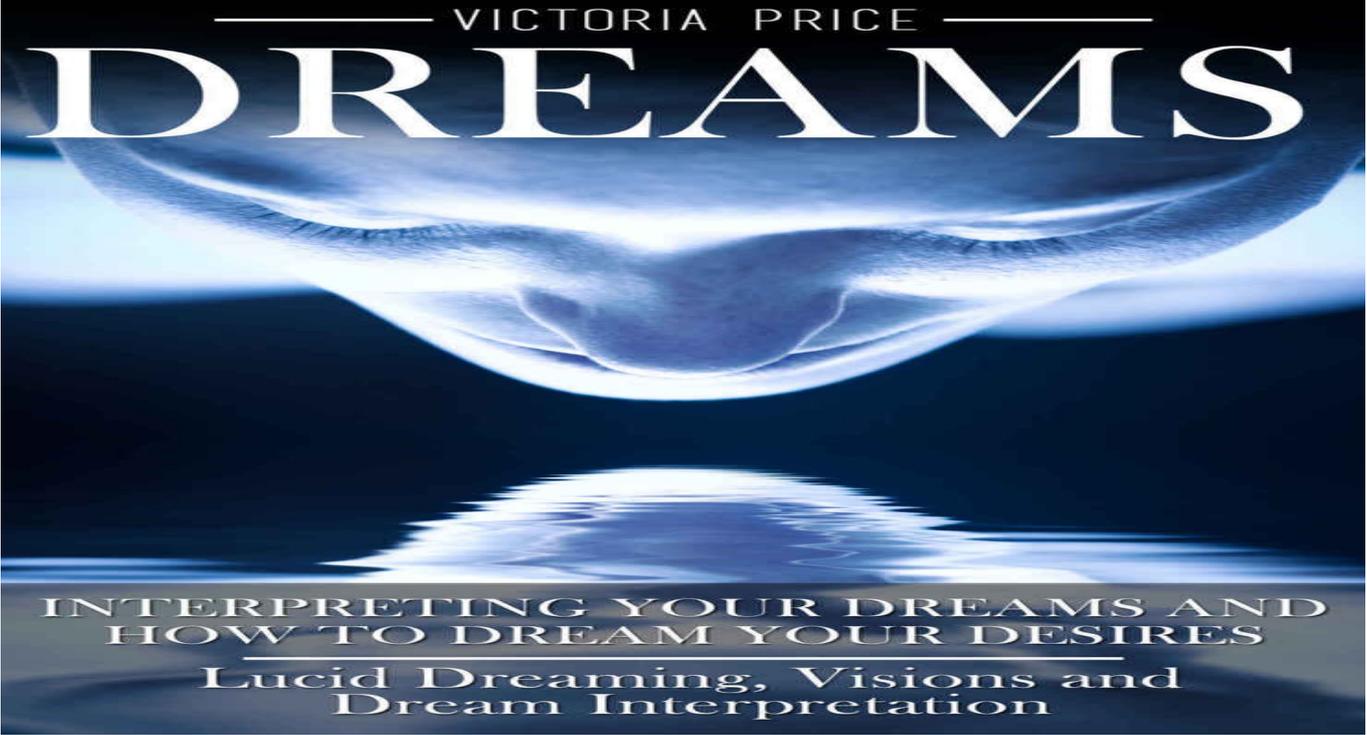


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DREAMS



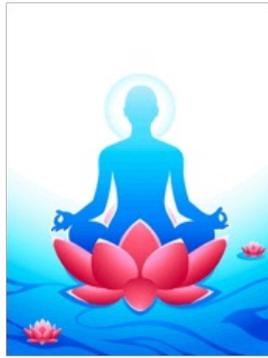
INTERPRETING YOUR DREAMS AND
HOW TO DREAM YOUR DESIRES

Lucid Dreaming, Visions and
Dream Interpretation

DREAMS

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INTRODUCTION

When it comes to life's mysteries, there are many unanswered questions that continue to intrigue people to this very day. One such mysterious concept is that of Dreams. Where do they come from? How do we experience them? Can we make them happen at will?

Since time immemorial, people have experienced the phenomenon of virtual reality in the form of dreams. Right from the elite to common man and from children to adults, everyone has witnessed vivid dreams, while asleep, and wondered as to what exactly happens to their minds when they shut their eyes. However, it's more complex than that. In order to reach that stage of dreaming, you need to get into REM sleep as that's when dreams start to happen.

The trend has existed from the time of our ancestors, the Neanderthals and the Paleoliths, walked on Earth and the trend of dream interpretation continues to be a part of our living day phenomenon.

We spend many waking hours wondering about our dreams and wishing to find answers to the many questions that pop in our heads when it comes to dreams. What really are these dreams and why do we experience them? Do all of us dream the same dream or do we have different dreams? Is there a cause and effect at play or is it all just random? Is the meaning of dreams opposite to reality? Well, there is only one way to find the answer to these questions: read on because this book explores the phenomena of dreams.

This book will not only explore the meaning of dreams, but will delve into the depths to understand why human beings experience dreams, and how they can be interpreted. We will also look at theories of dreams that many psychologists have presented over the years and try to analyze the concept of a dream in detail.

I thank you for choosing this book and hope you have a good time reading it because the subject of dreams is so interesting. It affects everyone in the world so is something that will be viewed from many viewpoints. That means that your dreams may have a special meaning to you, although the same dreams dreamed by someone else may have a completely different interpretation. That's why the subject is so fascinating and gives rise to such speculation.

CHAPTER 1

WHAT ARE DREAMS?

