Lucid Dream Control: Mechanisms, Challenges, and Future Directions

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Abstract

Lucid dreaming (LD) is the phenomenon during which dreamers are aware they are dreaming and may be able to influence dream content. Dream control, plays a critical role in the applications of LD across both clinical and non-clinical domains and may be a key determinant of therapeutic success. However, not all lucid dreamers are able to effectively influence their dreams, and achieving dream lucidity does not automatically translate into meaningful control. Despite the growing interest in LD, research on the mechanisms, reliability, and effectiveness of dream control remains limited. This work critically reviews the current state of research on dream control within LD, identifies gaps in knowledge, and proposes future directions for addressing challenges in reliably controlling lucid dreams. We begin by exploring the elements of dreams that can be influenced through dream control (including dream environment, body, and narrative) and discuss strategies, challenges, and individual differences in dream control. Additionally, we explore the clinical and non-clinical applications of manipulating lucid dreams and call for future research that focuses on standardizing dream control assessment methods, empirical studies evaluating dream control strategies, and a deeper understanding of the cognitive, emotional, and neurophysiological factors that contribute to successful dream control. Finally, the Lucid Dream Control Trait (LDC-T) and Lucid Dream Control State (LDC-S) scales are proposed as new standardized methods to evaluate dream control during LD. These questionnaires provide individual scores for specific aspects of LD control and overall dream control proficiency.

Keywords: lucid dreaming, dream control, questionnaire, volitional agency, metacognition, sleep-based interventions

Highlights

- Dream control plays a significant role in the applications of lucid dreaming.
- Dream control remains under-studied and lacks systematic assessment methods.
- Two new questionnaires are proposed to assess trait and state level dream control

1. Introduction and Scope

Lucid dreaming (LD) refers to the phenomenon where individuals become aware that they are dreaming while the dream is ongoing (LaBerge & Ornstein, 1985). During this state, dreamers may be able to manipulate elements of the dream, ranging from the environment and narrative to their own actions. As frequent LD remains a rare phenomenon, current research primarily focuses on identifying reliable and replicable induction methods. These methods include cognitive strategies (e.g., reality testing, mnemonic induction), external sensory cues, and pharmacological interventions, and have yielded promising results in increasing the likelihood of achieving lucid dreams (Tan & Fan, 2022). Additionally, most of the remaining work in the field aims to understand the trait characteristics of lucid dreamers through questionnaire-based assessments (Hess et al., 2017; Stumbrys et al., 2014; Stumbrys & Erlacher, 2017) and neuroimaging methods (e.g., functional MRI and EEG) (Baird, Erlacher, et al., 2019; Dresler et al., 2012).

LD presents a unique state of consciousness, combining waking cognition elements with dreams' immersive nature, offering promising real-world applications (Baird et al., 2019). For clinical therapy, it can provide patients with a safe space to reframe distressing dream scenarios and enhance mental well-being (Bergamini & Wiebe, 2022; Holzinger et al., 2020; Spoormaker et al., 2003; Tzioridou et al., 2025). LD can serve as a unique model for studying consciousness, memory consolidation, and the brain's capacity for self-reflection during sleep (Dresler et al., 2019; Hobson, 2009). Additionally, a variety of skills can be rehearsed during LD, with potential subsequent improvement in wakefulness (Bonamino et al., 2023; Peters et al., 2023). These applications and benefits of LD depend not only on successful LD induction and higher LD frequencies. The ability to effectively manage the dream experience—crucial to LD's therapeutic and practical applications—relies on dream control, i.e., the dreamer’s ability to alter dream content and events. Once lucidity is achieved, a dreamer can engage in DC to navigate specific dream scenarios or achieve particular goals. The ability to modify aspects of the dream—such as changing a distressing nightmare into a benign scenario—can be crucial in determining whether the experience is empowering or ultimately unhelpful or frustrating. A lack of DC skills can leave dreamers confined to the settings their dreams present, thus limiting the ways they can use LD (Bonamino et al., 2024). Similarly, limited dream control may prevent dreamers from appropriately adjusting exposure to specific scenarios, which could be problematic, for instance, in the treatment of phobias and traumas -where the inability to appropriately modify distressing elements of a dream could exacerbate anxiety or trauma-related symptoms, thus potentially hindering therapeutic progress (Tzioridou et al., 2025)

DC can vary significantly within and between individuals (Bonamino, 2024; Stumbrys et al., 2014). Some dreamers report limited control over specific aspects of the dream, while others experience considerably higher degrees of control, in which they can dictate the entire dream narrative in detail.

Some dreamers experience a high degree of control in one dream, while in another, they may feel unable to exert any control at all. Further, the level of DC can also fluctuate within a single dream (Mallett et al., 2021).

It is important to acknowledge that full control over the dream is rarely, if ever, attainable. Dreams remain inherently unpredictable; unexpected events can arise, surprising the dreamer and altering the dream course. External stimuli, emotional shifts, or spontaneous dream content may interfere with intended control. Moments of instability or disruptions, such as sudden scene changes, partial or complete loss of lucidity, or sudden awakenings, can also occur. The ongoing interaction between intention and spontaneous dream content highlights the dynamic nature of dream experiences, where control, like dream lucidity, exists on a spectrum rather than as an absolute state (Mallet et al, 2021). In addition to the mere insight into the dream state, DC enables the practical use of LD in clinical and non-clinical settings. Understanding the variability in DC, both within and between individuals, is crucial for advancing the therapeutic potential of LD. Despite the growing body of research on LD frequency and induction, there remains a critical gap in understanding the mechanisms, reliability, and effectiveness of DC. This work aims to address this gap by critically reviewing the current state of research on dream control within LD and exploring the factors that contribute to differences in DC. Additionally, two new questionnaires—the Lucid Dream Control Trait (LDC-T) and the Lucid Dream Control State (LDC-S)—are proposed as standardized tools for assessing individual differences in dream control proficiency.

2. Lucid Dream Control

DC encompasses manipulating varying elements, which can be categorized into several domains: dream body, dream environment, dream characters and objects, physical laws, and cognitive control. While each category represents a distinct aspect of DC, in practice, the boundaries between the categories are not strict and can extend across multiple forms. Oneiric manipulations are inherently interconnected, meaning that influencing one dream element can have a ripple effect on others. For example, a dreamer might create a magic wand and use it to cast spells. The act of using the wand involves manipulating the dream body and movements, the outcome of which is shaped by the nature of the object created - the *magic* wand – granting them magical abilities and the ability to alter the physical laws within the dream (minshpie, 2013).

2.1 Dream Body

Control of the dream body involves altering one's physical form and movements within the dream and includes control of one's own movements and actions, appearance alterations, and sensory manipulation. Movements can range from simple actions like walking, jumping, or picking up objects to more complex sequences such as rehearsing specific motor skills or practicing complex routines (Bonamino et al.,

2023; Peters et al., 2023). Dreamers can also change their own physical characteristics, such as height, strength, hair color, or other specific body features. Appearance alteration can extend to complete or partial body transformation, where dreamers morph into entirely different beings, animals (Lemyre et al., 2020; Sackwild & Stumbrys, 2021), switch gender (incakolaisgood, 2022), and even inanimate objects (Cabbageinator, 2023; querque505, 2022). Such transformations can offer unique experimental experiences, such as seeing the world from a bird's viewpoint or having the power of giant or mythological creatures (Hurricane-Dragon, 2023). Additionally, it might enable people with permanent bodily limitations/alterations, such as amputations, paralysis, or prosthetic implants, to explore other types of bodies without restrictions (Peters et al., 2025). Sensory manipulation involves altering one's senses, such as enhancing vision, touch, or hearing or even diminishing pain perception. This level of control allows for experiences that may not be possible in wakefulness, such as experiencing new colors or sensations. Dreamers may also choose to 'mute' particular senses to intensify others for a richer experience. One dreamer in Bonamino et al. (2024), for example, reported prolonging the sensation of pain whilst practicing planks and pull-ups during LD to increase his pain tolerance in wakefulness.

2.2 Dream Environment

Through control of the dream environment, lucid dreamers can modify the settings, scenery, and overall atmosphere of their surroundings (Bonamino et al., 2024; Schädlich & Erlacher, 2018; Stumbrys et al., 2014). This can involve subtle changes, like altering the color or size of a room, or more dramatic shifts, such as transforming an indoor space into an open field or creating entirely new worlds (DeusMortus, 2012). Further aspects that can be manipulated include lighting (e.g., turning night into day; nina, 2011) and weather or climate conditions (NWC, 2013).

