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#### ARTICLE

*Sleep can be more than just a rest period. It's night work—if you can get it*

## TWILIGHT ZONES

BY JAYNE GACKENBACH  
AND JANE BOSVELD

One night eighteenth-century composer Giuseppe Tartini dreamed that he gave his violin to the Devil to test the latter's skill as a musician. The Devil played a beautiful solo, surpassing anything Tartini had ever heard. When he awoke, Tartini jumped out of bed and grabbed his violin, trying to recapture the Devil's music. Although "The Devil's Trill," as Tartini entitled the composition, paled beside what he had heard in his dream, it is still considered to be the composer's best work.

Dreams have often offered fertile ground for new ideas and artistic insights. Such winners as Robert Louis Stevenson, Charles Dickens, and Charlotte Brontë, for example, found their plots, characters, and settings in their dreams. But most people rarely heed their dreams, going through life unaware of the inspiration dreams can know, seemingly out of nowhere.

In one of the most famous accounts of scientific inspiration, German chemist Friedrich August Kekulé claimed that in the 1860's he discovered the formula for the benzene ring in a dream.

PAINTING BY  
GEORGE TOOKER

"I turned the chair to the fireplace," he recounted, "and sank into a half sleep. The atoms wiggled and turned like snakes. One of the snakes seized its own tail, and the image whirled scintillating before my eyes. As though from a flash of lightning, I awoke. The crucial image of the snake, Kakule said, suggested to him the hexagon shape of the six atoms that make up the benzene molecule. (According to Southern Illinois University chemistry

professor John Woriz, Kakule reported at least three different versions of his benzene ring dreams. Woriz suggests that Kakule may have, in fact, made up the dreams to avoid sharing credit for the discovery with foreign researchers.)

Dream creativity should surprise no one. Most current theories about the function of rapid eye movement sleep during which dreams occur suggest that it serves to integrate old and new infor-

mation. Our dreams are new worlds that are spun by the muse that resides in each of us. While awake we may be so busy that we forget the part of us that creates—the mythmaker, the storyteller. "Our dreams are lost-and-found creations, rather than residues of waking life," writes psychiatrist Gordon Gloque in his book *Dream Life: Wake Life*. "We have the capacity for infinite creativity. At least while dreaming, we partake of the power of the

## NOCTURNAL FLIGHTS

Can you sell yourself to fly, spit, or even take a problem in a dream? To find out, two psychologists—Salphen LaBerge of Stanford University and Jayne Gackenbach of Athabasca University in Alberta, Canada—prepared our experiment in "How 'Spice' Can Help You Dream" (April 1997). The project included a series of tests to induce lucid dreams and a questionnaire for reporting individual results.

In their preliminary evaluation of 1,000 reports, the researchers found that "Onix" spiders were fairly successful in disrupting the contents of their dreams. In fact, 85 percent of the respondents claimed they had had lucid dreams during the two-week period required to complete the experiment. They represented a much higher incidence of lucid dreaming than among the general population. On closer scrutiny, however, about a third of the reports didn't clearly indicate that the dreamers had recognized they were dreaming. To most of these cases, the dreamers misunderstood the definition of lucidity," Gackenbach says.

The Onix experiment induced three lucid dream tasks: flying, spinning, and creative problem solving. One third of those attempting flight were successful. More than 50 percent of those attempting to spin for the fun of it, while 33 percent used flight as a means of travel—with a few journeying to outer space. Other reasons to take flight included escape from a nightmare figure and flying simply because it was the point of the exercise. Most flew no higher than two stories off the ground.

I achieved dream flying only once, but it was like nothing I had ever experienced before, while a Corpus



Chilis, Texas, respondent, I started by feeling a few feet off the ground and gradually gained speed. I was slightly tilted during the ride, but I was able to control my balance."

The spinning technique helps you to avoid awakening from a lucid dream or losing your conscious awareness of dreaming. The task designed for Onix, however, also included instructions for spinning as a means of moving from one dream scene to another. Before falling asleep, dreamers chose a destination and after turning lucid, used the spinning technique to transport themselves to the target scene. One dreamer, for example, joined her husband in a field; another met her grandfather in a desert state. There were also encounters with Tolkien Zone's Rad Boring in Australia, New York Mets outfielder Darryl Strawberry in a baseball stadium, and King Arthur in Camelot.