"All that we see or seem is but a dream within a dream." Edgar Allan Poe

When it comes to defining a set concept, most people often seem to struggle with it, as there will be a million possible ways to describe it. However, the best thing is to understand an acceptable definition and then form our individual opinions. So, to make it easy for ourselves, let us first look at the dictionary meaning of a dream and then go about dissecting the concept.

The dictionary states that a dream is- *a series of thoughts, images, and sensations occurring in a person's mind during sleep.*

Here, a dream is described as an occurrence where a person experiences the following aspects.

Thoughts- Thoughts are ideals that people have. People generally formulate opinions in their minds and thoughts are a result of the same.

Images- these are visuals of objects and people around us. Every day, we get to see just so many things that it is obvious for them to reappear in our dreams.

Sensations- The human body is quite sensitive to stimuli. It will feel sensations even when asleep and will also react to it, regardless of being awake or asleep.

All these occur within a person's mind, when they are asleep. In order to reach the true dream state, we need to be in REM sleep which is a deep form of sleep where the subconscious mind is able to explore and that's where dreams become interesting, because they are not made from conscious thoughts or brought about by choice. However, this is not the only dream state that exists as you will see later in this chapter.

This pretty much sums up the concept of a dream, described within a few wise words and tells a person what a dream is all about. But given how deep a concept it really is, it is rather unacceptable to remain satisfied with such a minimal explanation.

If it really is just a sequence of images and sounds that get repeated in our minds, then why do we spend countless hours wondering what our dreams mean? Surely there must be more to it than just a reiteration of different everyday situations.

It is interesting to know that there are two distinct approaches to understanding and interpreting dreams. On the one hand there is the neuro scientific analysis of dreams and on the other, there is the psychoanalytical interpretation.

The former will be interested in knowing about the basic structure of a dream and how dreams take shape. They will conduct experiments to know what happens in the mind while dreaming, and the physical signs and symptoms that the person shows while he or she is dreaming.

The psychoanalysts, on the other hand, are more bothered about the interpretation of the dreams that people have. They perform experiments to find a co-relation between people's dreams and their lives.

Upon mixing the two, scientists were able to come up with two distinct results. The first set found that all people have a particular dream phase, which occurs in succession through the night and the latter found a few common dreams that most people have on most nights. We will look at the former, i.e. phases of dreams in this chapter and look at the latter, i.e. common dreams in a later chapter of this book.

DREAM PHASES

Everybody dreams, and there is no person on earth who has not dreamt a vivid dream in their

life. In fact, not just humans, animals too dream and experience similar virtual phenomenon.

Through many years of research, scientists have successfully identified 5 stages of dreams that all people experience. It is a pattern that people's minds follow in order to generate these dreams. Let us look at these 5 stages or phases in detail in this next segment.

Phase 1

The first stage is known as an Alpha phase. It is one where the person is getting ready to fall asleep and is in a state of trance. He or she is not asleep yet and is experiencing a mild dream like state. Physically, the person's muscle activity begins to slow down and they start drifting in their sleep. There might also be some slow movement of the eyes. During this phase, many people experience life like sensations. They might suddenly contract a limb or lift their head up. They might also hear someone calling their name or the telephone ringing or receiving a message etc. These are better known as hypnagogic hallucinations. In the next 5 minutes or so, the person enters the state of Theta, where he or she just about falls asleep. Although these are the first few stages of sleep that a majority of the people experience while falling asleep, there can be some that experience this while remaining awake. It is a very common aspect amongst those that indulge in activities that induce a trance such as meditation and yoga. These will almost always leave people feeling like they are in an Alpha state. During this state of sleep, the dreams that are going through the mind could be derived from the thought processes that happen as we go off into a deeper sleep and when you bear this in mind, you can actually think up the theme of the dream and have much more control over the kind of dream that you have. Since this is only Alpha state dreaming, it is not so much dependent upon the subconscious and may pick up on thoughts and be a lot more logical in nature than those dreams that are dreamed at deeper levels of sleep.

Phase 2

Phase 2 of falling asleep deals with experience rapid body movements and also internal changes. The muscles start to relax and recoil. The brain starts sending rapid waves that cause our bodily functions to slow down. Our heart rates begin to slow and we slowly start drifting away to dreamland. The waves that our brains produce are known as sleep spindles and are what cause us to fall asleep. Our body temperature also starts to fall rapidly, which generates a welcoming environment for us to fall asleep. This phase is said to last for about 20 minutes and forms 45% of our sleep pattern. Dreams within this stage of sleep will be fairly random and if you are woken or disturbed from them, it's likely that you will remember a certain amount of what you have dreamed. However, you will not retain the thoughts for long, so if you want to recall your dreams, you should keep a notepad next to the bed and make a conscious effort to recall them upon waking and note them down.

Phase 3

Phase 3 of our dream cycle deals with the emerging of delta waves in our brains. It is better known as a transitory phase where we slowly transition from light sleep to deep sleep. We tend to move slowly while our brain gets down to business. It is almost like allowing it to do its job and consciously relaxing our bodies, to help it get to work. This phase makes up for about 46% of the dream cycle. During this sleep cycle, the dreams are likely to be completely random and also difficult to recall. You have very little control over the subject matter of these dreams and one can even experience nightmares within this phase of sleep. The kind of thing that can wake you in this phase would be the movement within the dream. Have you ever felt that you were falling into a hole? Then, it is likely if you remember this kind of dream, that it was dreamt in this stage of sleep. You will recall the falling feeling and will probably wake up believing the dream to have derived from a real event.