2.3 Dream Characters and Objects

Dream characters, often perceived as other people, animals, or beings, can be influenced by enabling their presence within the dream space or by altering their appearance and behavior. Dreamers may summon specific figures, modify their personality and physical appearance, make them disappear, or influence how they act and respond (Lemyre et al., 2020; Schädlich & Erlacher, 2018). For instance, dreamers could transform the behavior or appearance of intimating figures into friendlier ones to change the course of the dream into less threatening.

Dream characters can be summoned or altered with specific intentions, such as for personal growth, skill development, or for therapeutic and entertainment purposes. For example, dreamers might call upon dream figures to seek guidance, support, advice for life challenges, spiritual insight, or creative problem-solving (Lemyre et al., 2020; Sackwild & Stumbrys, 2021; Stumbrys & Daniels, 2010; Waggoner, 2008). Accounts from lucid dreamers indicate that dream characters can be summoned or persuaded for motor learning and sports purposes, such as using dream characters as training partners or for guidance for sporting tactics and nutrition (Schädlich & Erlacher, 2018). In therapeutic contexts, dreamers can

purposely summon or engage with characters to confront or process past trauma or difficult experiences (Sackwild & Stumbrys, 2021). Lastly, DC of dream characters can be used purely for enjoyment, such as creating favorite fictional characters, engaging in fantasy-like adventures, sexual interactions, or other hedonic experiences (Bonamino et al., 2024; Sackwild & Stumbrys, 2021). Object manipulation is equally diverse, from creating or removing specific objects to altering their properties, including enhancing or reducing their size, changing their texture or color, or giving them magical properties. Dream object manipulation often overlaps with other DC domains, particularly when it serves as a tool for transforming the environment or modifying the dreamers' abilities and LD experience. For instance, creating a door as an object to transport the dreamer to an entirely new dream setting or giving a broom or carpet magical abilities to allow the dreamer to fly. Dream characters and objects can also be transported to different settings at the dreamers' will (Bonamino et al., 2024).

2.4 Physical Laws

Dreamers may also choose to manipulate aspects of their LD experience relating to physical laws such as gravity, time, and other fundamental laws of physics. For instance, gravity could be altered or removed entirely, enabling activities like flying, floating, or levitating one's dream body, other dream characters, or objects. Some dreamers report shifting their perspective within the dream, experiencing it from a third-person viewpoint, as if observing themselves from an external vantage point rather than embodying their own dream body. This type of DC has been used by dreamers for motor learning purposes, allowing them to watch themselves perform actions from a detached viewpoint to refine and analyze techniques or correct movements (Bonamino et al., 2024; Schädlich & Erlacher, 2018). Time within the dream space can similarly be slowed down, sped up, paused, or even reversed, allowing one to relive past events, accelerate dream scenarios, or extend or suspend particular moments within the dream entirely. For instance, Bonamino et al. (2024) describe a case in which a dreamer deliberately rewinds his dream to rehearse various opening strategies for an upcoming boxing match. Similar accounts of time manipulation for skill enhancement, including slowing down and speeding up times, have also been reported by Schädlich and Erlacher (2018). It is also possible to bend other fundamental laws of nature, such as altering objects' elasticity, density, or solidity, allowing dreamers to experience phenomena like walking through walls as if they were immaterial (Peters et al., 2025). Additionally, dreamers may create entirely new physical laws unique to their dream world, such as enabling superpowers and magical abilities like breathing underwater (TheLuciDCage89, 2022), casting spells (Lemyre et al., 2020), and creating light, fire, or other objects out of thin air.

2.5 Cognitive control

Cognitive control refers to the dreamer's ability to exert cognitive influence over their dreams, including their thoughts, emotions, and awareness. One fundamental aspect of cognitive control is the ability to maintain dream lucidity within the dream – recognizing that one is dreaming is, in fact, what defines being in a lucid dream (LaBerge & Ornstein, 1985). Given the dynamic nature of LD, maintaining

lucidity can require deliberate cognitive effort to prevent the loss of dream awareness, which may result in falling into a non-LD state or waking up prematurely (Sandell et al., 2024). Maintaining dream lucidity may thus, at least at times, be an active rather than a passive state. While lucidity alone does not directly translate to DC (i.e., one can experience a lucid dream without necessarily being able to exert control), sustaining higher levels of lucidity likely enhances the dreamer's capacity for DC (Mallett et al., 2021).

3 Lucid dreaming control techniques

Overall, there is a scarcity of empirical evidence regarding DC strategies and their effectiveness. Tholey (1983) documents various dream control techniques but does not present a systematic data analysis method. Similarly, several "how-to" books discuss such strategies but also lack systematic analysis approaches (Gackenbach & Bosveld, 1991; LaBerge & Ornstein, 1985; Waggoner, 2008, 2014), indicating that much of the reported information on DC strategies is predominantly anecdotal. However, some recent studies adopting more systematic methodologies have identified comparative DC methods. For instance, Leymre et al. (Lemyre et al., 2020) examined the DC strategies in a sample of lucid dreamers using an online survey and content analysis, highlighting the potential of these methods for treating chronic nightmares. In an interview study, Bonamino et al. (2024a) used reflexive thematic analysis to explore the LD experiences of adolescent frequent lucid dreamers, including their DC. Several methods for dream control have been proposed.

3.1 Pre-sleep Intention, Visualization, and Auto-suggestion Methods

Similar to how lucid dreams can be induced via intention and auto-suggestion methods before sleep, their content can also be influenced. Tholey (Tholey, 1983) reports that psychotherapy patients who had set the intention before sleep to gain insight into their psychological issues through LD found themselves addressing those conflicts during the lucid state. The use of intention and auto-suggestion prior to sleep to manipulate dream content has also been reported by lucid dreamers outside of psychotherapy (Bonamino et al., 2024; Lemyre et al., 2020).

3.2 Control by Wishing or Visualization

Dreamers can change the dream environment, own dream body, can travel to other locations in space and time, and conjure objects and dream characters 'by *s*imply wishing it so' (Bonamino et al., 2024; Lemyre et al., 2020; Tholey, 1983). This strategy is common among lucid dreamers (Lemyre et al., 2020). Additionally, DC of the dream space can occur when dreamers close their eyes and visualize a new setting before reopening them, transporting the dreamer to the desired location (Bonamino et al., 2024). Peters et al. (2025) also reported the use of visualization strategies for dream environment control.

Personalizing or imitating other figures, such as fictional characters or animals, has also been reported to result in acquiring their powers or transforming into them (Lemyre et al., 2020).

3.3 Control by Emotional Projection

This method is based on the concept that a dream's content and environment are shaped by the dreamer's emotional and psychological state (Tholey, 1983). For example, interacting with a threatening figure may lead to different outcomes depending on the dreamer's approach. Conciliatory behavior will likely diminish the figure's intimidating presence. Conversely, responding with fear will likely intensify their threatening nature, making it appear more menacing. Lucid dreamers have suggested that to prevent the emergence of negative or nightmare-like experiences, one should actively avoid negative thoughts during LD (Bonamino et al., 2024). Projecting positive energies such as "sending love … compassion and understanding" can effectively manage threatening dream characters (Lemyre et al., 2020).

3.4 Control by Means of Looking

Focusing inventively on a specific point in the dream space may lead to awakening (Tholey, 1983). The focal point begins to blur, and the dream environment fades. In this transitional state, some skilled lucid dreamers can reshape the dream environment as desired.

3.5 Control by Verbal Commands

Interacting with and addressing dream characters can change their appearance or behavior. For instance, posing the question "Who are you?" can cause dream figures of strangers to change into familiar ones (Tholey, 1983). Verbal commands can make dream characters appear or disappear from the dream space (Bonamino et al., 2024; Lemyre et al., 2020). They can also influence dream characters' roles or behaviors, such as directing them to adopt a particular role (e.g., a guide) or perform specific actions (Lemyre et al., 2020). Verbal commands can be used to influence the properties and appearance of objects or the dreamer's own oneiric body, produce desired outcomes (e.g., freezing time in the dream space), gain greater DC abilities, or seek specific answers by posing questions to the dream itself and subconscious (Lemyre et al., 2020). Engaging with dream characters and the dream space via verbal utterances and questioning has also been extensively explored by R. Waggoner and can serve as a powerful tool for personal growth and self-discovery (Waggoner, 2008, 2014).

