

DreamSpeak

An Interview With a David L. Kahn

Responses © David. L. Kahn
Questions by Robert Waggoner

Lucid dreamer David L. Kahn has recently completed a book about dream interpretation, "A Dream Come True", which recognizes the value of precognitive material and lucid dreams. The book is currently being reviewed by some publishers for possible publication. (You can purchase the self-published version on-line at <http://stores.lulu.com/lucidreverie>) David has been a lucid dreamer for nearly thirty years. He lives near Minneapolis with his wife Chris, son Jacob, and daughters Kristin, Amanda and Heather.

When did you first learn about conscious dreaming or lucid dreaming?

I was around ten or eleven years old. I saw a television show that had a piece on lucid dreams, explaining what they are and how you can make conscious choices in them, including to do things that would not be possible in real life. I was glued to the TV. The show had an example of a girl that was running on a beach while being chased by a person on a horse. She could not see who the person was, because the rider was wearing a black hood. She realized that this was a dream, stopped running, and turned to face the person on the horse. The horse stopped running and the rider took off her hood. She saw that the person on the horse was herself.

Can you recall your first lucid dream experience? Please, tell us about that.

The very first time that I realized that I was dreaming while the dream was occurring, I was perhaps 8 or 9. At that time I had never heard of a lucid dream and I wasn't aware that I could change the dream. My first true lucid dream was the same night that I watched the TV show. In the dream I was at school with my friends when I realized that I was dreaming. I took off and flew very fast over the school yard for a couple of minutes until I awoke.

What about that lucid dreaming experience (or those early experiences) did you find interesting?

I was surprised by how real the dreams felt. The dreams seemed as real as waking life, sometimes even more so. The colors became very rich and images became sharper. Sometimes I was surprised to find out that I didn't have total control. How can I know that I'm dreaming, but be unable to walk through this wall? There were also times that I recall telling my friends in the dream that they too were dreaming, so quickly I realized that there are different levels of lucidity.

At that time, what methods did you use to bring conscious awareness into the dream state? Has that changed over the years?

I did a lot of work with lucid dreams during my teen years. I was fascinated by Stephen LaBerge's work. I read his books and had an audiotape of his at the time. I had some success with MILD, but mostly I found incubation to be something that worked for me if I put enough effort into it. I also experimented with reality checks during the day, and I even bought a subliminal message tape. Mostly I just tried to keep lucid dreams on my mind, often with books or tapes. That made a big impact on the frequency of my lucid dreams. I recall one night as a teen having a lucid dream, waking up, then going back to sleep and having another lucid dream. In both dreams I attempted to fly my way out of my body. I didn't succeed, but I did have strange circular flights. These days I still tend to use dream incubation as my main method of inducing lucid dreams.

As you had more lucid dreams, were there any lucid dreams that made a deep impression on you? Tell us about them.

Nearly all of my lucid dreams have made a major impact on me, but there is one that was a major turning point in my life. I had this dream about twenty years ago, when I was in my later teens. I was in an empty room. There was a window on one of the walls. Nothing caused me to question my reality, but I became lucid. The colors became very rich. I walked over to the window and looked out onto an open meadow with a single tree in the middle of the meadow. My vision focused in so that I could clearly see fine details of the individual leaves. Each leaf was luminescent, glowing with a bright green color. I realized at that moment that each leaf was alive, but so too was the entire tree. I felt the connection between all living things.

Interesting! What did you take from this lucid dream experience? What did it come to mean to you?

I remember that dream as though it happened last night. It had a major impact on my life in subtle ways that may be hard to quantify. I see the world and the people in it differently. I am reminded of the Native American saying, "No tree is so foolish as to have branches fight amongst themselves." In addition to the metaphoric meaning, I literally have never looked at trees the same since. I notice the individual leaves, not just a single tree. When I hear the sound of wind blowing through the leaves, it has a calming affect on me. It is much like the peace you might feel while taking a walk on a beach listening to the crashing sound of waves.

What experiments have you tried when lucid in the dream state? Please describe and tell us about some of those?

