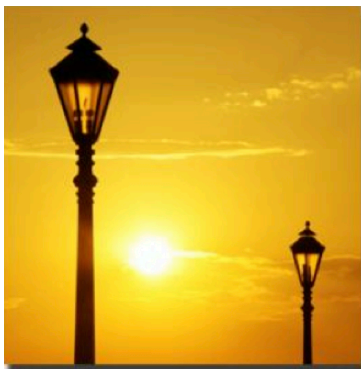


Playing with lights in my lucid-dreams and out-of-body experiences



By Sirley Marques Bonham

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Seeing lights in my lucid-dreams or out-of-body experiences is a very common phenomenon for me. However, before I go on, let me clarify to the reader that, personally, I have never perceived any significant differences between lucid-dreams and out-of-body experiences. I see these differences mainly as philosophical, and perhaps they are due to stubbornness by the respective defenders. So, in what I describe below, it could be an out-of-body experience (OBE), or it could also be a 'Wake Initiated Lucid-Dream' (WILD), as defined by the famous Steven La Berge, which to me is indistinguishable from the old-style OBE.

Experiences of lights happen to me in both, at the threshold of sleep and awakening from sleep, as well as during common dreams or lucid-dreams. They appear in a varied of forms, represented by lamps or candles, car headlights that move from one side to the other, or visions of the moon or the sun. Their intensity varies from faint to being so intense as to be bothersome. Once, while very deep into a meditation-like exercise, which corresponds quite clearly to the hypnogogic state, I had even the experience of a very strong light appear on my forehead, at the position of the so-called Ajna chakra. I spent quite a while trying to see if what happened was due to sensitivity to light in the bedroom where I was sleeping, which would be reflected on the wall opposite my bed, from cars headlights driving by the window. However, all my attempts to check this supposition failed. The light on my forehead was too strong, and it repeated twice! This happened in February 1991, and it took a few years until I acquired an OMNI magazine, as it contained an article on lucid-dreams. It also contained an article about people having problems with extreme experiences during meditation, which were attributed to Kundalini phenomena. Among the various symptoms described in this article, it included not

only the 'electrical perception' people sometimes refer as 'vibrations' during the sleep/awake threshold, but also 'seeing lights.' These symptoms are assumed to be due to a physiological energy, the Kundalini, which moves upward the spine from its seat at the base of the spine, through the various chakras, until it reaches the brain. The information contained in that article constituted an 'a-ha!' moment for me. I had never heard about Kundalini before. After that I investigated several books on Kundalini phenomena.

Visions of lights may not be truly due to the Kundalini phenomena, but I strongly suspect they are, even if the person does not practice meditation, as prescribed by several Yoga teachings. I have had experiences of light in dreams long before I did the practices I was doing continually from November 1989, through 1995, which could be the cause of the phenomenon just described. These practices could be classified as a form of active meditation. Yet, what about the lights I see in lucid-dreams? Could they be due to the perception of the same form of 'energy' I (and others) perceive?

Following is a recent experience of mine with many aspects that may be involved in producing an experience of the lucid-dream type, which contains experiences of lights. I call attention to evoked emotions before falling asleep, as well as perceived sensuality during the lucid-dream. Principally, it also shows how I behave while attempting to keep awareness while in a lucid-dream.

November 28, 2012:

Early morning. I got up at 4:00AM, as usual, then after returning to bed I had to soon get up again, because my mind was too excited not allowing me to do an exercise of visualization or to meditate, as I intended to do. So, I went to work on a text I started yesterday, which was about the phenomenon of awareness, the state of attention where one remembers oneself. Then, as I was doing this while listening to music, I stopped writing and started paying attention to the music, which worked as a form of meditation, and also calmed my mind.

After a while I went to bed and lay down on my back with my knees bent and remained very quiet paying attention to the awareness of myself. There was a distinct feeling or nice emotion at the center of my chest, it seemed. On and on I came back to the same attitude and feeling, at the same time as I paid attention to what I perceived on the black-screen of my visual field or third-eye area. There were swirls and varying colors, and also an impression like that of a galaxy rotating. I thought it interesting to perceive this rotation, as "rotation" was one of the exercises I used to do. It felt comfortable being in such a situation, and soon I perceived that this state was deepening, and that the swirls began to change to impressions of places or things. On and off there came these impressions, as I deepened my state, approaching the hypnagogic state, and came back to the surface, again and again, until I felt myself going out of the body. But no, it was more like "out I was," as I didn't quite perceive the disconnection. Yet, by realizing this, I caught the moment saying: "Oh, I know! I got it, I got it!" And I fully moved out into the room, which should supposedly be my bedroom, but all was different, and I began to observe the differences. At a certain point I turned

around to look at my body on the bed. As it always happens, it was something different there, like a girl with the bedcovers off to the side and all looked so different that I commented. "Oh, that is not what I expected, was it?" But rather than being upset, as I am used to these differences from other similar experiences, I proceeded to observe the environment around me, keeping careful attention to my state – that of knowing where I was, that I was in a special situation, that I needed to keep myself aware.

