

Exploring the Very Strange Liminal World of Meeting People in a Lucid Dream

Shôn Ellerton, May 1, 2026

You know it's a parallel universe made up in your mind, but are those people in the dream for real?



Have you ever experienced a dream which you *knew* was a dream, but yet, you felt convinced that those *in* the dream are others from the real world who just also happened to be there *in* the same dream with you?

I know.

It sounds as confusing as the plot from that great sci-fi movie, [Inception!](#)

I recently experienced one of these. I tend to get several dozen of these bizarre kind of dreams in a given year and in every case, I can recall a great amount of detail.

The phenomenon is known as [lucid dreaming](#), a subject that I written about several times during the last several years. In essence, you have a degree of power over what you experience in your dreams. Not only that, you *know* that you dreaming. They're also easy to get out of. In my case, I just wince hard, and, bingo, I'm out.

There's a whole gamut of research about the subject of lucid dreaming most generally on topics that expel on the notion of how to train your mind to achieve best results.

I've done *none* of that. Lucid dreaming just naturally happens to me.

In general, my experience of lucid dreaming has been positive and empowering.

However, I've experienced a few dark and disturbing episodes. For example, one in which my wife, somehow or another, found her way to another room in the apartment and sleeping on a makeshift bed there only to be surrounded by, what I can only describe as, malevolent wraith-like figures. Although I had the power to intervene and stop the wraiths from attacking, I was overwhelmed with the sheer number of them which kept materialising. What made this lucid dream so frightening was that it was a mere part of a sequence of them that I experienced during the same night, which made it especially confusing whether or not I was in the real world or not.

From my experience of lucid dreaming, they seem seldom to spawn *directly* from going to sleep in the real world. There's always some sort of 'buffer or interstitial zone' that takes place beforehand. A series of normal dreams, most of which are incidental and usually unmemorable. These persist for some time, usually to the early hours of the morning.

Provided the dreams are not disquieting or unnerving, the experience of fuzzy calm besets you and strangely, a window of your actual surrounds, for example, the bedroom in which you're in is in view. It can't be the real thing because the bedroom is warmly lit but in reality, the lights are actually off. When I say warmly lit, I mean like the light that a dying fire gives off. The corners are subdued in darkness but the corners of the bed can be seen and the outlines of the paintings on the wall can be seen.

It is this precise moment that I know that I have the *option* of entering into a lucid dream. If I wanted, I could just leave this moment and wake up, but I always want to explore, so I venture into the liminal spaces defined by the lucid dream by gravitating to it like a ghost. I know it may sound decidedly creepy, and it is, but I've become so used to it and know that it's a form of relaxation *and* adventure.

The feeling of travelling to this new liminal space is not unlike something Alice might have experienced while falling into the rabbit hole. In my case, I get lots of colourful mosaics, Mandelbrot patterns, and Golden Spirals, and lots of other geometric oddities flashing in front of my eyes. It's a bit like a cross between going through the portals in both the sci-fi films, *Stargate* and *Tron*.

Most often, the first port of call after the transition is going through a series of non-descript and usually quite dark rooms. This is the part I never like because

this is the one place which I've, from time to time, encountered incredibly disturbing entities. Not only that, at this stage, it's harder to extract yourself from the dream if things go awry.

I recently came across a game called *Escape the Backrooms* in which the player is 'no-clipped' into different liminal spaces from abandoned office buildings to permanently darkened suburbia. Throughout the game, there are a variety of malevolent beings who just want to kill you. 'No-clipping' is the parlance the writers of first-person viewer games came up with during the early 90s of suddenly materialising into spaces or discovering secret recesses behind walls. A good example would be the original *Wolfenstein 3D*.

After floating through the darkened rooms including going through the walls, with luck you end up in the space of your choice. Perhaps, a spritely lit up ballroom in a fancy hotel during the early 30s, or in a jazzy café with lots of music being played for the customers. It's always in an urban setting for me initially, however, it's easy to become Superman and wing it off like a catapult to great heights landing in the middle of the wilderness somewhere.

Now this is another thing which my experience tells me about lucid dreaming. You need interaction with the characters in your dream.

Why?

Because every time I propel myself to the middle of nowhere, like a quiet forest, or on top of a mountain, or near the shores of a still and dark lake, my mind becomes relaxed and unengaged and I either wake up or just sleep dreamless into morning.

It seems one needs to be constantly engaged to be within the lucid dream.

The best places to remain in the lucid dream is to be active with the other characters in the dream.

These are the characters in the lucid dream which just happen to be there like props or those which you summoned up through sheer concentration.

It's not always easy to summon people in the dream or the type of person you want to meet in the dream. Often, I think there's some sort of hindrance or force that makes it difficult to do so. As if in one's subconscious.

Now let me clear, I am no sleep specialist nor have I played around with sticking electrodes across my head to analyse all this stuff. I'm just saying that is what I experienced.

Most of the characters are props, or people who are strangers who either look at you with no resemblance of them knowing anything about you or those who just look away with disinterest. Then there are the characters you know and this is where it gets very weird.

I once had this most real conversation with my late grandfather. He told me things which I'm sure he never told me about. He was a member quite high up in Grand Royal Arch Masonry circles, and told me that this was one of his best experiences in Masonic circles. At this time, I had only just joined Freemasonry as an outlet to do something rather than sit binge-watching streaming videos on the telly. But it felt utterly real and I can smell his breath and feel his skin. It was as if I was speaking to someone from across the divide of the living and the dead. It was exhilarating, creepy, but somewhat depressing at the same time. I could have done so much more for him before he passed away.

But more recently, I came across three figures in the dream which I became attached to and had quite an interesting philosophical conversation. I'll point out this is *in* the dream, which is quite wild.

Sometimes, it's difficult to distinguish if this is for real or not, so I tested this out with my well-trusted engrained method of looking for a digital clock. Oddly, this is an item which is easily summoned in the dream. If the clock displays gobbledygook, then this is a lucid dream. Digital clocks are *always* screwed up in lucid dreams. A lot of text is but not all simple text, for example, large signs or billboards.

Here I am having this surreal conversation with these three gentlemen in the dream. Not only that, I point out to them that they are *also* in a lucid dream and that we should exchange particulars so we can meet each other in the real world.

Now this is so strange.

Whilst in a lucid dream, it is so convincing that those *in* the dream are also *actually* in the real world. You're so sure that you can recount the names they gave to you including their addresses.

But no.

On awakening in the real world, you can recount every little detail in terms of what the place was like, what they looked like, even what they talked about. But as for their particulars?

Nope.

With disappointment, you, yet again, realise that those you meet in the lucid dream are fictional characters or those characters which you summoned up in your mind.