

DREAMS AND THERE MEANING

First Impressions

My initial impression of Dreams is that most people only look at one aspect of dreams that is: “unconscious” dreams. What immediately comes to mind are daydreams which are neither conscious nor unconscious but are still dreams. We have all daydreamed and we know that although we are awake and conscious about most things occurring around us, we are unconscious about others. What must be remembered is that dreams are a mental activity or processes which give rise to strange images, scenes, events and persons.

This I suppose brings in levels of consciousness. In medical parlours the meaning is black and white, unconscious is that all physical activity has ceased though the person is breathing and has a pulse. To daydream seems to switch off all senses around you and take you into a dreamlike state eyes wide open. We are semi awake or semi asleep. I guess that they could also be considered as having a wandering mind not being able to concentrate on the point at hand.

We also need to consider the depth of sleep required to dream. We have all heard of REM (rapid eye movement) this is a person in deep sleep where dreaming occurs. It’s in this realm that a person has there most vivid dreams and because they are in such deep sleep they have difficulty in remembering the dream when they awake. Dreams you have when you dose tend to be remembered far more easily than deep sleep dreams. These dreams we could consider as the act of “true dreaming.”

Now I’ve given consideration to dreams for some time, but never in any great detail just a superficial look at trying to interrupt dreams, and I found that every “dreamologist” can have a different theory for the meaning of a similar dream. So due to this frustration I gave up. So let’s look at in general and very basic terms - dreams.

Meaning of Dreams

The earliest known interpretation of dreams is a papyrus 1250 BC with 200 dreams supposedly interrupted by the god Horus.

Biblical references to dreams:

- Pharaoh related to the seven fat cows
- Cyrus related to a vision of his predecessors.
- Joseph related to the seven years of plenty and seven years of famine.

Ancient Greeks believed dreams to be messages from the Gods.

General belief throughout the ancient world is that dreams were the gods’ predictions of the future.

Many interpretations include superstitions associated with dreams

A great deal of empirical evidence suggests that dreams can be prophetic.

Lucid Dreams give glimpses of the future.

Types of Dreams

- Lucid
- Day dreams
- False awakening dreams
- Nightmares

- Recurring dreams
- Healing dreams
- Prophetic dreams
- Signal dreams
- Epic dreams

Dream Theorists

- Carl Jung
- Alfred Adler
- Sigmund Freud
- Calvin Hall
- Frederick Perls

Commencing with:

Carl Jung

- Saw dreams as more spiritual
- Saw them as a way of communicating with the unconscious
- They serve as a solution to a problem you are facing in your waking life.
- His theory was that all things can be viewed as paired opposites
 - o Male/female
 - o Good/evil
 - o Love/hate
 - o Ego/counter ego

Alfred Adler

- Believed dreams are an important tool to mastering control over our waking lives; that is problem solving devices.
- The less dreams we have the less problems
- Adler believed that an individuals actions and behaviour are ruled by the unconscious
- The conscious and unconscious do not function against one another but act the same way whether awake or asleep.
- Adler believed that dreams are open pathways toward your true thoughts, emotions and actions.

Sigmund Freud

- Freud believed that nothing you do occurs by chance, every action and thought is motivated by your unconscious at the some level.
- Dreams allow us to unleash urges and impulses that are repressed/held-back during our waking hours simply because they would be socially unacceptable.

One way these urges and impulses are released is through your dreams. Because the content of the unconscious may be extremely disturbing or harmful, Freud believes that the unconscious expresses itself in a symbolic language.

Freud categorizes aspects of the mind into three parts:

Id - centered around primal impulses, pleasures, desires, unchecked urges and wish fulfillment.

Ego - concerned with the conscious, the rational, the moral and the self-aware aspect of the mind.

Superego - the censor for the id, which is also responsible for enforcing the moral codes of the ego.

When you are awake, the impulses and desires of the id are suppressed by the *superego*. Through dreams, you are able to get a glimpse into your unconscious or the id. Because your guards are down during the dream state, your unconscious has the opportunity to act out and express the hidden desires of the id. However, the desires of the id can, at times, be so disturbing and even psychologically harmful that a "censor" comes into play and translates the id's disturbing content into a more acceptable symbolic form. This helps to preserve sleep and prevent you from waking up shocked at the images. As a result, confusing and cryptic dream images occur.

According to Freud, the reason we struggle to remember our dreams, is because the superego is at work. It is doing its job by protecting the conscious mind from the disturbing images and desires conjured by the unconscious.

Calvin S. Hall, Jr. (1909-1985)

Focuses his study of dreams on the content, aptly referred to as *content analysis*. Because dreams are in essence thoughts, it is a cognitive process. Dreams provide a map or route to the inaccessible regions in your mind, otherwise known as the unconscious. Hall believes dreams are the best way to discovering personal thoughts and to explain your behaviour.

Frederick Perls (1893-1970)

The founder of Gestalt therapy. Gestalt therapy seeks to fill your emotional voids so that you can then become a unified whole. Perls believes that dreams contain the rejected, disowned parts of the Self. Every character and every object in a dream represents an aspect of the Self. You are the hurricane, you are the attacker, you are the broken down car, you are the bridge, and you are the dusty book. Perls rejects the notion that dreams are part of a universal symbolic language. He believes that each dream is unique to the individual who dreams it. In order to discover what aspect of yourself is being disowned, Perls believes that it is important to retell your dream in the present tense and act it out accordingly.

Types of Dreams

Lucid Dreams

Lucid dreams give you the ability to control your own dreams and steer them toward the direction you want. In the lucid state, you are more willing to confront threats and as a result, become more self confident. When you achieve lucidity, you can use it as a tool to improve your sports game, to rehearse for a speech, to fulfill your fantasies, or to solve a problem in your waking life.

