

# DREAMS

*From a Rosicrucian Manuscript*

According to the most recent scientific research, dream activity constitutes a considerable part of our conscious life. Many experiments show, in fact, that almost one-fifth of our sleep is spent dreaming. Experts in dream research tell us that this activity is as necessary to our mental balance as air and food are to our physical well-being. They feel that dreams fulfill a vital function and that their total absence could result in mental illness or, in extreme cases, death. They further state that dreams provide an outlet for impulses that have been repressed during the day and they allow people to rid themselves of certain tensions that could eventually create a serious inner imbalance.

Thus, these researchers affirm that dreams constitute a form of psychological self-adjustment which is indispensable to human health. They state that a deficiency of dream activity can result in various types of mental derangement, much as a deficiency of protein will result in physiological problems.

Psychiatrists and psychologists, for their part, add that the contents of our dream life offer the best source of information about the deeper aspects of our personality. In their words, "it furnishes a living picture of our present existential state." This viewpoint is also found in the definition that Jung gives to dreams.

According to him, each dream is a spontaneous and symbolic representation of the current state of our unconscious.

Generally speaking, what scientists say about dreams is basically correct. Their analysis is incomplete, however, in that their research has been focused almost

exclusively on the corresponding mental processes. Keep in mind that dreaming is not a function of the brain, but of consciousness. This means that even a person who has been deprived of brain functions will dream, whether or not it can be proven with an electroencephalogram. Furthermore, while it is true that many of our dreams are formed from impressions originating in our subconscious, others are derived directly from our psychic self. This means that our dream activity is not simply limited to exchanges taking place between our subconscious memory and our brain activities. If it were, dream interpretation would never have become an art to be practiced by mystics throughout history.

We previously indicated that everyone is in a state of projection while asleep, as the psychic body is separated from the physical body at that time. The plane upon which we are located when we project is determined by our spiritual aspirations and degree of evolution, and this plane carries with it different impressions which become part of our dreams in a more or less vivid manner. When our dreams are particularly inspiring, we may think of them as the expression of our very soul, for the soul itself gives rise to such impressions. They come to us as special visions, contacts with other entities, messages in symbolic form, music, or liturgical chants, etc. Dreams that lack this inspiring nature can be considered products of activity belonging to the lower levels of the subconscious.

From a mystical viewpoint, therefore, dreams are not simply the expressions of our subconscious life and the means by which we rid ourselves of certain tensions. For someone who can interpret them correctly, they are a way of piercing the



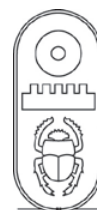
mysteries of the unseen by making use of the psychic plane, the plane upon which we are located while asleep. For this reason, ancient tradition has always accorded considerable importance to dreams.

Oneiromancy, or the art of foretelling the future through the interpretation of dreams, was a standard practice in the temples of ancient Egypt. Lector priests and scribes were responsible for interpreting the dreams of those who came to them for this purpose, as dreams were highly regarded as valuable premonitions. We find, in fact, in an Egyptian wisdom book, the following words: “Divine Intelligence created dreams to show people the way when they cannot see the future.” It was thought, moreover, that they constituted in themselves initiations into the afterlife.

Dreams can be divided into three major categories: physical, psychological, and mystical. In the first category are those that arise because of an indisposition of the physical body. This condition may originate either because of outside influences or because of physiological disturbances. For example, experiments have proven that an uncomfortable bed, an overheated or underheated bedroom, a persistent noise, or a constant draft, are all elements that affect our dream activity. For instance, people who frequently sleep in a cold bedroom will have recurring

dreams of being in situations where they are cold. In keeping with these outside influences, you know all too well how when you are overtired or when you have eaten unwisely or too much, that your dreams will reflect this situation. They will not be at all mystical in character, in that they are most often accompanied by disagreeable impressions and may even result in nightmares. This is because they are chiefly the subconscious expression of our physical state.

The second category of dreams constitutes those relating directly to our current mental and emotional state. They may take the form of scattered ideas, including “flashes” of things we did during the day or in the hours before bedtime. Sometimes they are the projection of especially vivid scenes we have witnessed or of particularly intense discussions we might have participated in fairly recently. They can also be the reflections of the fears, anxieties, or worries associated with our professional or family life. This category of dreams most clearly mirrors an individual’s psychological balance or imbalance. These dreams are also most closely linked to our subconscious, as they have their origin in the two major attributes of the subconscious: perfect memory and deductive reasoning. We suggest that you review the discussion of this subject that is found in the monographs of the Second Temple Degree.



The third category is comprised of dreams that are mystical in nature. These dreams are under the impulse of the soul, and we experience them through the intermediary of the psychic body which is in a state of projection during sleep and is thus capable of perceiving impressions belonging to the unseen world. Such dreams are far more rare than the others in that they occur when dream activity has not already been initiated by the first two categories. Thus, people who are always in the habit of eating too much food in the evening or of going to bed in a state of anxiety will not bring together the best conditions for making the night a period of cosmic communion. Obviously, people who are interested in spiritual matters will have many more mystical dreams than will more materialistically minded individuals, for their aspirations lift them toward the higher planes while they sleep.