3.6 Control by Actions

Engaging in certain actions can elicit specific experiences. For example, leaping from great heights or jumping can induce flying or floating during LD (Bonamino et al., 2024; Lemyre et al., 2020; Tholey, 1983). Turning around (Lemyre et al., 2020) and creating geometrical shapes by movement (Hamilton & Waggoner, 2020) can also lead to changes in the dream space. There are also accounts of dreamers

who changed the weather in their dreams by flexing their muscles (NWC, 2013) and creating tornados by moving their hands in a circular motion (Clark-Kent, 2013).

3.7 Control by Assistance of Other Dream Characters or Objects

Dreamers can enlist the help of other dream characters to elicit specific experiences, such as learning to fly with the guidance of a ghost, having ecstatic experiences through a dream hypnotist, and being metamorphized or transported to other dream spaces by a magician (Tholey, 1983). Objects can also be used for several purposes, including facilitating transformations (e.g., drinking a potion to switch gender; incakolaisgood, 2022), traveling within the dream space, and enabling specific actions, such as passing through portals or doors to teleport to new locations or using magic wands (minshpie, 2013), carpets, umbrellas, or brooms to fly (Bonamino et al., 2024; Lemyre et al., 2020).

4 Challenges with dream control

DC is inherently limited and does not always work as planned. Disruptions with DC are not confined to novice lucid dreamers - in fact, experienced ones may also encounter them – and can arise across all forms of DC (Bonamino et al., 2024; Peters et al., 2025; Schädlich et al., 2017; Schädlich & Erlacher, 2018; Stumbrys et al., 2014). It has recently been observed that lucid dreamers who engaged more in dream control faced more disruptions than those who engaged in it less (Peters et al., 2025), suggesting that achieving complete dream control is inherently challenging and that certain aspects of the dream may remain unpredictable or resistant to change for some dreamers despite their DC abilities.

Difficulties have been reported with manipulating the dream body (e.g., execution of indented movements and actions) as well as the dream environment, objects, characters, and physical laws like time and gravity (Bonamino et al., 2024; Peters et al., 2025; Schädlich et al., 2017). DC appears more difficult when dreamers attempt to alter aspects of the dream they are less familiar with, such as performing new movements or introducing supernatural elements (Peters et al., 2025). Control of the dream body is the most frequently reported form of DC, while influencing the dream environment, characters, and other elements is less common (Bonamino et al., 2024; Peters et al., 2025; Stumbrys et al., 2014). Time appears to be particularly challenging to manipulate (rajaculate, 2011). Pre-existing mental representations may constrain DC. For example, some lucid dreamers require a clear mental image of the desired settings or prior experience in specific locations to successfully modify their surroundings (Peters et al., 2025). Further, some dreamers' experiences are restricted by a personal sense of logic or realism (Bonamino et al., 2024). Dreamers may also forget their waking intentions or run out of time to achieve a desired LD experience or execute intended dream control before their dream concludes (Bonamino et al., 2024; Peters et al., 2025; Stumbrys et al., 2014). These challenges with DC highlight the unpredictable and dynamic nature of dreams, which can still surprise the dreamer despite their efforts to exert control. This unpredictability is a defining feature of the dream state, where

‘waking’ logic and stability can give way to sudden changes or inconsistencies. Difficulties manipulating the dream as intended can hinder LD experiences, leading to frustration, sudden awakenings, or loss of lucidity (Bonamino et al., 2024; Peters et al., 2025; Stumbrys et al., 2014). In some cases, lucid dreamers may become discouraged from attempting to manipulate certain aspects of their dreams in the future or may only attempt DC when necessary (Bonamino et al., 2024; Peters et al., 2025), such as to prevent nightmares or undesired events from unfolding (Bonamino et al., 2024).

The intended waking benefits of the LD practice may also be affected. For example, distractions were observed during LD motor practice of a dart-throwing task, impacting waking performance outcomes, with improvements only seen in lucid dreamers who encountered few distractions during their LD practice (Schädlich et al., 2017). The disruptions reported by participants included dream characters interfering with the practice (“The doll kept throwing darts at me”, p.2367), having to adjust the dream environment or training equipment (“At some point I threw pencils”, p. 2367), difficulties with maintaining stability or lucidity with the dream (“I noticed it was getting somewhat instable ... I managed three or four more throws and then I woke up”, p.2367), and forgetting instructions (“I did the first throw with my right hand and then I realized: ‘Oh no I have to use my left hand!’”, p.2367). Other examples illustrating the challenges in maintaining dream control, particularly in the context of motor practice, are provided by Peters et al. (2025) and Bonamino et al. (2024). For instance, a participant in Peters et al. (2025), who was instructed to practice juggling during LD, described attempting to juggle but finding himself unable to control his dream, managing only to hold the juggling balls in his hand: “Once I had the balls, I don’t know if I was nervous or the dream world didn’t want me to juggle. Then I actually just had the balls in my hand” (p.33).

It is plausible that difficulties with DC could also hinder the effects of LD applications beyond motor practice, such as therapeutic interventions for trauma. In these contexts, LD could, for instance, be used to reframe distressing dream content like safely confronting a threatening dream figure. However, if the dreamer struggles to manipulate the dream – such as failing to transform the threatening figure into a non-threatening one or redirecting the dream’s narrative – this could reduce the emotional or psychological benefits of the intervention.

5 Overcoming Challenges with Dream Control

5.1 In-dream strategies

Despite dreams' dynamic and unpredictable nature, lucid dreamers can employ various strategies to overcome challenges with DC. When direct control fails, lucid dreamers can sometimes find alternative methods to achieve their goals (Bonamino et al., 2024). For example, some lucid dreamers unable to fly have successfully used mediums like flying carpets, brooms, paragliders, and flying cars (Bonamino et al., 2024; Picard-Deland et al., 2020). Similarly, those struggling to create objects or characters may

search for them within the dream space (Bonamino et al., 2024). Some instinctively check their pockets for specific objects, often finding them there (Lemyre et al., 2020). Although searching may seem distinct from deliberate dream control, it could function as an unconscious mechanism for manifesting desired dream elements, akin to control by wishing - where the mere act of looking, driven by belief or anticipation, can shape the dream environment, much like explicitly willing something into existence. Rather than actively summoning an object or figure, the dreamer's implicit expectation that it exists somewhere in the dream may be sufficient to bring it into existence. The act of searching may thus represent an indirect form of dream control.

Reframing dream elements may also be helpful. For example, a lucid dreamer who struggled to change the appearance of dream characters but was proficient in modifying the dream environment reported treating characters as part of the dream settings – enabling him to more easily make them appear or disappear ("...if I wanted to get rid of the audience in front of me, I see the audience more of like a part of the world environment."; (Bonamino, 2021). The way dreamers rationalize dream events also likely shapes DC. Bonamino (2024) reports dreamers who introduce plausible mechanisms - such as pulling a lever – to align dream transformations with their expectations of how reality works within their lucid dreams. By doing so, they could successfully carry out the desired control.

> Especially with like changing the environment and stuff like it does have to be realistic or otherwise it won't happen. So like for example … there'd be like a submarine and then I'll be like: 'I wish that like, I could go out of the water and like start to fly in it.' Erm so there would be I don't know I would touch like a lever … or a button or something … and then like the wings would like come out of the sides or something. (p. 107)

Enhancing dream control requires structured training methods that allow dreamers to build and refine their control skills. One promising strategy is the gradual progression of task difficulty (Peters et al., 2025). Many lucid dreamers struggle to maintain dream stability when attempting complex manipulations too soon. Dreamers may develop greater stability and skill over time by first focusing on smaller, controlled changes—such as controlling their own dream body or creating objects - before attempting more advanced transformations like teleportation or time dilation.

5.2 Waking strategies

5.2.1 Pre-sleep Intention, Visualization, and Autosuggestions

Setting pre-sleep intentions and engaging in visualization or auto-suggestion can shape the dream experience. These techniques can serve as a compensatory mechanism for lucid dreamers who may struggle with direct DC of the dream environment (Bonamino et al., 2024). By setting intentions or practicing visualization or auto-suggestion before sleep, dreamers can induce specific dream settings,

allowing them to achieve desired LD experiences without actively influencing the dream settings during the dream itself.

5.2.2 Mindfulness

Mindfulness and attentional training during wakefulness are key factors in improving dream control. Studies suggest increased mindfulness is associated with higher LD frequency and greater control over dream content (Stumbrys & Erlacher, 2017). Training individuals in focused awareness, cognitive flexibility, and non-reactivity may help them sustain lucidity and effectively manipulate their dreams once they have entered the dream.