Phase 4

Phase 4 of our dream pattern deals with falling into deep sleep. This is where the major chunks

of our dreams appear and what we are most likely going to forget when we wake up. Many of our physical phenomena occur during this very phase. Right from sleep walking to bedwetting, many other such natural physical phenomena occur. Deep sleep is when our eyes show no movement at all. And if people are awakened when they are in this phase then they will be disoriented and will not be able to adjust to the wake state easily. This phase makes for 15% of total sleep. During this phase of sleep, the dreams can be very disturbing, but that's nothing to be concerned with since it is very unlikely that you will be able to recall them, even if you are woken from them. Your mind takes a little time to adjust and come back to consciousness and thus, during this time, the dream will have disappeared.

Phase 5

The last phase is characterized by rapid eye movement or REM. The dreams that you see during this stage is what you will vividly remember in the morning. Two opposing situations arise in the body during this stage. Firstly, the body goes into a state of rest and all your muscles are completely relaxed. On the other hand, your brain is most active during this state. It is almost as if it is done with its other activities and is concentrating on the dream. In this stage of sleep, your dreams are likely to be very realistic and when you wake, you will recall them. You may see people that you know or places that you are familiar with though the dream does not always put things into any kind of logical sequence. For example, you could dream of someone who is in your life now, but have other people within that dream that have nothing to do with your current circumstances.

These are the different dream phases that occur. These are standard and universal. You will not have a control over it and will naturally occur.

Some scientists claim that there can be some who will not experience Phase 1 and move to Phase 2 almost as soon as they hit the bed. They might also experience lesser period of phase 4 and more of phase 5. It is also quite common for people to move between phases 4 and 5 all through the night.

Remember that people tend to have a series of dreams as opposed to a single one. Each session can last between 5 to 20 minutes and then we move to another dream. What you also need to remember is that dreams are experienced in different ways. Some people will be able to remember their dreams as being in full color, some in sepia or dreamlike tones while others only dream in black and white.

Another interesting perspective is that some people say that they always remain at the age they are when they have the dream but that the people they dream about will still be at the age when they knew them. If you want to keep a record of your dreams, this helps you to be able to work out their meaning, but it also helps you to see if there is a pattern as to how your dreams appear - i.e. in black and white or color. There are also other things that you can pick up on that may not apply to other people. Are you able to use other senses within the dream? Some people are able to recollect aromas while others are not able to discern this, even though their dreams may be of things one would expect to be associated with the sense of smell.

CHAPTER 2

WHY DO WE DREAM?

In the previous chapter, we looked at the different phases of sleep/ dream. We also understood the basic meaning of a dream. But the main question remains unanswered, why do we dream at all? It would seem a little superfluous. Surely are we not going to bed to sleep and to rest the mind? Dreams, as you know, refer to thoughts and images that play in our minds like a movie. But what causes us to dream at all? Could it be our mind's way of teaching us something new or could it indicate something much simpler, like a reiteration of events that we see all through the day. Could these dreams be messages from the subconscious to help us with difficult situations in our lives? Many questions hang over the meaning of dreams.

There is no proper explanation available as to why we dream. Although scientists have been studying the phenomenon for a long time, there are still no conclusive results to prove that dreams are meaningful virtual reality. However, for the sake of knowledge, scientists have come up with a few theories about dreams. These theories believe that dreams are our mind's way of teaching us new things, interpreting emotions, dealing with issues and forming memories. Since the body goes into healing mode while we sleep, is it completely beyond the bounds of possibility that this is the mind's way of healing? One thing that we do know is that during the hours of sleep, there are a lot of hormones being released into the body to help heal our wounds. Is the mind trying to tell us something to help up to ease our mental problems or dilemmas?

These are some of the most acceptable theories and here is an explanation of each.

Despite much debate against it, most scientists believe that dreams might be all about our brain trying to make our jobs easy. Say for example you are trying to learn a new language. In order to help you out, your brain will start playing the lessons to you at night, which will seem like a dream. In effect, all you are doing is reliving what you did in the waking hours in order to foster it. So, in effect, the brain is trying to reduce your burden during the waking hours by best utilizing the time that it finds, while you sleep. And that is exactly why the brain does not go to sleep when we do. It has quite a lot of work on its hands to complete. You can explain certain things from this theory. If the mind acts like the body and heals during sleeping hours, this may explain why an event such as that shown below may happen.

You go to bed knowing that you have lost the front door key or some other object. While you try and consciously think where you put it, you cannot find it. However, frequently upon waking, you have the answer as soon as you wake up. This could be the subconscious mind working on the problem by going through the activities that led you to losing the object. After all, the memory stores so much information that this isn't altogether based on guesswork. It could be that the mind is trying to sort out the problems that you have encountered during the day and much like your mind comes to life when you meditate, sleep could be producing the same effect.

However, that does not successfully explain the random things that we see in our dreams. It is not always about French lessons or algebra. We also seem to see many things that most often make no sense at all. They seem rather exaggerated and not in keeping with reality. Even if they do make sense then it looks more like a fantasy movie or we may not be able to give the dream any set explanation that makes sense.

Scientists therefore propose the theory that these dreams, without proper co-relation, are a result of our emotions. As human beings, we tend to experience several emotions all through our lives. Of these, not all are positive, and there can be some negative ones as well. We already know what negative thoughts affect our way of thinking and that they can hold people back from succeeding. We also know that positive thoughts come into play when you talk about placebos, since it is the belief in the medication, rather than the medication itself, that makes us

better. Thus, emotions are very strong and powerful and could explain much of the muddle that we see as a mixed up dream.

That is why we experience happy dreams on some days and nightmares during others. These dreams are just vents that help our pent up feelings to escape and showcase our true emotions. These dreams are meant to help us come to terms with our real emotions that might be hidden in our subconscious. We might not always be able to communicate our emotions while awake and our dreams will help bring them to the fore and deal with them. Have you ever woken up from a dream and had a feeling of sadness envelope you? One of the saddest dreams that I ever experienced was so powerful that the sense of loss overcame me for the whole of the next day, but I have experienced dreams which work in the opposite way. They have made me feel uplifted and energized. Thus, we have to appreciate that the dreams may actually be playing around with the emotional centers within the brain to help us to deal with things that we have not dealt with emotionally.