For the problem-solving task, respondents mentally framed their problems before going to sleep and attempted to work them out during lucid dreams. The problem could be emotional, professional, or biological. An amazing 64 percent of Onix readers successfully solved their problems in lucid dreams. One twenty-six-year-old man, for ex-

ample, struggled nervously for his child to fix another worked-out a physical equation.

The largest response in the healing category came from people who dealt with nightmares, using their lucidity to overcome fear and resolve conflicts. Only 23 percent attempted to improve their health, most successfully treating injuries, illness, or phobias. A twenty-one-year-old Illinois photographer had difficulty walking due to a very swollen

swollen ankle. In his dream he was running. "When I awoke, I must be dreaming," he began to come out of my dream. So I reached for my ankle with my dream hands, causing myself to begin tumbling, which kept me from seeing up. As I held my ankle, I felt a vibration resembling electricity. So I decided to throw lightning bolts around. I awoke with heat to no pain in my now-swollen ankle and was able to walk with considerable ease."

The idea of performing a spontaneous feat, exploring some fantasyland, or even writing a long-dead friend—if only in a dream—sanitizes the human imagination. In my lucid dream my brother-in-law Joe entered the room as I was writing a letter to my best friend who lived down the street," explains one Salt Lake City reader. "When I awoke, I was writing a letter to someone I saw almost daily. I wrote it up, I said, 'I must be dreaming. Joe assured me I wasn't, but when I noticed the letter I had took up was whole again, I knew I was dreaming. Then I figured since it was my dream, I might as well do something I'd wanted to do for a long time. I walked Joe would turn into a bright light fog. And he did." Ah, we can be so busy in a lucid dream.—Jayne Gackenbach

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eminent Spent, the minute Godhead that creates the cosmos.

Globus makes a distinction between the creativity that gives rise to the variety of "unique life-worlds" and "formative" creativity: a deeper level of creative thought. Usually, he writes, "we think of thought as empty, unladen, abstract. So it is strange to conceive of thought as thinking up a world. Formative creativity is the power of Zeus." Lucid dreams, Globus believes, most clearly demonstrate this creative capacity.

Most people don't realize they've been dreaming until after they've awakened. In lucid dreams, however, you are aware that you're dreaming—while you're still asleep. Such consciousness may be short-lived or may permeate an entire dream, but it empowers the dreamer to change the content of the dream. A sophisticated lucid dreamer could, for instance, decide to fly away from a frightening character or conjure up Einstein for a conversation about relativity. "The lucid dreamer just thinks the dream world he or she wants to live in and, lo, that world concretely appears," Globus writes.

Artist Fabia Bogdanov for one uses lucid dreaming as the primary source for her artwork. Not only does she "lead her future works of art while lucid in sleep, but she also finds made major changes in her style as a result of her lucid dreams.

In a typical dream she will walk into a gallery museum or studio, turn lucid, examine a completed painting or sculpture, and then later, when awake, attempt to create it.

On a superficial level the lucid dreamer seeks a solution to a waking problem, which the nonlucid dreaming mind then resolves. For example, a part-time artist places an empty canvas beside his bed before going to sleep. While lucid he concentrates on the need for inspiration to fill it. When he looks at the dreamed canvas, he says, it "magically fills with a picture." Once the dream has been fulfilled, lucidity helps to insure that he will remember it. Lucid dreams, including their minute details, are more easily remembered than other dreams. (To learn how to have lucid dreams, see "Power Tips: Controlling Your Dreams," *CNN*, April 1997.)

Conscious awareness during lucid dreams, enabling us to see, leap tall buildings, may also shed considerable light on the very nature of consciousness. We all experience boundaries—the feeling that particular responsibilities or patterns of behavior limit us. We're confined by plainfaced childhood by our role as lover, friend, or enemy. We often place boundaries between layers of our personal consciousness, delegating much of our awareness to the uncon-

scious. As children we learned to establish boundaries between reality and fantasy. Less obvious are the boundaries we place between our minds and bodies. We don't think of "me" as located in our elbows but somewhere deep within. Perhaps we set up boundaries between "self" and "other" and between "self" and the objects of the "real world." Even in lucid dreams, we often set up boundaries between the conscious dream ego and the creative source.

