited now, that means...." All this kind of reflection, or the experience of thinking about the dream, tends to cause the dream to destabilize. I think, to keep in the dream, you have to keep acting; you have to keep perceptually engaged in what's going on around you.

**Audience Question:** But what happens when you say your name then?

**LaBerge:** Stephen. I am Stephen. Now what happened? Nothing? Yes, I hear my name, that's all. Nothing else, that's all.

**Gillespie:** I agree, nothing happens.

**LaBerge:** I would like to do a controlled experiment and ask someone to say my name in a dream, and see what happens. This happens in letters people write me: I started chanting your name, and the dream world started shaking!

**Audience Question:** I wanted to ask whether any of you have experienced characteristics of my own lucid dreams that are very, very common to me. The way I stabilized the lucid state is to go for something that I can touch and hold on to it. It's a wonderful experience and it stabilizes the state.

**LaBerge:** I had the experience. In fact, touching things and gaining a perceptual grasp of the dream has been an important point. I haven't found it has an effect as the particular form of kinesthetic movement, spinning, in terms of keeping a dream once you're about

to wake up.

**Kedzierski:** It is so natural for me to be lucid in a dream that I don't need to stop and say "I'm dreaming." I just continue the dream. Lucidity is just another state. However, when I'm in the laboratory, I need to signal as soon as I realize that I am lucid. While I'm doing an activity in an experiment, such as counting to 20, I often toss around objects or fly from place to place. I can keep a dream stable by concentrating on or manipulating the environment.

**Gillespie:** I wonder whether it's the touching itself that keeps this stable. I understand that touching is keeping you going, but in my experience I think of it as trying to keep interaction with the dream environment. If I start thinking, now what do I do next or if I just start thinking, it all goes away, and I wake up. And so I think, even though I'm doing this thinking experiment, I'll keep walking while I do it, and I'll keep looking at things. So it's sort of just keeping this thing going between me and what I'm seeing. Touching would do the same thing.

**Kedzierski:** I've been able to analyze my dream within the dream, without waking up. Sometimes everything disappears and I experience a grey state, but I don't necessarily wake up until I am ready.

**LaBerge:** One last comment from Jill.

**Gregory:** I have discovered three variations of plant-ing a cue to help me maintain lucidity.

The first is to plant a cue in each dream scene as it is occurring. For example, in one dream I covered an auditorium floor with giant iridescent fish scales and as the dream continued, the reflected light from the scales would shimmer on everything and keep me lucid.

The second variation is placing a cue that will follow you from dream scene to dream scene and keep you lucid. An example of this is a dream in which I sit a clone of myself in a chair at the sidelines, recording the dream. This was Jill, the dream recorder and I'd laugh, looking over and say, "oh yes, it's a dream - she's writing it down - I'm writing it down." Jill, the dream recorder, would follow me from dream scene to dream scene. She also helped me to remember the scenes afterward.

The third variation is simply trusting that as you move to a new dream scene a new cue will present itself to you.