In a more artistic interpretation of dreams, scientists have described it as an animated expression of our reality. Say for example, you are worried about having to lose your job during inflation. In your dream, you see that you are trying to hold on to your job while it is running away from you. You might also feel like you have been reduced down to size while the rest of the world remains quite big. This type of interpretations is quite relevant to the fact that the brain likes to exaggerate things during sleep. You will see something that is relevant to everyday life but too unrealistic to be true. In a case like this, it may be exaggerated because that's the way that your mind sees the situation. In reality of course you would not be physically smaller than the things around you, but in fact that's how you feel emotionally, especially in a situation when you are faced with emotions that make you feel small and insignificant. You could also equate this to dreams in which you are large and powerful. Perhaps in a scenario like this, you see yourself as being empowered.

The fourth theory that scientists propose deals with memory formation. As you know, the human mind is constantly at work and undertaking many diverse functions at all time. Through all of it, it becomes increasingly difficult for us to form memories. So, our brains take it upon themselves to create these memories when we sleep. This can be a recap of things that have happened in your life that are merely happening as a result of things that you have done or experienced that your conscious mind has not yet had time to digest and process.

The brain works hard when we fall asleep to form the memories and sends them to two distinct areas of the brain, with one being the short term memory and the other being long term memory. It will take quite some time for it to make this decision and might also be quite a vivid experience. That is where you see most of your dreams. So when the memories are being converted, they are played in the mind like a movie. It is like the brain is looking at it again, to decide where it needs to be sent. That is why you relive many of the things that you see or do during the day. It's a very complex system and the human mind is indeed complex and may be looking at the different scenarios that you have experienced or may delve into your fears or things that you are afraid to experience. Thus, nightmares may result, where you wake up sweating and need to get away from the dream because it causes you fear. You may never have experienced this, but there are people who believe that if you turn over and start your sleep again, you can actually have a positive effect upon the line that your dreams take and thus get away from the bad dreams that you have been experiencing.

In a final theory, some believe that these dreams have no real meaning at all. They are simply random and carry no significant relevance. They are regarded as random by-products of sleep and do not really tell us anything. This might also explain why babies also dream despite not knowing too much about the world. They have dreams based on what they see on a daily basis and do not have to put in any effort towards understanding them in order to process the information.

THE PHASES OF THE MOON

There is a school of thought that believes that our dream cycle is largely affected by the gravitational pull of the moon and thus during periods such as full moon, the dreams would be more vivid. Psychologist, Richard Wiseman worked with 1000 volunteers and what he found was rather interesting. He did find that the phases of the moon did make a difference to the things that people dreamed about but what he introduced was sounds that people had in the background while they were sleeping and he was able to accurately predict the kind of dreams that people would have during listening to a sound from a mobile app. In fact, half a million users of this app tried it out and were asked to record their dreams upon waking. It was interesting to note that those who listened to sounds which were soothing – such as bird song, woke up after having experienced very positive dreams, while those who had the sound of cars were more likely to experience bad dreams. Thus, you can, to a certain extent control the kind of dreams that you experience by introducing different sounds. His work is interesting and he is furthering his studies because he believes that together with the release of serotonin during sleep and the effect that has on the state of mind, sounds may be the answer to help people who are known to suffer from depression.

Thus, if you think of it in that light, it may be possible to have more control over your dreams. One thing that was interesting from his studies was that people who had good dreams were energized and that may be useful in treating depressive patients. As for the lunar movements and their effect upon dreams, the connection is not yet clear, though it is thought that the full moon brings out the protective part of our nature where we may be more conscious than at other times of our need to protect ourselves. If you look at the way that our ancestors lived, this is not beyond the realms of possibility. When the moon is full, the light that this produces may just trigger a response to protect ourselves, so that the dreams we have during this phase of the moon are more likely to be disturbing or vivid.

No matter what the theories state, it's a fact that we will continue to dream, as long as we fall asleep. We can derive any explanation for the phenomenon but will not be able to escape its occurrence. In future chapters of this book, we will look at some common types of dreams that people have and how they can be interpreted successfully. It is an interesting thought indeed that there may come a time when we can almost decide what kind of dream we want to experience and get into the right sound to make that likely. For the time being, randomness is bound to occur because the stimuli around us varies so much and so does the emotional state of each individual who goes to bed and experiences dreams.

In the next chapter, we explore the conscious and the unconscious mind and take a look at how this can affect the dreams that we have. In fact, it is obvious that this will play a part in the dreams that we experience. When you look at people coming back from war torn countries, many of the nightmares that occur will certainly be as a result of what the conscious mind experienced and what the subconscious mind does with those thoughts as it turns them into dreams that are experienced as a result of being in very difficult situations that are not of an everyday nature.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONSCIOUS AND THE SUBCONSCIOUS MINDS

Dreams are like virtual reality. They might pertain to real life situations but can be far away from the truth. We might also experience them quite vividly but that does not mean they are real world scenarios, and we are partaking in the activities that are portrayed within the dream.

It is quite interesting to know that the human mind is split into two distinct realms namely, the conscious and the subconscious. Both these parts are interdependent and go hand in hand. Let us look at both individually.

THE CONSCIOUS MIND

Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis, is said to have extensively studied and described the conscious mind quite vividly. It is best described as everything that lies within our range of awareness. It is everything that makes us think is logical or rational. It deals with our emotions, feelings, memories and sensations. This is fairly obvious and something that most people take for granted. If we experience a good day, then the conscious mind may give us peaceful and happy dreams, whereas if we have experienced difficult situations for the emotional conscious mind to work on, then we are likely to dream in equally complex ways.