The concept of boundaries and its relationship to consciousness are central to the creative potential of lucid dreams. When we know we're dreaming, it is not unusual to break through the traditional boundaries. Lucid dreamers can push their hands through walls, fly and transform themselves into other creatures. Waking lucid dreamer Alan Worsley reports that in 45 attempts to penetrate "matter" in his dreams, he succeeded 41 times. Boundaries existed for him when he needed them—when, for instance, he wanted to play the piano, walk up stairs, open a door, use tools, or strip off his fingers. But when he desired, he could walk through brick walls or float above the linoleum.

In lucid dreams we may also continue to function with the boundaries we carry over from waking life. For Worsley, this was illustrated by his ability to toss a few

inches above the ground and his difficulty in flying more than 500 feet above it. It is possible, however, to dissolve all boundaries while lucid. Indeed, it is an essential aspect of moving into higher states of consciousness.

Feeling unrestricted of course, can cause problems. Stupefied people who suffer from frequent nightmares, psychiatrist Ernest Hartmann found that his subjects tended to have "thin" psychological boundaries. They were clearly sensitive people in many senses of the word, he writes. "They were easily hurt, they were empathic, in some cases they were unusually bothered by bright lights, loud noises." They also had thin boundaries in the sense of sexual identity. "None saw themselves as totally masculine men or totally feminine women; they were more willing than most people to see aspects of both sexes in themselves. And in their sexual preferences a large number were bisexual in their actions, or at least in their fantasy lives." In terms of dreaming, they were also unusual. Some described frequently waking from one dream and falling into another. Even their basic awake-wake boundaries were less solid. They described not being certain they were awake for quite a while in the morning, especially if they'd had a vivid dream.

Dissolving boundaries in lucid dreams is central to West German psychologist

Paul Probst's work with athletes, including himself. They won several important skateboarding championships primarily by training while dreaming. He has been able to put out his ego consciousness while doing the trick because of his training in lucid dreams, explains colleague Karel Ulich.

In other words, while dreaming, Probst dissolved the established boundaries between the mind and the body and between himself and "other" in order to fully experience his sport. More important, he comes over the lived dream form of his sport to actual waking performance.

It is standard practice for serious athletes to spend time imaging their game if they play basketball, they may see themselves running through smoothly executed plays and, losing, perfectly scored shots through the net. Swimmers may envision themselves expertly stroking their way to world-record times.

According to Colorado State University psychologist Richard Surm, Jack Nicklaus first visualizes his golf ball landing on the green and actually watches the bounce. Then he visualizes the arc of the ball in flight, and then his swing and the ball leaving the ground. His final step links them together in proper sequence.

Similarly, Surm says, former tennis champion Chris Evert "painstakingly rehearsed the forthcoming match. She

centered on anticipating her opponent's strategy and style and visualized herself countering with her own attack."

These mental imaging techniques are popular among athletes because they help improve performance. The National Research Council, an advisory branch of the National Academy of Sciences, in fact recently released a statement supporting the usefulness of mental practice for tasks that have significant mental components, especially when combining the imaging with physical practice. Surm compares the body-training, of mental imagery exercises to the powerful illusions of certain dreams. Perhaps he says, the major difference between such dreams and mental imaging is that we consciously control mental imaging.

They originally traced some of the positive effects of lucid dreaming on athletic performance to the improvement of the sensory field. It's crucial, for example, to execute a dreamed tennis stroke on a court in the hot sun with a crowd watching. He also found a relationship between improvement in athletic performance and the athlete's ability to shift his self-awareness, especially in those sports requiring quick and rapid reactions to changing situations.

The amount of actual practice, they argue, can be dramatically reduced by rehearsal to re-create the whole athletic

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he died when he slept alone. "I was given a room next to the maids," Mrs. Cunningham consulted no experts but used her own judgment in dozing his diet which included fruit, vegetables and raw hamburger. And roses. He loved to eat roses, but only if they were fresh. He wouldn't eat a faded rose.

When he became too big to keep Mrs. Cunningham sold him to a private park she believed would be ideal. Tragically he ended up in the circus instead. Anders had lost his own indulgent mother at the age of eight. He thought he had some insight into John Daniel. He knew what it was like to suddenly inexplicably exchange one home for another far less happy one. John Daniel's expression was intelligent but bewildered and beleaguered.

Too subtle for both grades, Anders was down to an audience of four. "So interesting," the teacher said brightly, although Anders did not think he had been listening. Probably he had been there with a different class last year and perhaps the year before that. Probably he had heard it before. Probably he had never listened. "Can you all thank Mr. Anders for showing us his gorilla?" the teacher suggested, and then, without pausing for thanks: "We won't see the gorilla if we don't praise it."