One experiment that has stuck with me over the years took place in another of my teenage lucid dreams. I decided that I wanted to hear what music sounded like in a dream, so when I became lucid I made my stereo appear in front of me. I had a cassette tape in my hand and tried to put it in the tape player. For some reason the tape wouldn't fit, so I just jammed it into the tape deck and forced it shut. Then out of nowhere I heard music. It was unbelievable. The sound was coming from everywhere, as though it came out of the air itself. It was the most crystal clear sound that I have ever heard. Interestingly, prior to having this dream I had a few nights of failed attempts at having a lucid dream. In one of those dreams I was hearing music. The name of the song in that dream was called "Dreaming Again." It is as though my mind was attempting to help me achieve my goal.

Have you ever tried “surrendering to the dream” or letting the dream show you something unexpected or unknown? Or have you had lucid dream experiences that were totally unexpected? What happened?

It is interesting that you ask this. I had a recent lucid dream that was perhaps the longest lucid dream that I've ever had. It lasted several minutes. After becoming lucid, I repeated nearly identically the events of an out of body experience that I had many years ago. I walked through the same window and began floating up above the same house and trees. I then felt that I wasn't just floating, but I was being lifted under my arms by something that I could not see. I had a brief moment of doubt and began to drop, with a feeling in my stomach like being on a roller coaster. I realized that I had to let go of my doubt, and I continued to float. I then turned my arms so that my hands were facing up. I repeated several times, "Show me what I need to see." As I was saying these words, I felt myself being quickly turned in different directions. In one direction I saw a silhouette of a large tree in a sunset. Eventually I went over the ocean and was dropped on an island, where my lucidity continued as I explored the island.

I realized a couple of interesting things after this dream. One is that I recognized the tree silhouette inside of a sunset as the wallpaper image that I have on my computer. Later that day I took a look at my computer screen wallpaper, which hadn't changed in months, and I noticed something that I had never seen before. I saw something very small next to the tree. I zoomed in on it and saw that it was a headstone. It wasn't scary. The feeling that I had is that something has been in front of my eyes all this time and I didn't see it until now. The other realization that I made is why I kept repeating the words, "Show me what I need to see." I had recently written a poem into a chapter about spiritual dreams in my book. My dream was telling me to listen to my own words. Here they are...

Enlighten me to all I see

*The storm at night, the sun by day
The black, the white, the shades of grey*

*The waves, the serenity of a calm sea
Dead branches for firewood, the living tree*

*The garden flower that smells so sweet
The cigarette butt tossed on the street*

*The house, the cars, the money you've made
The piles of bills you've left unpaid*

*Your friends, your family, the people who care
Those whose presence you cannot bear*

*Are you trapped or are you free?
Enlighten all it is you see*

Have you experienced lucid dreams that made you question the nature of reality?

I have precognitive dreams fairly often in both lucid and non-lucid dreams. No matter how often that happens, I still find myself with a sense of awe. In a recent lucid dream, I had a very bizarre experience unlike any other dream that I've had. I was standing in front of a bathroom mirror

when I became lucid. I noticed that the shower curtain was blue, and I also noticed geometric shapes on the shower curtain. I knew that I would be blue when I looked back at the mirror. Indeed my skin was very blue, except for my neck in the area that I recently had surgery. I looked away from the mirror for a few seconds, and when I looked back something very strange happened. I *became* the color blue. It wasn't just my skin color. I was actually the color, as though without me blue would not exist. This is one of my most difficult dreams to express in words, because it is hard to describe what it feels like to be a color.

What questions did this bring forward about lucid dreaming and the nature of consciousness?

More than ever I feel as though we have only touched the surface of what reality is, and where we can go with our minds. I have no doubt about precognitive dreams. I think anyone that experiences them has a knowing that they are real, even if it can't be proven scientifically (yet). I also have this sense that there is something guiding me that is beyond my own subconscious. There are too many synchronicities, and somehow they have never steered me wrong. If it was just coincidence, I would think that I'd be steered wrong at least on occasion.