5.2.3 Using Virtual Reality (VR) for Dream Control Training

An innovative approach to dream control training might involve virtual reality (VR). VR can simulate altered physics, dynamic environments, and avatar embodiment in ways that closely resemble dream-like scenarios (Denzer et al., 2022). By practicing within VR environments, individuals may develop the cognitive flexibility and adaptation skills necessary for effective DC. In a study on VR and vestibular experiences in dreams, pre-sleep vestibular VR experiences increased the number of lucid dreams experienced. However, also the qualitative aspects of lucid dreams, e.g., participants reported higher dream control (Picard-Deland et al., 2020).

In other ways, dreamers could use VR to simulate walking through walls, altering gravity, or reshaping environments, mirroring the changes they might attempt during a lucid dream. Exposure therapy within VR could potentially be used to train individuals in controlling dream narratives, particularly concerning nightmare management. Additionally, simulating common dream control failures—such as objects or characters not responding as expected—could help dreamers develop adaptive strategies for overcoming these obstacles in their actual lucid dreams. Lucid dreamers report using focused attention to stabilize the dream or manipulate specific dream elements (Bonamino, 2024). Eye movement tracking in VR training could simulate this process, helping individuals refine their ability to use gaze as a control mechanism within dreams. Integrating these techniques with VR-based simulations can potentially create a promising multi-modal training system for optimizing dream control.

6 Traits of Dream Control

The ability to manipulate lucid dreams varies considerably across individuals. While some dreamers can influence certain aspects of their dreams, others struggle to exert the same level of control (Bonamino et al., 2024; Peters et al., 2025; Stumbrys et al., 2014). Even executing specific actions, such as flying or running, may come easily to some but remain limited or elusive to others (Bonamino et al., 2024; Stumbrys et al., 2014). It is also important to note that not all lucid dreams involve DC (Mallett et al., 2021). Such variations reflect the complexity and multifaced nature of controlling lucid dreams, which can be influenced by a range of personal and situational factors. Similar to how dream lucidity can

fluctuate both between and within dreams, so too can the ability to exert control over the dream (Mallett et al., 2021). Thus, like lucidity (Moss, 1986), DC can be considered a continuum. In this spectrum, experiences range from minimal or complete absence of control to highly refined mastery (Mallett et al., 2021). Further, the level of dream lucidity appears to directly influence DC, with higher lucidity levels associated with greater control (Mallett et al., 2021).

Another aspect potentially contributing to DC is self-efficacy, or an individual's belief in their ability to manipulate their dreams. Confidence, mental clarity, and focus may enhance a dreamer's DC ability (Bonamino et al., 2024; Stumbrys et al., 2014). Conversely, hesitation and self-doubting may hinder efforts. Expectations also play a role: believing an action or experience is possible within the dream could determine whether a dreamer can achieve their desired level of DC (Bonamino et al., 2024; Peters et al., 2025). Empirical research, however, presents a nuanced perspective. A study by Sammer et al. (2024) found that while LD frequency and meta-awareness were significant predictors of overall LD skills (including awareness and control), these associations did not remain significant after correcting for multiple comparisons. This suggests that the influence of self-efficacy on dream control is unclear and may not be significant after accounting for other factors. Prior experience may also shape DC abilities, both in previous lucid dreams and in wakefulness. Lucid dreamers have reported struggling to influence unfamiliar elements (Peters et al., 2025). For some, LD "has to make sense" (Bonamino et al., 2024), suggesting that their LD experiences may be constrained by a personal sense of logic or realism. This indicates that control of a given aspect of the dream only occurs when perceived as plausible or based on previous waking experiences (Bonamino et al., 2024; Peters et al., 2025). For example, Bonamino (2024) provides an account of a dreamer who cannot fire a gun during LD because he had never handled one during wakefulness. Similarly, flying and introducing fantastical or bizarre dream elements may be challenging or require significant cognitive effort for individuals who might not easily accept such occurrences. Certain dream-related beliefs—particularly paranormal and "dream law"—may constrain dream control, potentially by shaping limiting expectations about what is possible in a lucid dream (Sammer et al., 2024).

Unlike novices or less experienced lucid dreamers, proficient dreamers tend to exert greater control over their dreams and manipulate a broader range of dream elements (Peters et al., 2025). This is expected, as experienced lucid dreamers likely had more opportunities to explore and refine their techniques for influencing dreams. Further, lucid dreamers use LD for different purposes and have different motivations (Bonamino et al., 2024; Schädlich & Erlacher, 2018) and, as a result, may be inclined to experiment and manipulate different aspects of their dreams. For instance, individuals who wish to use LD for practical purposes such as emotional regulation, problem-solving, and motor learning likely require a significantly higher degree of control than those who simply enjoy passively watching their lucid dreams.

Beyond individual differences, age-related factors may also play a role in DC development. Accounts from lucid dreamers indicate they experienced greater DC abilities in childhood. Children may feel a stronger need to exert control, given the higher frequency of nightmares and night terrors in younger populations. Children first report experiencing LD as a means of escaping nightmares (Voss et al., 2012). This necessity may encourage them to experiment with controlling different aspects of their dreams, allowing them to develop and refine their DC skills.

In contrast, older lucid dreamers may experience a less frequent need or motivation to manipulate their dreams, potentially leading to a decline in DC proficiency. Without regular reinforcement, these skills may become less accessible in adulthood. Overall, DC seems to be shaped by combining individual ability experience and motivational factors. However, research on DC is limited and predominantly based on self-reported data, highlighting the need for more empirical evidence to better understand the mechanisms underlying DC and the factors that influence it.

7 Applications

7.1 Nightmares

The ability to intentionally interact with and shape the dream world is of growing interest across various fields. Among these, one of the most prominent areas is the clinical treatment of nightmares, for example, those associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Tzioridou et al., 2025). In these cases, lucid dream therapy (LDT) allows patients to become aware that they are dreaming and manipulate the dream, which might reduce the nightmares' emotional impact (Ouchene et al., 2023). The ability to manipulate the nightmare scenario is critical for achieving these therapeutic outcomes. For example, a patient with recurrent anxiety-inducing nightmares reports the following strategy for redirecting a nightmare with an unknown attacker chasing her in the dark. After LDT, she reported: “I was able to fight and beat the attacker. I don’t think that I can talk to him, but now that I know I am stronger, I feel less frightened.” (Spoormaker et al., 2003, p.184). After LDT, she still had nightmares, but with a lower frequency. For some patients, however, merely understanding the concept of LD and its potential to gain control over the dream can alleviate emotional distress (Spoormaker et al., 2003; Spoormaker & van den Bout, 2006). In other cases, simply realizing one is dreaming is insufficient when the dreamer cannot actively alter distressing elements. For instance, a PTSD patient might become lucid during a trauma-related nightmare but remain unable to change key aspects of the dream, such as the presence of threatening figures or distressing events. Research shows that DC can help transform distressing content into less threatening experiences, allowing the dreamer to confront their trauma, ultimately reducing the severity of nightmares over time (Holzinger & Levitan, 2006; Ouchene et al., 2023; Spoormaker et al., 2003; Tzioridou et al., 2025). However, patients can lack the ability to manipulate these scenarios reliably, limiting the therapy's effectiveness (Tzioridou et al., 2025).

Advanced DC skills would allow dreamers to not only realize they are dreaming but also modify traumatic scenes, confront aggressors, or even change the emotional tone of the dream, potentially leading to more lasting therapeutic benefits.

7.2 Lucid Nightmares

Within nightmare therapy, lucid nightmares present a particularly intriguing phenomenon (Tzioridou et al., 2025). Unlike typical nightmares, in which the dreamer is unaware they are dreaming, lucid nightmares occur when an individual becomes consciously aware they are in a dream yet still experiences fear, distress, or horror (Bergamini & Wiebe, 2022) and are often characterized by a lack of DC despite efforts (Mallet et al., 2022). Although lucid nightmares are relatively rare (Stumbrys, 2018), they can be particularly frightening - causing dreamers to awaken in a state of distress (Bonamino et al., 2024) - and have been linked to poorer mental health outcomes (Stumbrys, 2018). While lucidity offers the potential for the dreamer to alter the nightmare scenario, the persistence of fear and the inability to effectively manipulate the dream make lucid nightmares particularly challenging. In lucid nightmares, the dreamer's awareness is paired with a sense of helplessness, leading to heightened fear. For example, a lucid dreamer experiencing a nightmare about being chased might realize they are dreaming but still feel unable to stop the pursuer or change the settings. This paradox—being aware of the dream state yet unable to control it—highlights the critical role that DC plays in overcoming distressing LD experiences. While research on lucid nightmares remains limited, interventions aimed at enhancing DC abilities could be beneficial.