It is a bit difficult to say where the conscious mind starts or ends. However, Freud described it as just the tip of the iceberg. He believed that it goes much deeper than what appears and speaking about the conscious mind alone might be like speaking only about the tip, while ignoring the entire iceberg. The conscious mind is that which knows what is going on and that makes us aware of what is going on, although the subconscious sees much more than that. It sees the way that what is going on affects our emotional state, and that's far more complex.

To put it straight, the conscious mind is best described as your awareness. It is what helps you take in the different sights and sounds around you. All your different senses are directly connected to your conscious mind. So when you see something, it is registered in the conscious mind, when you smell something, it stays in your conscious mind, when you feel something, the sensation is felt in your conscious, a sound you hear is also played in the conscious mind. When you eat something distinct, its taste will get registered in your conscious mind. Thus, your senses and the aware part of your mind is that which you are familiar with. If you touch something, it is this conscious sense that will tell you what it feels like. People who work with mindfulness work with the conscious mind. They make themselves aware of what is happening around them and will feel an exaggerated sense of wellbeing based upon what they experience. Others may experience the same thing but be totally unconscious of it, so to them, their conscious mind would be the one that deals with the problems of the day or the worries about tomorrow or even the depths of feeling that happens because of a past event.

So, it is your true aware mind. If you are to make a mundane decision then you will consult your conscious mind about it, especially when you wish you to make a spur of the moment decision. This is affected by your state of consciousness. For example, if you are a one task person and are absorbed by that task and are asked a simple question, you may not be able to find an answer to it, but it doesn't make your conscious mind any less astute. It's just that it is being concentrated into something that does not allow space for simple questions to be asked. Thus, your conscious mind is that which YOU are conscious of and this also adds another dimension to it, as this will be different for everyone. If you were to stand a dozen people on the same hill and ask them what they can consciously observe, you would get different answers from each of them, based upon their own consciousness. Thus, the conscious mind is a little more complex than we would at first suppose.

THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

The subconscious mind is the other part of our brains. Again, it is hard to say where it starts and ends. It pretty much blends into a single mind. The subconscious mind contains a lot of information that automatically implemented, without needing any instructions from us. For example, when you reach the front door, your hand automatically slips into your pocket to reach for the key. Here, you are not forcing your conscious mind to make a decision for you. However, if you had access to your friend's house and were trying to sneak in without his or her knowledge, then you would stop for a minute before reaching for the key in your pocket. Only if your conscious mind is willing to take action will you will decide to open the door and go in.

Interestingly enough, when you are hypnotized, you cannot be forced to do something that you subconscious or conscious mind would not allow you to do during normal circumstances, so it is kind of a safety valve to protect you. The subconscious mind does a lot of working out of problems even though you may think that your conscious mind is doing it all. It's not. The subconscious continues work even when you stop thinking about the problem. It is more complex and capable of dealing with problems as it doesn't get interrupted by other things that are happening.

The subconscious mind might help you make automatic decisions but it is quite a powerful part of your mind. Many believe that the secret to a healthy and happy living lies in understanding what lies in a person's subconscious. It is that part of the mind which is a treasure trove of ideas that need to be supplied to the conscious side of the brain, in order for us to put them into action. The subconscious mind is also something that comes into play when you meditate. The idea is to allow your subconscious mind enough space to come out to play and Buddhists believe that it is working toward unlocking this part of the mind, they are able to open their third eye or reach that place which they call Nirvana, which means the place where all questions are answered. Thus, the subconscious mind is very important and can help people to develop in many ways. In the land of dreams, it's that part of the brain that comes up with ideas that will help someone to make sense of their lives, as well as producing conundrums that will leave the dreamer guessing as to the meaning of the dream that has happened.

THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND

There is of course another part known as the unconscious mind. Although there are some that think that the unconscious mind is the same as the subconscious mind, it is not necessarily true. The unconscious mind can contain a lot of ideas that have been sent there because they are deemed unnecessary or redundant. Again, there is no harm in trying to tap into these. It is like stumbling upon an old photograph that you think you had lost but never really wanted to make the effort to look for. You might stumble upon something important there, which might make your decision-making capacity a little easier. Have you ever had a déjà vu situation happen in your life? This is where the unconscious mind may be prompted into sending signals to the conscious mind that something has happened which is recognizable and being something that has been experienced or seen before. Consider this a storehouse of memories, or a place where redundant memories may be placed in a safe corner of the mind until they are required.

Now you may wonder as to where dreams come into the picture in between all of this. As you know, you will have to untie your subconscious and to some extent your unconscious mind, with your conscious mind. That will go a long way in helping you lead a better life. But it sounds easier said than done. You cannot sit in a corner and force your minds to converge. You will have to put in a lot more effort towards helping the two meet.

According to Sigmund Freud, dreams are a sneak peek into what lies in our subconscious minds. Scientists believe that it is a very powerful concept and there might be a lot more to it.

During the day, we think out of our conscious mind and our subconscious mind does not really interfere. But during the night, when our conscious mind is resting, our subconscious takes over. This is also held to be true for meditation practice where people are able to overcome problems because they are allowing the subconscious mind the rest that it needs to help with

problem solving and explanation.

There have been several researches conducted on the same to see if there really is any truth to the fact that the subconscious has such a high role to play in dreaming. In one study, researchers conducted an experiment on amnesiacs. They were asked questions about certain activities that they might have taken up recently. The scientists were aware of them beforehand. Given that amnesiacs tend to have short-term memory loss they were able to answer correctly some of the questions about the activities. This indicated that they possibly dreamt of undertaking those activities and were able to answer the questions successfully.