No one else was scheduled until three. Anders opened the workbook to get his own lunch and a book. He was studying Koko now, a gorilla raised by a Stanford graduate student and taught to sign. He planned to eat inside with his gorillas, but Miss Elliot arrived instead. "Have lunch with me," she said. "I made cookies. It's a beautiful day."

Miss Elliot often came at lunchtime. She had no real interest in Anders, or so Anders thought. Her own upbringing as the baby of a large, loving family had left her with a certain amount of affection to spare. She regarded Anders as a project. No healthy young man could be allowed to wander among the exhibits. Get him out. Give him a bit of medicinal companionship. Miss Elliot wore a uniform with an elephant on the sleeve and below that the black circle. Miss Elliot showed the elephants, but they weren't her elephants and Anders doubted she even understood the difference.

If he refused her offer, he would face her brand of implacable, party determination. He found it unbearable. So he nodded instead and put the book back beside his tools and his sketches. He joined her at the exit, opening the door.

Miss Elliot shook her head. "You always forget," she said. Her tone was indulgent but firm. She reached back past him, brushing across the black circle on his sleeve, and threw the switch that turned the gorillas off. They ate lunch on the grass outside the Hall of Extinction. The cookies were stale. The flowers were in bloom. ☐

## TWILIGHT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 75

lucid environment during lucid dreaming. A West German martial arts competitor who had studied karate, Tom Kwon Do and judo decided to also learn aikido, a discipline quite unlike the others. After studying for two years, however, he couldn't master his new art, largely because he previously learned movements refused to give way to the "softer" ones employed in aikido.

One night, after still not succeeding in wearing down the attacker and taking him to the mat, I went to bed somewhat disheartened. "The martial artist recalls 'The situation ran through my mind time and again. While defending myself, the correct balancing movement collided with my impulse to execute a hard defensive block, so that I repeatedly ended up unprotected and standing there like a question mark, a ridiculous and unwelcome situation for the wearer of a black belt. During a dream that night, I fell down hard one time instead of rolling away. I had made up my mind to ask myself the critical question in this situation: Am I awake or am I dreaming?' I was lucid. Without thinking very long about it, I began an unsupervised training session on defensive techniques with my dream partner. Time and time again I went through the exercise in a loose and effortless way. It went better every time."

After practicing in his lucid dreams for a week, the West German once again began training. "I amazed my instructor with almost perfect defense," he recalls. And even though we speeded up his tempo, I didn't make any serious mistakes. From then on, I learned quickly and a year later, received my training license.

To enhance athletic performance through practice in the lucid dream, Tholey believes, the dreamer must break through the extraordinary boundaries. A particularly successful example of this is an Olympic equestrian from South America, whom Tholey trained with lucid dreaming, helping him become "one with the horse." The rider achieved a state of perfect empathy with the animal, eventually perceiving the world through the eyes, ears, and nostrils of the horse. The rider then transferred his dream experiences to his actual riding.

In his lucid dreaming training, Tholey incorporates many of the elements of mental imaging. First, while awake, you should, of course, practice your sport. It's safe to say that no amount of lucid dreaming alone will improve your game if you never practice at all.

Second, watch expert athletes practice. If you play tennis, for example, watch players like Martina Navratilova, Boris Becker, or Steffi Graf closely, observing how they perform particular shots. Many videos are available that will allow you to

study a certain move or style of play. Form a mental model of perfect performance.

When you become lucid in a dream, replay your mental model. In this third step, as with waking practice, be sure to internalize the performance. You are the outstanding tennis player or downhill skier. Also be sure that your dream includes all the elements of performing the actual sport. If you're practicing Alpine skiing, paint the dream scene with trees, snow, wind, mountains.

Fourth—and this is the critical step according to Tholey—let your ego and body boundaries dissolve into the setting. "You are the skier, the skier, the skier, the skier, the skier," the wind. "Because I know I'm dreaming," dream psychologist Clayton Delaney says about ice skating in a lucid dream. "I can skate with wings on my blades. When I jump, I am weightless and I fly as I turn in the air. When I spin, my balance is perfect. I feel a happiness that is one of the most profound I have ever known, and I am at one with the world. I feel all the forces of the harmony of the universe in my skating, and the intensity of my joy knows no bounds." It is this creative ability to become part of each facet of the activity that enhances the performance potential of the dream and allows you to carry over the experience to waking performance.