7.3 Mental Well-Being, Depression, and Anxiety

LD allows dreamers to explore emotional experiences and rehearse coping strategies in a controlled, consequence-free space. This ability to interact with distressing scenarios without the same real-world consequences has significant therapeutic potential for anxiety, depression, and phobia treatment (Tzioridou et al., 2025; Zhunusova et al., 2022). Research suggests that LD facilitates cognitive restructuring, emotional regulation, and self-efficacy, mechanisms central to psychotherapeutic interventions (Sackwild & Stumbrys, 2021). By modifying dream narratives, individuals can confront fears, reframe maladaptive thought patterns, and gain a sense of control over distressing experiences. The therapeutic effects of LD on anxiety and depression may be explained through multiple mechanisms. One key factor is cognitive reappraisal, where dreamers actively reinterpret distressing scenarios within the dream, enabling positive cognitive restructuring, which may help reduce ruminative thought patterns often seen in depression (Sackwild & Stumbrys, 2021).

Additionally, emotional processing in LD enables individuals to simulate feared or distressing situations in a controlled way, similar to imaginal exposure therapy, which is used to treat anxiety disorders (Holzinger et al., 2020). Interestingly, Holzinger et al. (2020) observed a decrease in depression and

anxiety symptoms, even when nightmare frequency did not change, demonstrating the direct benefits of LD on mental well-being. Further, LD also creates a shift in locus of control, which is particularly relevant for depression (Presson & Benassi, 1996). Depressed individuals often exhibit an external locus of control, feeling powerless over their circumstances. By gaining control over the dream world, LD may facilitate a shift towards an internal locus of control, strengthening the belief that individuals can influence their own thoughts and emotions, which is linked to psychological well-being (Taitz, 2011). In treating phobias, LD provides a safe environment for graded exposure. Individuals can recreate specific fears in their dreams, modulate their intensity, and practice coping mechanisms, facilitating desensitization without the same real-world consequences (Bonamino et al., 2024; Zhunusova et al., 2022). However, without the ability to manipulate dream scenarios, individuals may struggle to regulate exposure effectively, which would limit therapeutic benefits. These findings indicate that dream control and not necessarily dream awareness may carry most of the therapeutic potential of LD (Tzioridou et al., 2025).

7.4 Non-Clinical Cognitive and Emotional Rehearsal

LD offers cognitive and emotional rehearsal opportunities in non-clinical applications, allowing dreamers to practice tasks ranging from social interactions to artistic exploration and problem-solving. In social contexts, DC allows dreamers to rehearse interactions that provoke anxiety or require social practice, such as complex interpersonal conflicts, networking scenarios, or self-expression (Bonamino et al., 2024). Individuals can practice these interactions with dream characters by manipulating the dream and preparing themselves for different outcomes. This risk-free environment enables dreamers to experiment with communication strategies and emotional responses without the pressure of real-world consequences (Schädlich & Erlacher, 2012). While public speaking is one specific scenario where LD has shown potential, the application extends to various social interactions that can help individuals build confidence and reduce anxiety (Bonamino et al., 2024).

Beyond social rehearsal, artistic and creative exploration is another application area for LD. Many artists, writers, and musicians use lucid dreams to generate new ideas or refine existing works (Roklicer, 2023). LD is a unique brain state where the usual boundaries of reality do not apply, creating a space where creativity can flourish, enabling dreamers to explore new artistic concepts, experiment with abstract ideas, and simulate the creative process. For instance, musicians might compose original music, while painters could experiment with color palettes, spatial dynamics, or surreal forms unavailable in wakefulness. Writers may craft entire storylines or test dialogue sequences, using the dream as a creative workshop. The boundless nature of dreams allows for a level of creativity unrestricted by the physical constraints of wakeful life, creating an environment limited only by the dreamer's own imagination (Stumbrys & Daunytė, 2018).

7.5 Motor Skill Enhancement

LD provides a space for refining motor skills without physical constraints. Unlike traditional mental imagery, lucid dream motor practice (LDCP) allows immersive engagement with motor actions, combining cognitive and kinesthetic elements (Bonamino et al., 2023; Peters et al., 2023). Research suggests that executing movements in lucid dreams activates neural networks similar to waking motor practice (Dresler et al., 2011; Erlacher & Schredl, 2008; Stumbrys et al., 2016). Practicing a skill during LD has been shown to improve performance upon waking (Bonamino et al., 2023; Peters et al., 2023), and neuroimaging studies confirm sensorimotor system involvement in dream-based training (Dresler et al., 2011). One advantage of LDCP is the ability to refine movements without physical fatigue (Bonamino et al., 2024). Dreamers can experiment with variations and correct mistakes in real time. Those with strong dream control skills can modify elements to suit their practice, such as reducing gravity for high jumps, employing a third-person perspective for movement analysis, and adjusting body coordination for efficiency.

Aside from maintaining lucidity, setting clear intentions, and remembering those intentions, dreamers must be able to exert control over their dreams. Reports of difficulties in maintaining control include dream characters interfering, issues with training equipment, and movement execution (Schädlich et al., 2017). For example, in a LD dart-throwing study, Schädlich et al. (2017) found that the number of disruptions encountered during LDCP affected subsequent waking performance. Improvements were only observed in participants who encountered few distractions, while those who encountered more showed no improvement. Further, dream distractions can hinder the dream practice itself. Participants may "waste" time trying to overcome the challenges in controlling their dreams rather than actually practicing the intended task. For example, in Peters et al. (2025), a participant reports having to search for juggling balls: "... I wanted to juggle, but I couldn't because I didn't have the balls and then I had to go look for balls." (p.33). Similarly, a lucid dreamer in Bonamino et al. (2024) spent the entire lucid dream attempting to recreate a rock-climbing problem without completing any of the intended motor practice: "I couldn't get the rock feeling how I wanted it to feel, I could not I could not get the moves the right distance apart… I just could not get any of it to work right… Like until I woke up I was just tryina fix this one problem." (p. 13) (Schädlich et al., 2017).

While problems with dream control can indeed impair dream practice and subsequent waking performance, they may also, in some cases, present learning opportunities. Bonamino (2024) reports a case where a dreamer failed to recreate the desired weight and length of spinning pois. Despite being unable to adjust them as he had hoped, this provided an opportunity for him to practice with pois of varying lengths and weights, promoting subsequent adaptability and skill transfer during wakefulness.

> Either the pois were too heavy too light too long too short. Yeah, I just couldn't get it right. I was aware that it wasn't the right weight so, even though I was like practising

> it with like different weights and different things to real life, since I practised with so many different like things in my dream and like I was aware that it was like different, I was able to adapt (in real life) when I went from like my pois to like a second pair of pois (of different length or weight) that I had. And I was able to transfer between the two along. I was able to adapt a bit better with that. (p. 102)

These examples illustrate the challenges dreamers may face in maintaining consistent dream control during LDCP.

8 Categorizing Dream Control by Application

DC remains a central challenge for scientific research and applied fields, including therapy (Tzioridou et al., 2025) and motor skill enhancement (Bonamino et al., 2023; Peters et al., 2023). While studies have explored various methods for inducing lucid dreams (Tan & Fan, 2022), relatively little research has focused on improving dream control itself. Below, we discuss future directions in categorizing, measuring, and enhancing dream control abilities to optimize the applicability of LD. A crucial step in advancing research is establishing a framework that differentiates specific dream control abilities by application. While core competencies such as intention setting, dream stabilization, and maintaining lucidity are universally essential across all contexts, distinct skill sets become particularly relevant depending on the intended use of LD. Understanding these distinctions can help guide research and interventions better suited to specific applications, whether they involve therapy, motor skill practice, problem-solving, creativity, or other areas.

In therapeutic contexts, the primary focus of LD control skills is emotional regulation and introspection (Tzioridou et al., 2025). For instance, when working with nightmares or trauma, lucid dreamers need to be able to stay calm and navigate strong emotions, such as fear or anxiety. This can involve confronting frightening dream figures or transforming them into something less threatening. Emotional regulation thus becomes an essential skill for successfully navigating distressing dream content. Additionally, the ability to engage in self-reflection and introspection allows individuals to explore the emotional layers of their dreams, allowing for deeper insight into unresolved issues or past traumas.

