

Dream state: Researchers manipulate 'borderland' between waking and sleeping

There is a borderland between waking life and the uncharted wilderness of sleep that we all traverse each night, but we rarely stop to marvel at the strangeness of this liminal world... Usually we pass through this state of half-wakefulness on our way to deep sleep within minutes.

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[Adam] Horowitz and his colleagues at the MIT Media Lab have developed a relatively simple device called Dormio to interface with this unique stage of sleep.

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Horowitz tested the first version of Dormio on six volunteers from MIT... As they were falling asleep, the Jibo robot would prompt them with one of two phrases: "remember to think about a rabbit" or "remember to think about a fork." When the Dormio system detected the participants were falling asleep, the robot would say their name and "you are falling asleep."

...but the aim of Dormio is not to wake up the sleeper entirely. Instead, the system is meant to prevent the user from falling deeper into sleep, effectively suspending them in an extended state of hypnagogia. Once the volunteers were in a state of hypnagogia, the Jibo robot would ask them what they are thinking about and record their answers.

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[A]lthough not all of the subjects remembered what they said to the robot, all of them "remembered and reported seeing the prompt word during their dream state, showing successful inception and recall of stimuli into said dream state."

Read full, original post: [MIT Researchers Have Developed a 'System for Dream Control'](#)