This is a clear indication that it is possible for people to travel to their subconscious thoughts, when they fall asleep. Many times, it is possible for an unconscious thought to move to the subconscious and then you dream about it vividly and spend time thinking about it, thereby moving it to the conscious mind. If all the best ideals make a similar transition, then it will prove to be quite beneficial for you.

We will read, in detail, about the steps you can take to work on your subconscious mind in the next chapter of this book. However, before going there, it may be worthwhile studying the way that the subconscious works by reading up on meditation or mindfulness. In the normal passage of a day, the conscious mind sees so much that it cannot possibly recall all of the information that is presented to it. The subconscious mind can store things that the mind believes will be useful over the course of the next night during that time which is called "healing time" and the unconscious mind will be the place where things are stored that are not necessarily needed by the subconscious until such time as triggers happen when they need to be accessed.

Dreams that happen overnight may stem from the subconscious mind trying to put all of the thoughts of the day in order. They may also stem from emotional highs and lows and the way that the brain processes them. There is not a set way that dreams are founded, although in experiments, people have been able to produce the kind of dreams that help them to be more positive in their approach to life which would suggest that the subconscious is indeed at play in healing the mind and making it manage all of the elements that are fed to it during the course of the day that has passed.

There is a level of control that you can have over the dreams that you have. We will explore this in the coming chapters. This will help you to gear your dreams in a way where you have more control over the feelings that come from dreams and the emotions that are wrapped up in those dreams. We mentioned before about positive and negative emotions and we already know that these can be triggered by listening to different sounds during the course of sleep, but how else can you control your dreams? Read on to get a better idea because you really have more control over your dreams than you may imagine.

CHAPTER 4

INTERPRETING YOUR DREAMS

Previously, we read about the conscious and the subconscious mind and how our dreams might be vivid illustrations of the ideals that lie in the latter. In this chapter, we will look at the steps that you can take to see if this is true and whether you can establish a set dream pattern. If you follow the instructions below, you can experiment with your dreams and this may help you to understand how dreams work in your particular case.

STEP 1 RECORD

When it comes to dream patterns, everybody is quite unique and it will be very difficult to generalize. You must not think about everybody in general and focus only on what your dreams look like.

The first step is to always record your dreams. For that, you will have to place a pen and paper next to your bed, so that you can immediately get up and write down all that you saw in your dream. Remember that even a vivid dream might stay in your mind only for a few minutes, right after you get up, and forcing yourself to remember it for some time might not help you do so. If you think it will help you, you may have a program on your cell phone where you can simply speak your dream and record it, so that you have a record straight away from the moment of waking. If you are the technical kind of person, this will probably work better for you and you can transcribe it at a later time so that you have an accurate record and can compare dreams from day to day.

You can also have a dedicated book for it at your office, where you can record something that you suddenly remember during the day. You can quickly write it down without wasting any time or simply use the same app on your cell phone to record what you remember.

You should also make up your mind to dream as vividly as possible. As you know, it is possible for you to train your conscious mind to do something for you, provided you give it clear instructions. You will have to tell yourself to remember as much of the dream as possible in order to get an insight into it. Tell your conscious mind that you will be consciously dreaming and should remember what you saw until morning. You can even experiment with setting yourself up for a dream. If you left off from a dream that you were enjoying on a previous night, think of the thoughts within that dream and visualize it in your mind's eye before you go off to sleep. I don't know if you have ever been upset because you left a dream unfinished. I have been in this situation many times and have been able to set the dream up for the following night, so that by suggestion, I am able to go back into that dream. This is also a good practice for people who suffer from nightmares. In order to avoid the nightmare, think of the dream that was welcoming and happy and think of it and visualize it before you go off to sleep at night and it's likely you can avoid the bad dreams.

STEP 2 RECOGNIZING THE FEELING

The next step is to identify the feeling you felt while seeing the dream. When you remember the dream that you had, you will also remember the feeling that you experienced when you had it. Chances are you will be able to identify the exact feeling you felt when the dream occurred and also what led you to feel that way. It might be anger, sadness or happiness. When you record the dream, you must also describe the feeling that you felt while seeing it. The emotions may be very strong. You may wake up feeling anger or happiness or even euphoria. Make sure that you note that emotion that you felt as this forms a very strong part of the dream. It also gives you a clue as to why you were dreaming such vivid and emotional dreams.

One woman who tried this experiment woke up in the morning believing her husband to have been unfaithful. Not only that, she imagined that her husband had cheated her with her best

friend. She believed it to such an extent that she actually turned around and hit her husband. That's how powerful feelings that come in dream format are. She had a bit of explaining to do, but worked out that the feeling of betrayal came from things that had happened to her in the past and her underlying fear of losing her partner. She had a self-esteem issue that was stopping the relationship from growing and her husband was able to work with her to help her through it, once he was aware of what the problem was.

Remember that the two need not be coherent. You might feel happy to have eaten a large burger while you were on a diet in your dream. So, don't assume a feeling you might have had based on the nature of the dream, and record what you really experienced through it. No matter how logical the dream seems, record it. Know what you felt, what you did and what you experienced with whom and where. Sometimes there are repetitions in dreams and these dreams are interesting ones to record because a recurrent dream is a sign of a problem that needs to be resolved but that you have not yet been able to resolve. More than 65 per cent of adult dreams are of the recurrent type and this can be a real indication that you have unresolved issues.