I soon began to see little blue lights on or around some of the objects in this environment. As lights are a common phenomenon in my "outings" – and lucid-dreams – I tried to fix my attention to them in a relaxed way. This blue light varied, wobbling then disappearing to just appear on something else. I followed this blue light to wherever it would appear. It was not like the common light phenomena I usually observe. It had a form like that of a fluffy thing that fluctuated. (I mean, it was fluffy like children's toy animals.) Finally this blue light did not appear anymore and I moved on to something else. By then the environment had already changed to something else, also, and I continued paying attention to my awareness experimenting with the way I felt about it to see if I could keep it on for longer.

A couple times I almost lost my awareness by the environment darkening, which I know it means a closeness to waking up, and I talked to myself to keep it up, to remain conscious, and succeeded in returning to the experience. Interestingly, when I talked to myself to keep aware, I noticed how my voice was soft almost child-like. I kept doing this, but now, as it frequently happens to me, the lights were of the yellow types coming at the border of my field of vision, or appearing as lamps, candles, or the sun in the sky. I tried to observe them, at the same time paying close attention to not make too much effort, but half expecting they may dissolve and disappear, as that was also my common experience with observing these light-phenomena. And so, they did. Yet, in this experience, I once looked carefully at the image of the sun I could see above, and it first almost disappeared, then it came back and became brighter, to my surprise, and it remained that way for a short while, then slowly dissolved. I then moved on to something else to observe.

These observations went on for quite a while. Somehow I did not see anybody around me... or did I? The truth is that I didn't feel alone, but I was too involved in keeping myself conscious while making all my observations. After a while, I felt a sensation that was almost like sensuality. I worried because all my former experiences with sensuality "out of the body," or in lucid-dreams, were not good ones, mainly silly or absurd ones. But I dared to say: "Okay, then I need to find somebody to make love with." It was as if I knew for sure there was a woman nearby. I directed my attention towards her, then seeing her, though barely, I asked her specifically how I could find a man. I was able to observe, though not too clearly, that she looked at me as if reasoning: "Oh, such a silly child!" – then directed me to search around. So around I went in search of a man to have this sexual-like sensual experience. However, instead of finding a man, all once again changed!

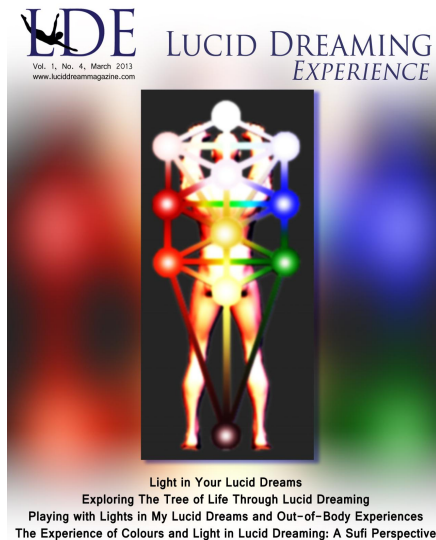
Suddenly, I was thrust, or captured into a psychedelic-like experience. I was in a situation where it appears that there were some medical personnel working on my body and checking it out for health or illnesses. One of them even injected something at the area of my thyroid, which coincidentally has been an area that I have worried about. I felt (or did I imagine?) the pain of the injection. I could also see all the

ligaments and veins in my body. It was almost like the skin and muscles were not visible. And it was while being involved in this odd experience that I felt returning to my physical body, waking up. I could perceive that my cat Takumi had jumped on the bed and was walking about, which could be what brought me back. I remained there quietly and amazed at this series of experiences, and its relation to what I was writing about. I was also quite puzzled to feel as if there were other beings nearby, though I couldn't be sure. I wondered if the feeling I felt in my heart was due to a being, or more than one, close by, perhaps in some way collaborating with, or helping me in what happened in this experience. After all, I have had many experiences of lucid-dreams where someone helps me in some way.

...And that's how things happen in my experiences of lucid dreams, with or without the perception of leaving my body with awareness. They can be sometimes confusing, but always worthy of exploration.

Sirley Marques Bonham, Ph.D.

*Research physicist at the Center for Relativity,
University of Texas at Austin;
Advisor for research and education,
Institute of Neuroscience and Consciousness Studies (INACS),
Austin, Texas*



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