Mystical dreams generally include scenes, messages, and symbols directly associated with our actual experiences, and we may interpret them using meditation or simple reflection. For Rosicrucians, such scenes, messages, and symbols are frequently connected with the teachings we are studying and the importance we place upon our ideals. They may also contain elements taken from the other traditions we are acquainted with. They can also take the form of events that relate particularly to the life of a person who has had a great influence in the realm of spirituality. Whatever their specific content, such dreams always impart a pleasant feeling when we awaken, and we unconsciously feel the desire to remember them. Furthermore, they may continue for several nights, and they tend to return in regular cycles which we should learn to predict and analyze.

One should not necessarily think that all mystical dreams have a precise meaning. Sometimes they are simply experienced

as an inner plenitude, thus indicating a communion with higher cosmic planes. In certain cases, they may open doors to past lives and thus indicate what we were in one of our past incarnations. For instance, people who frequently dream of India, and of Hindu or Buddhist symbolism, probably lived in that country at one time. The psychic body of these people may even be projecting there regularly while they sleep.

Likewise, if a man often sees himself with the features of a woman when he dreams, this may indicate a remembrance of a previous life.

Of course, a dream may really be conveying a message which, depending upon circumstances, includes the solution to a problem, the answer to a question, a premonition of an event, etc. It is important, therefore, that you devote your full attention to interpreting it. You will want to meditate regularly on its content, but without ever making this an obsession. In fact, we must also know how to detach ourselves from such a dream so that it may reveal itself to our consciousness in ways not served by our purely objective faculties.

Many people find it difficult to remember their dreams. This often happens because they get up too quickly in the morning. The best moment for recalling dreams is when we are just between the sleeping state and the waking state. It is during this passage from unconsciousness to consciousness that the recall of one's dream activities must take place. For the best results, you should ideally awaken naturally and gently before your alarm clock rings, but this might be impractical due to your nature or activities. If this is the case, after regaining consciousness of the physical world, do not get up immediately, but remain in bed for a few minutes with your eyes closed, holding the desire to return gently to an intermediate state. This

period of relaxation may be accompanied by concentrating for several minutes on the area around the first cervical ganglion (at the nape of the neck). This type of concentration facilitates dream recall, for this ganglion is directly connected to the pituitary and pineal glands, which are in turn intimately linked to our psychic being and the soul consciousness.

Many books have been written on the symbolism and interpretation of dreams. Some of these works are informative and make worthwhile reading. It is important to understand, however, that any material you find on this subject can only act as a guide, and that its prime value is to lend direction to our research. Dream interpretation must, of necessity, be entirely personal. In other words, except in certain cases where you feel a distinct need, we advise that you refrain from asking another person for help in discovering the meaning of your dreams, for others do not have your personal experience, understanding, inner life, or evolution. They can only interpret your dreams in the light of their experience or their knowledge in this area – such experience and knowledge being necessarily imperfect and limited. Furthermore, many dreams, especially those of a mystical nature, contain a message which concerns you alone. When you confide in others indiscriminately, you are in danger of inhibiting the unfoldment and continuation of these dreams, and thus you deprive yourself of information that might be quite useful to your future evolution.

In closing, we wish to emphasize that dreams truly constitute one of the keys which allow us to pass through the portals of the unseen. Through the medium of dreams, you can learn much more about the spiritual world than you ever would by reading hundreds of books on the subject. For this reason you should grant them the importance they deserve by making every

effort to bring together the necessary physical and mental requirements to ensure a profitable night on the psychic plane.

Speaking of this matter, you should know that it is completely possible to direct one's dream activity. To do so, you only need to relax just before falling asleep and visualize a mystical theme about which you would like to dream. Depending upon your aspirations, this visualization might take the form of a symbol, an inspiring landscape, a religious edifice you are particularly fond of, an initiate whose life and work you have studied, etc.

You will also find that keeping a special notebook for your dreams is quite helpful. Take time to jot down the dreams you remember, along with any commentaries you feel inspired to make. Remember to indicate the date and the specific time, if possible, when each dream occurs.

And as mentioned previously, to facilitate the recall of dreams, avoid waking up too quickly. Before rising remain in an intermediate state for several minutes so that you can concentrate calmly and effortlessly on the area around the nape of the neck.

With time and practice, you will notice that some of your dreams recur on a regular basis. In some instances, they correspond to repressions tied to fears or events which have left a psychological mark on you. You should therefore detect these and learn to free yourself from such inhibitions. Other dreams, which are of a truly mystical nature, you will definitely want to meditate upon. Their purpose is mostly to draw your attention to certain points involving your mystical quest or with choices that must be made in directing your life toward the happiness you seek. By paying close attention to such dreams, you will find that they repeat themselves in definite cycles, each time bringing with them new and increasingly precise elements.