A common dream for students, for example, was reported by a study in 2010 that said it found that students would dream about missing an exam or turning up too late to take an exam and much of this can be put down to unresolved issues concerning getting through their examinations. This is logical. However, when this occurs at a later stage in life, it could have similar meaning. For example, the same kind of dream could occur about getting to a meeting in time or arriving for an interview too late to be interviewed. This kind of dream may indicate to you that you need to leave early in order to be sure of getting there on time and may be the subconscious working on your conscious mind to show it that you need to take remedial action to ensure success. We already know that the subconscious works out problems for you and a recurrent dream of this nature can be very useful when it comes to deciphering the meaning of the dream.

STEP 3 CONNECT

The next step is to connect the dreams that you have had. You will see that there is an identifiable pattern in your dreams. Once you record them for a month or so, you will see that the dreams all have some sort of a connect. Maybe you have the base concept as the common aspect or there is someone in it that appears regularly etc. However, don't come up with an imaginary pattern. Maybe there is a subtle one and that is exactly what you should stick with. Don't feel tempted to create an imaginary dream sequence.

Next, you have to check if the dreams match up to any thoughts that you have had during the day. It is highly likely that you had thoughts of meeting an old friend but could not do so and saw yourself meeting him or her in your dream. This is indicative of the fact that although the conscious mind is what was doing all the thinking, of meeting the friend, in the morning, your subconscious made you believe that you had come face to face with them, in your dream. This to a large extent goes to show that the two sections are interdependent.

If you have spotted something that seems recurrent and has not happened in your life yet, then it might be indication of what is to come in your life. Say for example you see a baby in your dreams quite often. The baby need not be the same one and you might see a different one each time. It might be indicative of new beginnings in your life. So, your dreams might be indicative of what the near future holds for you.

There will always or almost always be some connection between what is happening in your dreams and what is happening in your reality, although the dream may not be an indication that bad things are going to happen. They may just be a warning to your conscious mind that bad things COULD happen as a way to protect you from those things actually coming to pass.

STEP 4 DREAM DICTIONARY

It is understandable that it sounds quite easy to tell somebody to dream vividly, write it down and then interpret it. But in reality, it might be quite tough to do so. Although the first two aspects are entirely up to you and you alone can get yourself to dream vividly and write the dream down, you can avail help with the final aspect, which relates to the interpretation of a dream. You can make use of a dream dictionary, which will help you know the exact meaning of the symbols that appeared in your dream. These symbols are quite common amongst all dreamers and you will be able to know what exactly the dream meant. You can do a simple Internet search and find the symbols and their meanings. Say for example a cabbage has been appearing in your dreams quite too often. Sometimes it looks like you are growing cabbage and other times it looks like you are eating it. This might be indicative of the fact that you are wasting your time trying to indulge in unnecessary petty matters. You will have to take control and find a way around them. Similarly, the different symbols in your dreams will indicate your mental state.

If you want a good starting point, perhaps following [this link](#) would be a good one, as there is a whole heap of information on the theme of a dream dictionary which may help you to understand why you are having particular themes running through your dreams. Be careful when you are recording your dreams though, because proposal is very powerful indeed and if you start to suggest certain dreams to yourself, you may have those dreams as a result of the suggestion - rather than having them because they are a result of the life that you are living. For example, one woman was having dreams of winning the lottery, but that didn't mean that she would win. However, when she took her dreams a little further, she actually learned to use visualization and the law of attraction to follow through. She did win, but it wasn't because she dreamed she would win. The power that she gained through her dreams was the incentive to win. The rest was down to conscious thought and aiming toward an end result that she wanted. Dreams don't work like that on their own, but if you find that you have a recurring dream theme that you want to follow, then perhaps following it with visualization can help you to realize that dream. In the meantime, the dictionary can help you and be a powerful ally in trying to understand the obscure dreams that you have that make no sense to you.

STEP 5 ACTING ON IT

The final step of course is to act upon what you see in your dreams. If you think there is something bothering you, then you must tackle it. It might not seem so apparent when you are awake, but might be eating you on the inside. It can include a health issue that you have been putting off or reconciling with a sibling etc. Whatever it is, you will have to deal with it in order to stop the ill feelings and dreams from coming back. These are the steps that you need to take in order to interpret your dreams successfully. But remember that practice makes perfect and it might take you some time before you actually interpret your dreams successfully. You have to remain persistent and do as you think is right, to tap into your subconscious mind. You will surely be rewarded for your efforts and your life will improve once you take up this activity.

In the next chapter, we will read on some of the most common types of dreams that people have and what they might mean. In the meantime, look at the records of your dreams and see if there is a recurring theme. Then try to put some meaning to it. For example, if you dream that you are betrayed, ask yourself if you have an underlying problem that makes you feel that you would be betrayed. The fact is that emotions run deep and although you may be happy with your partner, you do need to resolve those feelings which are unresolved. This may mean talking to your partner about your insecurities and particularly how they play out in dreams, so that your partner can help you to overcome your insecurities.

People who dream about death may find that they are nervous in their approach to the next day because they expect the worst. If this is a dream that you have on a recurring basis, try to work out why. Death is a common dream and it may not mean death as you see it. It may just mean a moving on from one phase of your life to another. When you dream, for example, of a child that dies, it may be that you now feel you have grown up beyond being a child and be nothing more

sinister than that. It is a good idea to couple up the events that you are experiencing in your life and see why death would be a dream that would keep happening. You go through so many stages in your life, and each of these stages is growth. What you need to understand though is that growth in one area of your life can mean death to another. You should never be concerned that it means literal death, because that is a very rare thing for it to mean that. How you act on your dream interpretation is to recognize it for what it is and see that your dream is just your subconscious mind sending you messages about something that you may or may not have to do something about. Sometimes these are just passages of time within your life, but when you understand that, you don't need to do anything. All you need is to understand the significance and that makes it a lot easier to handle dreams in the future because your understanding is so much more comprehensive.