I understand that you have almost finished a book on dreaming, and have a chapter on lucid dreaming. Tell us about the book.

The book is called *A Dream Come True*. It discusses many different interpretation techniques that I believe would be affective for both experienced and non-experienced dreamers. My belief is that many, perhaps most, dreams include some precognitive material and that the dream cannot be fully interpreted without seeing the past, present and future aspects of the issue you are dreaming about. I also discuss recognizing angles and 3-dimensional space within dreams as a means of recognizing what may be precognitive material. The more basic interpretation sections of my book include such topics as understanding why your dream takes place in your childhood bedroom, recognizing oversized objects, etc.

On the chapter on lucid dreaming, tell us a bit about your viewpoint; what are you trying to get across to readers?

The information that I provide about lucid dreaming is something that experienced lucid dreamers would easily understand. I felt it was important to include a chapter on lucid dreams early in the book, because I have included various lucid dream examples in other chapters ranging from spiritual dreams to precognitive dreams. I think experienced lucid dreamers would find some similarities in their dreams and gain further ideas about what they can do with their own lucid dreams, while less experienced lucid dreamers would gain a better understanding of the value of lucid dreaming. In an example that I use in a chapter on "Actions and Figures of Speech", I tell a story of a series of synchronistic events that occurred both in and out of my dreams.

An interesting part of a lucid dream is included in which I ask a dream character for help in dealing with a financial issue that I was having. The character replied, "Ask the old man." I don't know why, but I awoke with the thought that "ask the old man" could be an acronym (ATOM). I thought about atoms, and realized that the night before I had been reading about molecules in a book by Dr. Wayne Dyer. I have a lot of respect for Dr. Dyer's work, and he happens to be nearly the same age as my father. I realized that he is "the old man." With this I knew that my answer was to ask myself what Wayne Dyer would do in this situation. Instantly I heard myself say, "Surrender and trust that the universe will take care of this." So, my dream wasn't so much giving

me financial advice as attitude advice. Although in the end, the synchronistic events mentioned in this chapter of my book did end up manifesting some real life solutions.

It seems like nowadays many people have heard about lucid dreaming, and have a basic conceptual understanding. Does it seem odd that individuals that are used to having individual dream experiences would have so many similar common lucid experiences? What might that suggest?

Non-lucid dreams certainly seem to have a lot of common themes, as indicated in Patricia Garfield's book *The Universal Dream Key: The 12 Most Common Dream Themes Around the World*. It would make sense that there is at least some commonality among lucid dreams as well. What I find interesting is that lucid dreams seem to have their own similar experiences, often different from those of non-lucid dreams. Flying dreams, dreams of light, deceased family or friends, the richness of colors, and so forth don't seem to fit into the standard mold of dreams. It seems that many of the differences between standard and lucid dreams are spiritual in nature, as though by reaching certain levels of consciousness we become more open to those experiences. The most spiritual of lucid dreams have a feeling of coming from someplace other than my own mind, and I have heard this described by others.

What kind of lucid dream experiments could move forward the understanding of the potentials of the dream state and lucid dreaming? What would you like to see?

It would be interesting to look at precognitive dreams or remote viewing dreams by two or more people simultaneously having lucid dreams (or at least in the same night) in order to see if there is a difference in the degree of accuracy. On a personal level, I am interested in dreams of light. I am curious about experiences of others that may be similar to my tree of life dream. Perhaps next time I should try to communicate with the tree, or even to become the tree. Also, after my experience of becoming the color blue, I am curious as to what else we might become. I think many of us have become animals, different people, or even floating consciousness in our dreams. What would it be like to become a beam of light, water, gravity, or a geometric shape?

Thanks David, for your observations into lucid dreaming. Any parting thoughts?

Trust the guidance of your dreams and then manifest their messages into reality. That is how my book, articles and this interview came into being. I felt guided, and over time I began to rid myself of doubt as my dreams had shown me. Also, realize that sometimes there are signs right in front of your face...

*Dreams
Represent
Explanations
Acronyms
Metaphors
Symbols*