Attempting certain movements while

lucid may break through the physical boundary of sleep. When, for instance, "I made a large movement of my leg while dreaming and sleep recording in the laboratory, I was lying facedown," says Worley. "My legs were covered with a light quilt that was lying loose. Thus my lower legs were free to move by swinging up, wards from the knee. In the dream which was lucid, I made deliberately kicking backwards with my right foot against a hard surface. Suddenly I woke and found that my right lower leg was in the air. The large movement was recorded on the polygraph and was followed in less than a second by characteristic signals indicating Worley was waking up." It seemed obvious to me that the kick in the dream had caused a large real movement of my physical leg.

Both the sleep environment and the intent of the dreamer may influence the outcome of such movements. On the surface, research subject Bob Tucker's lucid dream involving karate seems similar to Worley's but with a different outcome. "I was sending my take to high school when I saw a suitcase," Tucker says. "Curious, I opened it and found some large bills wrapped in paper. I was deciding if it was right or wrong to steal it. I looked around and didn't see anyone. So I started getting the large bills and some other items from the suitcase. Then I saw a large in-

clan who also wanted the money. He came at me. I ducked and executed a perfect side snap kick. The Indian took off his shirt revealing a muscular body. Angry the ran at me. I had perfect timing again, and perfectly executed an elevated front snap kick. He was laying on the ground and furious. He came at me again with a wide right hook, which I blocked with my right arm and then dove a punch into his solar plexus. He loudly said some slang words and finally left. I could not believe I fought so well. In other dreams my technique had been good but slow. In this one, however, all the moves were premeditated and executed perfectly. Not as if I were merely playing with this angry man.

Although Tucker and Worley both knew they were dreaming, Tucker was totally absorbed in his dream world, whereas Worley was not. Also, Worley was in a sleep lab, where it may take more effort and adaptation to pressure sleep. And as other research has discovered, the more absorbed the sleeper is, the more vivid the imagery, the more likely one will be able to successfully apply the dreamed action when awake.

Being at one with the world around you, whether in a dream or in what we perceive to be the real world, is crucial for achieving excellence in sports. It is what the archer experiences in Zen and the



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**Art of Archery** The Zen archer becomes so at one with the task, his lived world that he can shoot bull's-eyes while blindfolded. Similar examples can be found among many athletes and artists. Tholey, for example, tells of a European junior boxing champion who, after training in his lucid dreams, managed to go "into" his opponent. The boxer could predict his opponent's every move, in large part because the junior champion had practiced dissolving the boundaries between himself and his opponent.

The sports equipment takes over the function of sensory and motor organs. Tholey explains. Experienced skiers, for example, feel the snow and the terrain with their skis, and, rather than deliberately moving their bodies, they move the skis.

This absorption resembles that found among meditators. Indeed, several researchers have identified a positive relationship between meditation and sports performance in at least three groups of athletes: Olympic rowers, collegiate runners, and standing broad jumpers. Improvement in their performance may be partly due to meditation, which has been shown to affect such physical factors as muscle tension, reaction time, blood flow and heart rate. In addition, meditation researcher A. J. Delmon reports that ego boundaries become more fluid during meditation, a state frequently found in lucid dreams and sought by athletes.

Meditational dreams are, in fact, more likely to be archetypal, wild, bizarre, and memorable, a combination that may enhance creativity as well as self-awareness. Indeed, meditators and lucid dreamers score high on creativity measures. As inner consciousness grows, dream experiences increase in number, clearness, coherency, accuracy. And after some growth of experience, we can come to understand them and their significance to our inner life. The Indian sage Sri Aurobindo stated: "We can, with training, become so conscious as to follow our own passage, usually veiled to our awareness and memory through many realms and the process of return to the waking state. At a certain pitch of this inner wakefulness, this kind of sleep, a sleep of experience, can replace the ordinary subconscious slumber."

Creativity is, of course, at least partly a product of insight and the recognition of unexpected relationships. But a "sleep of experience" may serve to enhance our vision and help us reclaim what Michael Murphy and Steven Donovan refer to in their book *The Physical and Psychological Effects of Meditation* as "the full and external awareness that is our fundamental ground and source, in all of our experience." **GD**

Excerpted from *Control Your Dreams* by Jayne Gackenbach and Jane Boward, published by Harper & Row, Inc. in 1989 by Jayne Gackenbach and Jane Boward.