

Lucid Dreams, Out—of—Body Experiences and Near—Death Experiences

Over the last several months several items have come to my attention regarding the relationship between lucid dreams, out—of—body experiences (OBE) and near—death experience. One of the major reasons that I got involved in lucid dreaming research was their apparent similarity to OBE’s and the role of OBE’s in near—death experiences. My recent interest in this relationships was sparked by a letter I received in response to materials on dream lucidity I had sent the International Association for Near—Death Studies, Inc., Kenneth Ring, the director, wrote:

I know a little about lucid dreams (having read about them for several years and having had a few myself) and I’ve met and talked to Steve LeBerge. I still don’t know what an OBE is, but I’m not convinced it is a lucid dream (though I’m not closed to the possibility either). From what I’ve read (I’m referring to some stuff — and it may not yet be published- by Glen Gabbard, Stu Twemlow and Fowler Jones), I thought the EEG patterns asso-ciated with OBEs and lucid dreams are quite different. Am I wrong? I also know that near—death survivors usually not only deny but deny emphatically that what they experience while out—of—body is anything like a dream, even a lucid dream, I daresay. But who knows-the question is still an intriguing one and perhaps your research and that others will shed some clarifying light into a murky corner of our consciousness. Concerning the impor-tance of lucidity at the moment of death, who could disagree? In my own case, though, I find it very hard to be fully lucid even in the moments of my everyday life.”

- Kenneth Ring, Ph.D.
 Department of Psychology
 University of Connecticut

A few months later these two items came to my attention. First a letter from S. J. Blackmore restating an often found relationship between lucidity and OBE’s.

“I have done several surveys on OBEs but usually included questions on lucid dreams as well. Generally the same people tend to have both experiences and also, when I have asked about them, flying dreams. However, this may be an artifact of more frequent dream recall. The table shows some of these results.

Study	N	% lucid dreams	X ² with OBEs	X ² with flying dreams
1. Surrey University	157	79%	6.7 (p < .01)	-
2. Bristol University	114	73%	3.7 n.s.	6.6 (p < .01)
3. Amsterdam University	189	73%	8.9 (p < .05)	11.8 (p < .001)

- Dr. S. J. Blackmore
 The Medical School
 University of Bristol
 England

Second, an item from Perspective, a monthly research service published by the Association for Research and Enlightenment (A.R.E.), Virginia Beach, Virginia. Dr. Richard Kohr, director of the A.R.E. Workbook Questionnaire Research Project, identified three groups of respondents, who differed in whether or not they had had a near—death experience. The experiencing group indicated they had come close to death; had a deep, moving personal experience, and had one or more of the six types of experiences described in the research of Raymond Moody and Kenneth Ring. A second group indicated that they had come close to death and may or may not have had a moving personal experience. The third group was referred to as the Non—Experiencing group, composed of persons who had never come close to death. In terms of dream states the Experiencing group reported a greater frequency of dreaming in color, greater frequency of unusual dream states such as LUDICITY and vibrations and a greater range of types of sense modalities in dreams.

- “Perspective”
Association for Research
and Enlightenment
Virginia Beach, Virginia

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