In contrast, lucid dream control for motor skill rehearsal likely requires different abilities, focusing on precise body control and the simulation of realistic physics. In these cases, lucid dreamers use their dreams to practice physical actions—like running, jumping, or other specific motor movements, like playing an instrument—while maintaining precise control over their bodies. Achieving effective and meaningful motor skill rehearsal depends on maintaining accurate body control and ensuring the dream environment adheres to settings comparable to physical practice.

Problem-solving applications emphasize cognitive coherence and structured thought processes. In these contexts, lucid dreamers should maintain logical consistency within the dream, allowing them to approach problems systematically and evaluate potential solutions that mirror real-world decision-making. Moreover, individuals can simulate or access memories within the dream, enabling cognitive processing and information recall. These skills are especially beneficial in problem-solving tasks that require precise, organized thinking and the ability to test solutions in a controlled dream environment.

Using lucid dream control for creativity and open-ended exploration relies on flexibility, adaptability, and navigating dynamic and evolving dreamscapes. In creative contexts, dreamers can benefit from flexible control, where the dream environment and narrative can shift organically to accommodate new ideas and artistic exploration. The ability to create entire worlds or shape complex dream scenarios promotes an environment that encourages creative freedom, helping to generate fresh concepts, ideas, or artwork. Free from the limitations of waking logic, abstract thinking is a key part of this process, allowing dreamers to explore new and unexpected ideas.

Overall, establishing a clear framework that categorizes lucid dream control by application will aid in the design of targeted research and facilitate the development of tailored interventions for various applications. By recognizing the distinct skills required for each desired application, whether therapeutic, motor skill-related, problem-solving, creative, or other, researchers can better understand the nuances of controlling lucid dreams and optimizing the potential of DC across diverse domains.

9 Measuring Dream Control: Questionnaires, Interviews, and Standardization

To assess dream control effectively, researchers require reliable measurement tools that capture the full range of control abilities. The Lucid Skill Questionnaire (LUSK) (Schredl et al., 2018) is currently the most widely used tool for assessing lucid dreaming skills, but it remains highly general. It does not explicitly target distinct aspects of dream control in detail. There remains a need for a more comprehensive, structured, and multi-method approach to measuring DC abilities. One key consideration when developing such a tool is the need to account for the significant inter-individual variability in LD experiences. Dream control can vary widely between individuals but across separate lucid dreams. This variability suggests that dream control assessments should be adaptable to capturing these differences in abilities over time and across specific dream experiences. While some researchers might use a single questionnaire to assess a person's overall LD skills, others may find it more beneficial to aDCinister scales relating to a more specific dream. A more nuanced and adaptable measurement tool would allow researchers to capture the full complexity of lucid dream control, accounting for individual variability and contextual factors.

9.1 Lucid Dream Control Trait (LDC-T) and Lucid Dream Control State (LDC-S) Questionnaires

We propose two questionnaires designed to assess lucid dream control from two distinct perspectives: general control skills and control within a single, specific LD experience. These tools evaluate the frequency of various LD control abilities, including cognitive control, emotional regulation, and control of the dream body, characters, objects, environment, and laws of physics. The first scale, Lucid Dream Control Trait (LDC-T), assesses general dream control skills, encouraging participants to reflect on their overall abilities across multiple lucid dreams. The LDC-T consists of 36 items and is scored on a 4-point Likert-type scale (Never = 0, Rarely = 1, Sometimes = 2, Often = 3, Always = 4). The Lucid Dream Control State (LDC-S) focuses on a specific LD experience, gathering detailed information about how control manifests within a particular dream context. The LDC-S consists of 36 items and is scored on a 4-point Likert-type scale (Not at all = 0, Slightly = 1, Moderately = 2, Quite a bit = 3, Completely = 4). For both scales, the option "N.A." is also included to account for dream control aspects that do not apply to participants (e.g., they never attempted them or were unaware they were possible). Both the LDC-T and the LDC-S can help identify individual differences in dream control and track changes over time and across different lucid dreams. The LDC-T and LDC-S are depicted in Appendix A.1 and A.2 respectively.

These scales were developed through extensive theoretical research, expert discussion, and a thorough refinement process. To ensure the quality of the questionnaire, we combined insights from the current work, existing literature, expert consensus, and community feedback. We first designed the questionnaire based on the current state of the literature, ensuring that each item reflected key theoretical aspects of DC. Through expert discussions, we refined the items' wording, structure, and focus on optimizing clarity and relevance.

A validation of both questionnaires is currently underway. The scales were posted online (including Reddit, r/LucidDreaming, and other social media platforms), and data are collected from lucid dreamers. This also includes detailed feedback on item clarity and relevance, providing valuable insights into further refining the questionnaires. While this initial validation will be based on expert review and community feedback, further research is required to assess the questionnaire's reliability, validity, and overall structure. We encourage future research to use the proposed items as a foundational framework for assessing lucid dream control. These items can serve as a starting point for further exploration and refinement and can be tested in diverse contexts to validate their applicability across different populations and dream experiences. One of the main strengths of the LDC questionnaires is the opportunity to score each dream control category individually. This allows for the assessment of different subcategories of DC with several potential benefits, including identifying areas of

improvement within dream control for optimizing LD applications and targeted recruitment strategies for LD research.

9.2 Microphenomenological Interviews

Beyond structured questionnaires, microphenomenological interviews provide a qualitative approach to understanding dream control (Demšar & Windt, 2022). These interviews use guided recall techniques to reconstruct dream experiences in detail, capturing nuances that might be missed in survey-based methods. Participants can describe the subjective process of attempting and executing dream control, including the cognitive and emotional challenges they face, which might be especially hard to capture in a questionnaire. This approach allows researchers to identify patterns, compare successful and failed dream control attempts, investigate individual differences in DC experiences, and explore how waking cognitive strategies translate into in-dream control. Researchers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of dream control mechanisms by integrating rich and nuanced first-person accounts with quantitative measures. Standardization efforts should establish a universally recognized framework for assessing dream control. Such frameworks should account for the complex and subjective nature of lucid dreams by integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches. A key challenge lies in balancing the need for generalizability whilst capturing the individual variability in how dream control is experienced and expressed.

9.3 Empirical Validation of Dream Control Strategies

To date, all proposed DC strategies are based on subjective or anecdotal accounts, highlighting the need for empirical validation. Future studies should focus on systematically evaluating these strategies using controlled intervention designs to assess their effectiveness and reliability. For instance, experimental studies could implement specific dream control techniques and measure their impact on dream content and lucidity, providing objective data to support or refine these approaches. Additionally, exploring the neurobiological underpinnings of DC through neuroimaging methods could offer insights into the brain regions and mechanisms involved in dream control. Investigating individual differences like personality traits may also help identify individual differences factors that influence the success of DC techniques.

10 Conclusion

Dream control remains an underexplored yet essential component of LD research. Future efforts should focus on systematically training individuals to improve DC, developing precise measurement frameworks, and categorizing dream control skills based on their relevance to different applications. By integrating structured questionnaires, microphenomenological interviews, and standardization efforts, researchers can create a robust and unified approach to assessing dream control. Moreover, exploring novel training techniques, including VR-based and eye gaze-supported methods, may provide practical tools for improving dream control skills. By refining these approaches, we can move towards greater

clarity and standardization in the study of dream control, ultimately benefiting both scientific inquiry and applied fields such as therapy, cognitive training, and creative exploration.

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Lucid Dream Control for Specific Experiences Questionnaire (LDC-SE)

A lucid dream is a dream during which you are aware of being in a dream and which may involve control of the dream content and events. This survey assesses how easily you were able to influence different aspects of a specific, single lucid dream. Please answer based on this specific experience rather than your typical lucid dream experiences. Each question assesses a specific aspect of dream control, and you will be asked to indicate how well you were able to perform it.

There are no right or wrong answers, so please respond honestly. The questionnaire covers different aspects of dream control, including cognitive control, dream physics, dream body control, dream characters, dream environment, and emotional regulation. It should take approximately 10–15 minutes to complete, and your responses will remain anonymous and used for research purposes.

Use the following scale to indicate the degree to which this was the case for you during the dream:

Not at all = 0; Slightly = 1; Moderately = 2; Quite a bit = 3; Completely = 4

If a question doesn't apply to you (e.g., you never attempted a particular type of dream control or were not aware that it was possible), mark it as "N.A.").

Your rating should reflect how often you succeed when attempting a specific type of dream control. For example, selecting "Rarely" (1) means that when you attempt this action, you rarely succeed. It does not mean that you rarely attempt it and therefore, succeed rarely.