Daydreams

The meanings to your nightly dream symbols are also applicable to your daydreams. The content in your daydreams are also helpful to the understanding of your true feelings and in fulfilling your goals.

Daydreaming occurs when you are semi-awake. It is the spontaneous imagining or recalling of various images or experiences in the past or

future. You allow your imagination to run away from you. When you daydream, you are accessing your right brain, which is the creative and feminine side of your personality.

Daydreams are often viewed as light-hearted in nature. They are just silly fantasies and wishful thinking. Actually, even worrying over things can be classified as a form of daydreaming. When you worry, you are visualizing an unwanted or negative outcome to a situation. By repeating these negative images in your mind, you are more likely to make them happen. Next time you start worrying, try to think of a positive outcome.

False Awakening Dreams

Have you ever thought you have woken up and gone about your daily morning routine: getting up, brushing your teeth, eating breakfast and going to work, only to wake up "again" and realize that what just happened is just a dream. That sensation is referred to as a false awakening.

Nightmares

Nightmares are a subcategory of dreams. The distinction of a nightmare is its frightening and/or emotional content. You tend to wake up in fear in the midst of a nightmare. Because of its frightening nature, you are more likely to remember your nightmares and the vivid details.

They have a bigger impact upon your waking mind. Its images stay with you throughout the day.

Some studies show that people who are more sensitive, intuitive, creative, or imaginative are more prone to have nightmares. This may be because they are more empathetic and more in tune with their surroundings.

One reason for nightmares may be a way for your unconscious to get your attention about a situation or problem that you have been avoiding.

Recurring Dreams

The message in recurring dreams may be so important and/or powerful that it refuses to go away. The frequent repetition of such dreams forces you to pay attention and confront the dream.

Recurring dreams are quite common and are often triggered by a certain life situation, transitional phase in life or a problem that keeps coming back again and again. These dreams may recur daily, once a week, or once a month. Whatever the frequency, there is little variation in the dream content itself. Such dreams may be highlighting a personal weakness, fear, or your inability to cope with something in your life - past or present.

Healing Dreams

Healing dreams serve as messages for the dreamer in regards to their health. The Ancient Greeks called these dreams "prodromic". Many dream experts believe that dreams can help in avoiding potential health problems and healing when you are ill or when you are grieving. Research shows that asthma and migraine sufferers have certain types of dreams before an attack. Your bodies are able to communicate to your mind through dreams. The dreams can "tell" you that something is not quite right with your bodies even before any physical symptoms show up. Dreams of this nature may be telling the dreamer that he or she needs to go to the dentist or doctor. If you can understand the language of dreams,

your dreams will serve as an invaluable early warning system. They can help inform, advise and heal.

Prophetic Dreams

Prophetic dreams, also referred to as precognitive or psychic dreams, are dreams that seemingly foretell the future. One rational theory to explain this phenomenon is that your dreaming mind is able to piece together bits of information and observation that you may normally overlook or that you do not seriously consider. In other words, your unconscious mind knows what is coming before you consciously piece together the same information.

Signal Dreams

Signal dreams help you to solve problems or make decisions in your waking life.

Epic Dreams

Epic dreams (also referred to as Great Dreams, Cosmic Dreams or Numinous Dreams) are so huge, so compelling, and so vivid that you cannot ignore them. The details of such dreams remain with you for years, as if you just dreamt it last night. These dreams possess much beauty and contain much archetypal symbology. When you wake up from such a dream, you feel that you have discovered something profound or amazing about yourself or about the world. It feels like a life-changing experience.

The Meaning of Dreams

Looking at a couple of common dreams.

Falling Dreams – “I’m falling”

- Falling dreams are another theme that is quite common.
- You will not actually die if you do not wake up before you hit the ground during a fall.
- Falling is an indication of insecurities, instabilities, and anxieties.
- You are feeling overwhelmed and out of control in some situation in your waking life.
- Falling dreams also often reflect a sense of failure or inferiority in some circumstance or situation. It may be the fear of failing in your job/school, loss of status, or failure in love.
- Dreams of falling according to Freud indicate that you are contemplating giving into a sexual urge or impulse. You are lacking indiscretion.
- Falling dreams typically occur during the first stage of sleep. Dreams in this stage are often accompanied by muscle spasms of the arms, legs, and the whole body.
- Dreams about falling according to biblical interpretations have a negative overtone. It is believed that such dreams relate to how you are acting and walking, according to your own way of thinking and not those of the Lord.

Naked Dreams - “I’m Naked”

- Nudity symbolizes a variety of things depending on your real life situation.
- Realisation that you are naked in public, reflects your vulnerability or feelings of shamefulness.
- Nudity also symbolizes being caught off guard. Finding yourself naked at work or in a classroom, suggests that you are unprepared for a project at work or school.

- If everyone else in the dream is going about their business without giving a second look at your nakedness, then it implies that your fears are unfounded.
- If you dream that you are proud of your nakedness and show no embarrassment or shame, then it symbolizes your unrestricted freedom.

Conclusion – Feelings

Dreams are important – because from a spiritual point of view they are a way of communicating directly with your God. Like a pipe line/channel from your soul or unconscious to the Supreme Being.

Being able to remember your dreams will enable that same connection within the conscious state. By the use of a dream diary we can assist ourselves to remember these dreams by noting their details as soon as we are awake. The deeper we sleep it is argued by some theosophists the farther off has the Spiritual Soul gone from the sleeper and the more it sees and hears but is harder to remember when we wake. Of course all this is very hard to prove and demonstrate.

By remembering our dreams we are enabled to interrupt the meaning which prepares our mind for the observation of our dreams by which we can eventually control what we dream about and hence provide a direct connection by the astral plane to the Higher Worlds. This will then lead us to “true dreaming”.