



Reality Checks For Lucid Dreaming

Are you recording your dreams as discussed over on the [dream journaling page](#)? Hopefully so. Now, dream journaling is important and will help you remember your dreams, yet how is that going to help you become lucid? Well, unfortunately, simply recording your dreams may not be enough. I can recall many, MANY time where I have been in a dream, but not quite realized it. There have been at least 3 dozen times when I was in a dream and I told myself, if I can fly I'm in a dream. Then I proceeded to start jumping, at first just a foot or two, then higher and higher until I was jumping hundreds of feet into the air. However, I would fall back down and not be able to fly. So even though I was jumping to a height of hundreds of feet, my conclusion was that I wasn't dreaming, simply because I couldn't fly. What I needed was a better system for checking, within the dream, as to whether I was dreaming or not.

That brings the discussion to the main topic - reality checks. First a quick definition - a reality check is a way for you to test, in your dream, whether you are dreaming or not. So you hear this definition, but you are still not sure exactly what a reality check is. Well, let me share some examples with you:

- Looking at words or numbers and not being able to make them out clearly
- Looking at words or numbers, looking away, and then looking back to see that they have changed
- Jumping off the ground and either going very high or even floating - basically defying the laws of normal physics
- Being able to melt the scenery around you
- Look at your hands very carefully - examine them
- Try pushing your hands through glass or a mirror - or even a solid object
- Ask yourself "exactly how did I get here?"
- Simply asking yourself "am I dreaming?"

So those are some examples of reality checks - how do you actually perform a reality check? What is the reality checking strategy to be used? Great questions! The entire idea behind reality checks is to perform them throughout your waking day. You perform them on a consistent basis, and you are very aware and conscious, or as the Jedi would say mindful, of your surroundings and environment. So every so often throughout the day you perform one (or multiple) of the reality checks above and ask yourself very mindfully - "am I dreaming?". You can also ask this question

The ultimate goal is for reality checks to become such a normal part of your waking life that they also become a part of your dream life. Now you have been recording your dreams, so as you record your dreams you remember more and more of your dreams. As you record more and more of your dreams, you become better at remembering your dreams. As you become better at remembering your dreams, you start having more vivid dreams. As you have more vivid dreams, you start to really become conscious in your dreams. And as you become more and more conscious in your dreams, you start to remember to perform your reality checks. And finally, you'll perform a reality check, and suddenly you will realize you are dreaming!

So let's go into more detail about when to perform reality checks during the day. Whatever works for you is best. And what works for you is mainly what you are going to stick to. Now you can perform reality checks at set intervals throughout the day. That just gets you in the habit of performing them. And remember we want to be very deliberate about the reality check. Take your time and really experience the reality check. In addition to set intervals, you can do a reality check every time you are in a less common area. Maybe waiting in the post office you perform a very deliberate reality check. Or at the bank, or in the grocery store - you get the idea. Perform reality checks constantly throughout the day - ideally both at set intervals and also whenever you find yourself in uncommon surroundings.

Why do we want to be so mindful when we perform our reality checks? Well, remember how I was testing for dreaming, and I could leap hundreds of feet in the air but I couldn't fly, so my erroneous conclusion was that I was not dreaming? Had I been performing daily reality checks mindfully, I would like to think that the ability to leap hundreds of feet into the air would have set off my internal lucid dreaming alarm. Maybe not, I don't know. But I believe the chances of my becoming lucid would have dramatically increased.

What do I really mean when I say that we need to be mindful when performing our reality check? I mean that you should really take your time. If you spend 2 seconds looking at your hands for example, that is not a mindful reality check. Really examine your hands. Examine the grooves and the finger prints. Really examine the shape of the palms and fingers. This doesn't have to take 5 minutes - maybe 30 seconds or so, but certainly enough time to do a thorough examination. And the goal here is to carry that habit into your dreams. When you perform that very careful examination on your hands in your dreams, you should notice shifting and a lack of real definition.

Now some people believe that you should be perform two reality checks every time you do a reality check. They believe that your brain is so powerful that it can fool you. If you are recording your dreams in the morning, hopefully you will remember any failed reality checks. A failed reality check would be exactly my jumping hundreds of feet in the air and concluding I'm not dreaming since I can't fly. So if that starts happening to you, do what I didn't do. Change your reality check, or add a 2nd reality check, or do both.

Hopefully you will soon be in the habit of performing reality checks, and that will absolutely spill over into your dreams sooner or later.

Next, let's discuss the lucid dreaming technique of the [lucid dreaming back to bed method](#).

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