Scoring Instructions

Each item is scored as follows: Not at all = 0; Slightly = 1; Moderately = 2; Quite a bit = 3; Completely = 4. If an item is marked as "N.A." it is excluded from the scoring. It is not treated as 0.

To calculate the score for each dream control category:

1. Add up all your scores for that category (ignore the "N.A." items). This is your **category score**.
2. Count how many questions you answered within that category (ignore the "N.A." items).
3. Multiply the number of answered questions by 4. This is your **maximum possible score for that category**.
4. Divide your **category score** by the **maximum possible core** to get your **dream control category score**.
5. Your **category control score** will be between 0 and 1. Higher scores indicate stronger dream control and lower scores weaker dream control.

To calculate the Total Lucid Dreaming Control Score:

Score each item from 0 (Never) to 4 (Always). If a question doesn't apply to, mark it as "N.A." and skip it in the calculation.

1. Add up all your scores (ignore the "N.A." items). This is your **total score**.
2. Count how many questions you answered (ignore the "N.A." items).
3. Multiply the number of answered questions by 4. This is your **maximum possible score**.
4. Divide your **total score** by the **maximum possible score** to get your **total lucid dreaming control score**.
5. Your **total lucid dreaming control score** will be between 0 and 1. Higher scores indicate stronger dream control and lower scores weaker dream control.

Cognitive Control

This set of questions assesses your overall cognitive control during your lucid dream, including setting and remembering intentions, maintaining dream stability, and sustaining dream lucidity. Please rate each of the following on a scale from 0-4 where:

Not at all = 0; Slightly = 1; Moderately = 2; Quite a bit = 3; Completely = 4.

If a question doesn't apply to you, mark it as "N.A.".

To what extent were you able to deliberately and successfully…	**Your Score**
1. ... maintain lucidity without waking up?	
2. ...remember a pre-set intention while lucid in the dream?	
3. ...prolong the lucid dream when it started to fade or feel unstable?	
4. ..remain focused on a chosen goal or task without getting distracted?	
5. ...prevent losing lucidity or waking up before completing a desired action or intention?	
6. ...experience dream control without major distractions or instability (e.g., struggling to exert control, being distracted by the dream or dream characters)?	
7. ...regain focus or control when dream distractions or instability occur? If you answered "Completely" at question 6, please select "N.A." here.	
Category Score *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Questions Answered *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Cognitive Dream Control Score *(Cognitive Dream Control Score = Category Score / Maximum Possible)*	

Dream Physics

This set of questions assesses your ability to alter time, gravity, and spatial properties within the lucid dream. Please rate each of the following on a scale from 0-4 where:

Not at all = 0; Slightly = 1; Moderately = 2; Quite a bit = 3; Completely = 4.

If a question doesn't apply to you, mark it as "N.A.".

To what extent were you able to deliberately and successfully…	**Your Score**
8. …alter the passage of time (e.g., speed up, slow down, pause, or rewind)?	
9. ...modify gravity (e.g., making objects, yourself, or others float, reducing or increasing gravity)?	
10. …switch viewpoint (e.g., from first-person to observer perspective)?	
11. ...pass through solid objects or walls?	
12. …change the fundamental properties of objects or your surroundings (e.g., density, solidity)?	
Category Score *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Questions Answered *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Dream Physics Control Score *(Dream Physics Control Score = Category Score / Maximum Possible)*	

Dream Body Control

This set of questions assesses your ability to control your own dream body. This refers to your capacity to change the form, proprioception, and senses of your dream body. Please rate each of the following on a scale from 0-4 where:

Not at all = 0; Slightly = 1; Moderately = 2; Quite a bit = 3; Completely = 4.

If a question doesn't apply to you, mark it as "N.A.".

To what extent were you able to deliberately and successfully…	**Your Score**
13. ...modify your dream body (e.g., change size, shape, or abilities)?	
14. … shapeshift or transform into another being (e.g., animal, plant, person, fictional character) or inanimate object?	
15. ...disable or alter your visual perception (e.g., black and white vision, looking through binoculars)?	
16. …disable or alter your auditory perception (e.g., make sounds feel louder or softer)?	
17. …alter other sensory perception (e.g., intensity or quality of smell, taste, or touch)?	
Category Score *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Questions Answered *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Dream Body Control Score *(Dream Body Control Score = Category Score / Maximum Possible)*	

Dream Movement Control

This set of questions assesses your ability to control the movements of your dream body. Please rate each of the following on a scale from 0-4 where:

Not at all = 0; Slightly = 1; Moderately = 2; Quite a bit = 3; Completely = 4.

If a question doesn't apply to you, mark it as "N.A.".

To what extent were you able to deliberately and successfully…	**Your Score**
18. …perform fine motor actions, such as writing, playing an instrument, or using tools, with precision?	
19. …perform athletic movements, such as sprinting, climbing, or gymnastics, with ease?	
20. …maintain balance while performing actions like jumping, standing on one foot, or walking on narrow surfaces?	
21. …take-off, fly, and control your flight direction and altitude (e.g., turning mid-air, adjusting speed, stopping)?	
22. …float (not fly)?	
23. …perform coordinated motor actions with other dream characters (e.g., dancing, fighting, playing sports together)?	
Category Score *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Questions Answered *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Dream Movement Control Score *(Dream Movement Control Score = Category Score / Maximum Possible)*	

Dream Characters Control

This set of questions assesses your ability to summon, communicate with, and modify dream characters. Please rate each of the following on a scale from 0-4 where:

Not at all = 0; Slightly = 1; Moderately = 2; Quite a bit = 3; Completely = 4.

If a question doesn't apply to you, mark it as "N.A.".

To what extent were you able to deliberately and successfully…	**Your Score**
24. …summon or remove a specific dream character?	
25. …alter the appearance of a dream character (e.g., change their clothes, height, hair, or other physical features)?	
26. …alter the behavior of a dream character (e.g., ordering them to complete an action or behave in a specific way)?	
27. …have a casual conversation with a dream character (e.g., exchanging greetings or small talk)?	
28. …have a deep conversation with a dream character (e.g., seeking life advice, new knowledge, solving a problem)?	
Category Score *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Questions Answered *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Dream Characters Control Score *(Dream Characters Control Score = Category Score / Maximum Possible)*	

Dream Environment Control

This set of questions assesses your ability to alter settings, objects, and spatial continuity within a dream. Please rate each of the following on a scale from 0-4 where:

Not at all = 0; Slightly = 1; Moderately = 2; Quite a bit = 3; Completely = 4.

If a question doesn't apply to you, mark it as "N.A.".

To what extent were you able to deliberately and successfully…	**Your Score**
29. …travel to another location by actively changing your surroundings (e.g.,teleporting, using a portal, turning around/corners)?	
30. …alter the weather or climate (e.g., making it rain or snow)?	
31. …create or remove objects (e.g., trees, buildings, specific elements of your surroundings)?	
32. …control the lighting (e.g., make the dream space brighter or darker, changing the hue/color)?	
Category Score *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Questions Answered *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Dream Environment Control Score *(Dream Environment Control Score = Category Score / Maximum Possible)*	

Dream Emotion Control

This set of questions assesses your ability to manage fear, anxiety, excitement and other emotions to sustain dream lucidity and control. Please rate each of the following on a scale from 0-4 where:

Not at all = 0; Slightly = 1; Moderately = 2; Quite a bit = 3; Completely = 4.

If a question doesn't apply to you, mark it as "N.A.".

To what extent were you able to deliberately and successfully…	**Your Score**
33…remain calm and collected in an overwhelming, stressful, or particularly exciting dream scenario	
34. …remove an element that induces fear, stress or other unwanted emotions?	
35. …change your emotional state (e.g., induce joy or relaxation)?	
36. ...maintain lucidity and control when experiencing strong emotions (e.g., excitement, fear, frustration (e.g., excitement, fear, frustration)?	
Category Score *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Questions Answered *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Dream Emotion Control Score *(Dream Emotion Control Score = Category Score / Maximum Possible)*	

Total Lucid Dreaming State Control Score

	Your Score
Total Score *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Total Questions Answered *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Total Lucid Dream Control Score *(Total Lucid Dream Control Score = Total Score / Maximum Possible Score)*	

Lucid Dream Control Trait (LDC-T)

A lucid dream is a dream during which you are aware of being in a dream and may involve control of the dream content and events. This survey assesses how often you can influence different aspects of your lucid dreams on average. Please answer based on your typical experiences rather than a single dream. Each question describes an aspect of dream control, and you will be asked to indicate how frequently you have successfully performed it.

