

Mass participation experiment reveals how to create the perfect dream

Today psychologist Professor Richard Wiseman from the University of Hertfordshire announces the results of a two-year study into dream control. The experiment shows that it is now possible for people to create their perfect dream, and so wake up feeling especially happy and refreshed.

In 2010, Professor Wiseman teamed-up with app developers YUZA to create 'Dream:ON' - an iPhone app that monitors a person during sleep and plays a carefully crafted 'soundscape' when they dream. Each soundscape was carefully designed to evoke a pleasant scenario, such as a walk in the woods, or lying on a beach, and the team hoped that these sounds would influence people's dreams. At the end of the dream, the app sounded a gentle alarm and prompted the person to submit a description of their dream.

The app was downloaded over 500,000 times and the researchers collected millions of dream reports. After studying the data, Professor Wiseman discovered that the soundscapes did indeed influence people's dreams.

Richard Wiseman, professor in the Public Understanding of Psychology at the University of Hertfordshire, said: "If someone chose the nature landscape then they were more likely to have a dream about greenery and flowers. In contrast, if they selected the beach soundscape then they were more likely to dream about the sun beating down on their skin."

In addition, the researchers discovered that people's dreams were especially bizarre around the time of a full moon.

"In 2013, neuroscientists from the University of Basel discovered that people experience more disturbed sleeping patterns around the time of a full Moon," remarked Wiseman. "We have seen a similar pattern, with more bizarre dreams being associated with a full moon."

Finally, the team also found that certain soundscapes produced far more pleasant dreams.

"Having positive dreams helps people wake-up in a good mood, and boosts their productivity. We have now discovered a way of giving people sweet dreams, and this may also form the basis for a new type of therapy to help those suffering from certain psychological problems, such as depression," commented Wiseman.

The findings are described in Professor Wiseman's book on sleep and dreaming, *Night School*. The Dream:ON app and all of the soundscapes are currently available free of charge.

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For more information, please contact Julie Cooper, University of Hertfordshire Press Office on 01707 284095, Email: j.cooper5@herts.ac.uk

Notes to Editor

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