

How Do Dreams Work?

By Natalie Cote

Do you ever wake up thinking-*Woah! That was a crazy dream!*- Have you ever wondered what they are? Have you ever thought about it, or even learned about them? A lot of people don't bother studying dreams because they think they are silly little things that have no purpose, or there is nothing to study about them. In actuality, there is a lot to know. For example, why we have them, what our brains are doing at night, if dream control is possible and more. It is a good thing that there are people who believe this too, otherwise the world of dreams would be a complete mystery.

Scientists have different theories about why we have dreams. One of those theories is that our brain uses dreams to sort through all of our memories and determine which ones are worth keeping and which ones are not. That's why, most of the time, you only see the most significant things that happened that day in your dreams. Some people believe that our brain uses dreams to deal with threatening or emotional situations based on the similarities of how our brains fire neurons back and forth when we are facing those situations in real life and when we are dreaming. We can make connections and discoveries unlike the ones we would be able to make while we are awake. Others think that we can discover true facts while dreaming, which is similar to the idea of making special connections. One example of this is a German chemist who discovered that the shape of a molecule he was studying was a ring shape after dreaming about a snake biting its tail. Some people don't think dreams have any purpose at all. There are several theories of why we have dreams, but everyone's brain goes through the same process while they dream.

Our brains are very active while we sleep. During the day, your brain collects memories of what you did and puts it into pictures to create dreams in the night. It doesn't just go through a sequence showing you everything you did, it merges them all together to create a new story. That's why sometimes, dreams make no sense at all. While you are sleeping, your brain goes through two different stages, REM sleep and non-REM sleep. REM stands for Rapid Eye Movement. During REM sleep, your eyes move back and forth under your eyelids. Most of the time during REM sleep you have dreams. Your brain switches back and forth between REM sleep and non-REM sleep. The longest periods of REM sleep happen closer to the morning hours. If you wake up during these stages, those are the dreams you will most likely remember. There are three phases of non-REM sleep: falling asleep, light sleep, and deep sleep. During deep non-REM sleep your body repairs and grows tissues, it also strengthens your body and immune system. Our brains get really busy at night repairing our body and allowing it to rest, but there are ways to make your brain work even hard with dream control.

Wouldn't it be cool to control your dreams? In order to do that, you should be capable of having lucid dreams. Lucid dreams are dreams that some people are able to control. While having a lucid dream, you are aware that you are dreaming, then, you are able to make the story yourself. Some people say that lucid dreaming can help others with self-confidence, overcoming fears and nightmares, and improving health. It can also help you solve real-life issues. Achieving lucid dreams may require special training. I say this because some people are naturally capable of controlling their dreams without even trying. There are different techniques to accomplish lucid dreaming, but it depends on the person and what works best for them. You have to have the ability to recognize when you are dreaming, so you have to be "awake" enough to be able to decide what will happen. This means it is unlikely but not impossible to control your dreams in a normal sleep cycle.

In conclusion, nobody really knows why we have dreams, but there are a lot of theories to choose from. Is it just your brain creating images as a result of a hard night's work and they have no purpose? Or is it a way of sorting through memories and dealing with problems? Either way, dreams are a complicated subject and dream control makes them much more complicated. There is a lot more to learn about dreams and scientists will continue to study them, but for now we can only have our own opinions about them. Based on what we have

learned, why do you think we have dreams? What is the purpose of dreams? And, do you think one day dream control will be a common thing?