There are no right or wrong answers, so please respond honestly. The questionnaire covers different aspects of dream control, including cognitive control, dream physics, dream body control, dream characters, dream environment, and emotional regulation. It should take approximately 10–15 minutes to complete, and your responses will remain anonymous and used for research purposes.

For each statement below, please rate your experience on a scale from 0-4 where:

Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Often = 3; Always = 4.

If a question doesn't apply to you (e.g., you never attempted a particular type of dream control or were not aware that it was possible), mark it as "N.A.".

Your rating should reflect how often you succeed when attempting a specific type of dream control. For example, selecting "Rarely" (1) means that when you attempt this action, you rarely succeed. It does not mean that you rarely attempt it and therefore succeed rarely.

Scoring Instructions

Each item is scored as follows: Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Often = 3; Always = 4. If an item is marked as "N.A." it is excluded from the scoring. It is not treated as 0.

To calculate the score for each dream control category:

1. Add up all your scores for that category (ignore the "N.A." items). This is your **category score**.
2. Count how many questions you answered within that category (ignore the "N.A." items).
3. Multiply the number of answered questions by 4. This is your **maximum possible score for that category**.
4. Divide your **category score** by the **maximum possible core** to get your **dream control category score**.
5. Your **category control score** will be between 0 and 1. Higher scores indicate stronger dream control and lower scores weaker dream control.

To calculate the Total Lucid Dreaming Control Score:

Score each item from 0 (Never) to 4 (Always). If a question doesn't apply to, mark it as "N.A." and skip it in the calculation.

1. Add up all your scores (ignore the "N.A." items). This is your **total score**.
2. Count how many questions you answered (ignore the "N.A." items).
3. Multiply the number of answered questions by 4. This is your **maximum possible score**.
4. Divide your **total score** by the **maximum possible score** to get your **total lucid dreaming control score**.
5. Your **total lucid dreaming control score** will be between 0 and 1. Higher scores indicate stronger dream control and lower scores weaker dream control.

Cognitive Control

This set of questions assesses your overall cognitive control during your lucid dream, including setting and remembering intentions, maintaining dream stability, and sustaining dream lucidity. Please rate each of the following on a scale from 0-4 where:

Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Often = 3; Always = 4.

If an action was never attempted, mark it as “N.A.”.

How often can you deliberately and successfully…	**Your Score**
1. ...maintain lucidity without waking up?	
2. ...remember a pre-set intention while lucid in a dream?	
3. ...prolong a lucid dream when it starts to fade or feel unstable?	
4. ..remain focused on a chosen goal or task without getting distracted?	
5. ...prevent losing lucidity or waking up before completing a desired action or intention?	
6. ...experience dream control without major distractions or instability (e.g., struggling to exert control, being distracted by the dream or dream characters)?	
7. ...regain focus or control when dream distractions or instability occur? If you answered “Completely” at question 6, please select "N.A." here.	
Category Score *(Ignore the “N.A.” questions)*	
Number of Questions Answered *(Ignore the “N.A.” questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Cognitive Dream Control Score *(Cognitive Dream Control Score = Category Score / Maximum Possible)*	

Dream Physics

This set of questions assesses your ability to alter time, gravity, and spatial properties within the lucid dream. Please rate each of the following on a scale from 0-4 where:

Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Often = 3; Always = 4.

If an action was never attempted, mark it as "N.A.".

How often can you deliberately and successfully…	**Your Score**
8. …alter the passage of time (e.g., speed up, slow down, pause, or rewind)?	
9. ...modify gravity (e.g., making objects, yourself, or others float, reducing or increasing gravity)?	
10. …switch viewpoint (e.g., from first-person to observer perspective)?	
11. ...pass through solid objects or walls?	
12. …change the fundamental properties of objects or your surroundings (e.g., density, solidity)?	
Category Score *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Number of Questions Answered *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Dream Physics Control Score *(Dream Physics Control Score = Category Score / Maximum Possible)*	

Dream Body Control

This set of questions assesses your ability to control your own dream body. This refers to your capacity to change the form, proprioception, and senses of your dream body. Please rate each of the following on a scale from 0-4 where:

Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Often = 3; Always = 4.

If an action was never attempted, mark it as "N.A.".

How often can you deliberately and successfully…	**Your Score**
13. ...modify your dream body (e.g., change size, shape, or abilities)?	
14. …shapeshift or transform into another being (e.g., animal, plant, person, fictional character) or inanimate object?	
15. ...disable or alter your visual perception (e.g., black and white vision, looking through binoculars)?	
16. …disable or alter your auditory perception (e.g., make sounds feel louder or softer)?	
17. …alter other sensory perception (e.g., intensity or quality of smell, taste, or touch)?	
Category Score *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Number of Questions Answered *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Dream Body Control Score *(Dream Body Control Score = Category Score / Maximum Possible)*	

Dream Movement Control

This set of questions assesses your ability to control the movements of your dream body. Please rate each of the following on a scale from 0-4 where:

Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Often = 3; Always = 4.

If an action was never attempted, mark it as "N.A.".

How often can you deliberately and successfully…	**Your Score**
18. …perform fine motor actions, such as writing, playing an instrument, or using tools, with precision?	
19. …perform athletic movements, such as sprinting, climbing, or gymnastics, with ease?	
20. …maintain balance while performing actions like jumping, standing on one foot, or walking on narrow surfaces?	
21. …take-off, fly, and control your flight direction and altitude (e.g., turning mid-air, adjusting speed, stopping)?	
22. …float (not fly)?	
23. …perform coordinated motor actions with other dream characters (e.g., dancing, fighting, playing sports together)?	
Category Score *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Number of Questions Answered *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Dream Movement Control Score *(Dream Movement Control Score = Category Score / Maximum Possible)*	

Dream Characters Control

This set of questions assesses your ability to summon, communicate with, and modify dream characters (including humans, animals, or other entities). Please rate each of the following on a scale from 0-4 where:

Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Often = 3; Always = 4.

If an action was never attempted,, mark it as "N.A.".

How often can you deliberately and successfully…	**Your Score**
24. …summon or remove a specific dream character?	
25. …alter the appearance of a dream character (e.g., change their clothes, height, hair, or other physical features)?	
26. …alter the behavior of a dream character (e.g., ordering them to complete an action or behave in a specific way)?	
27. …have a casual conversation with dream a character (e.g., exchanging greetings or small talk)?	
28. …have a deep conversation with a dream character (e.g., seeking life advice, new knowledge, solving a problem)?	
Category Score *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Number of Questions Answered *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Dream Characters Control Score *(Dream Characters Control Score = Category Score / Maximum Possible)*	

Dream Environment Control

This set of questions assesses your ability to alter settings, objects, and spatial continuity within a dream
Please rate each of the following on a scale from 0-4 where:

Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Often = 3; Always = 4.

If an action was never attempted,, mark it as "N.A.".

How often can you deliberately and successfully…	**Your Score**
29. …travel to another location by actively changing your surroundings (e.g., teleporting, using a portal, turning around/corners)?	
30. …alter the weather or climate (e.g., making it rain or snow)?	
31. …create or remove objects (e.g., trees, buildings, specific elements of your surroundings)?	
32. …control the lighting (e.g., make the dream space brighter or darker, changing the hue/color)?	
Category Score *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Number of Questions Answered *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Dream Environment Control Score *(Dream Environment Control Score = Category Score / Maximum Possible)*	

Dream Emotion Control

This set of questions assesses your ability to manage fear, anxiety, excitement and other emotions to sustain dream lucidity and control. Please rate each of the following on a scale from 0-4 where:

Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Often = 3; Always = 4.

If an action was never attempted, mark it as "N.A.".

How often can you deliberately and successfully…	**Your Score**
33…remain calm and collected in an overwhelming, stressful, or particularly exciting dream scenario	
34. …remove an element that induces fear, stress or other unwanted emotions?	
35. …change your emotional state (e.g., induce joy or relaxation)?	
36. ...maintain lucidity and control when experiencing strong emotions (e.g., excitement, fear, frustration (e.g., excitement, fear, frustration)?	
Category Score *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Number of Questions Answered *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Dream Emotion Control Score *(Dream Emotion Control Score = Category Score / Maximum Possible)*	

Total Lucid Dreaming Trait Control Score

	Your Score
Total Score *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Total Number of Questions Answered *(Ignore the "N.A." questions)*	
Maximum Possible Score *(Maximum Possible Score = 4 x Questions Answered)*	
Total Lucid Dream Control Score *(Total Lucid Dream Control Score = Total Score / Maximum Possible Score)*	