You can act on dreams where you are left with insecure feelings by talking to someone who you trust. If you have issues about where you stand in life, perhaps these dreams are reminding you that you are human and that you can expect to make mistakes along the way. When you have written down a dream that leaves you in a mood of upset, then talking about it with someone that you trust may be all that it takes to put that dream in the back of your mind. If they are being dreamt because of your insecurity, the moment that you act on them and discuss your insecurities with someone, the sooner the dream will disappear because it is no longer unresolved. Your mind is a very powerful place and your subconscious mind will be taking notes of what you do and adjusting your dreams to fit with the life that you are living. Thus, you may be able to banish those bad dreams forever, simply by taking the proactive approach and acting on the dream until you understand it better.

CHAPTER 5

COMMON DREAMS AND THEIR MEANINGS

Dreams can be quite lucid and leave you wondering why you had the dream you did. In this chapter, we will look at some common types of dreams that people have and interpret each one's true meaning. The meaning will vary slightly for each individual and these translations of meaning are general. You need to be able to work out the dream in accordance with your own circumstances so that you can make sense of the dream and see it as a learning experience, rather than something that is totally random.

SEEING PEOPLE

Seeing people is possibly the most common dream that people have. These can be everyday people that you meet in your life or someone that you have not seen in a long time. It is also a fact that we tend to see people that are no more. We tend to see them as being alive and interact with them. It is quite common for us to see our spouse or partner as well. If we are going through a period of fighting with our spouse, then we will keep seeing them until the issue is resolved. If you see people who have died, then this isn't a bad thing. It probably means that you have not dealt with all of your feelings concerning the death, although positive dreams can actually be something very comforting to people who have lost someone dear to them. The way that you see people will differ as well. In one dream, I saw a friend who had died and she was beckoning me. I followed and although I could see her in the distance, there came a point in the dream when she disappeared and I woke, feeling very empty indeed. This was symbolic because I had never really accepted that she was gone. The dream helped me and in future dreams about this same person, the level of discomfort was less and I was able to enjoy her company in a much more productive way.

MEETING CELEBRITIES

Many people dream of meeting their celebrities and being star stricken. This can mean that they are really appreciative of the celebrity's work and see some of their positive aspects in themselves. Sometimes, people visualize themselves meeting celebrities from the past. Be careful. If you dream that someone you know will become a celebrity, you may be feeling a kind of fear that your friend will leave you and not want to be your friend any more. This may symbolize that your friend is growing in a different direction to you and if there is something that you can do to change this, now would be a good time.

The other thing that you may pick up from a dream about a celebrity is that element that makes you interested in that celebrity. Perhaps they have something that you admire about them other than their celebrity status. For example, when I dreamed about Leonard Cohen, I saw him in the robes that he wears for meditation. I admire the fact that someone as rich as this and as famous can be so humble. I followed that dream with a day where I tried to follow in his footsteps and it really worked. Perhaps what I was picking up on in the dream was how this celebrity was affecting my own approach to life and your celebrities may be appearing in your dreams for similar reasons. Follow the clues because they are there.

BEING CHASED

Being chased by someone is a dream that we tend to have quite often. We feel like somebody is chasing us using a long stick. We often don't remember who is chasing us or why. This is symbolic of us running away from something that needs to be attended in life. By solving the issue, we will be able to put an end to such dreams. Alternatively, when you are being chased by someone desirable, it may be a sign to you that your relationship is blossoming and leading somewhere. If this is the case, then it's a good sign and something that you could share with your partner to try and make sure that he/she is on the same wavelength as you are.

VEHICLES

Some people tend to see vehicles quite often. Be it a plane or a car, people see vehicles often and quite prominently. This might be indicative of them trying to find direction in their life. It might mean that the person is not sure where he or she is headed and whether there is a need to change the direction. It might also indicate an impending journey that the person will be taking soon.

SCHOOL/ TEST

This is a very common dream and can occur at any age. It might not be limited to just students who will see such dreams. It is also common amongst grownups. It feels like a major test is approaching and you are unprepared for it. It can indicate unrest and that something needs your attention urgently. It might also signify something that is unsettled from our past. We explored the school test in a previous chapter and all we saw it as indicating was your primal fear about the unknown. If you make sure that you are on time for exams and that you have time to spare, you can avoid all of the nerves that are associated with taking exams. If you have this at a later time in your life, then the chances are that you have an appointment to keep that is important. Again, leave early, be prepared. Your subconscious mind is merely reminding you that in order to avoid disappointment, you need to be aware of anything that may stand in your way, in order to avoid disappointment.

FALLING

Suddenly falling down from somewhere is often a dream that most people have. It might not always be falling from a tall place and can also be falling on the floor while walking. This can be indicative of losing power or being pulled down by something. It can also mean that you have a big problem in your life that you are neglecting. However, on the other hand, some people look at it as being a relieving experience. It is like they are letting go of a bad situation and falling into a good one. This is a common dream to have and that falling may be acting as a warning, but only you will know. Are you about to embark on something new? Should you proceed with caution? Probably - and the reason for saying this is that caution never hurt anyone, whereas lack of caution may just lead you to disappointment.

BEING IN POWER

Some people see themselves being the president or the king. Such a dream can signify that the person is trying to be in power and control others. Those that have such a dream might not be in power and thus remain desirous of having some. If you find that you are dreaming this on a regular basis, perhaps it means that you have little control over your life. It is the subconscious working toward making you aware of this and the need to do something. You need to be more assertive and self-assertion lessons may help you. Perhaps, up until now, you have allowed your partner to be the dominant but you are not really happy with the results. Talk to your partner and regain your status as an individual because that will help you to grow toward losing the need to dream of being in power.

FLYING

Many people often dream of flying in the sky. This can be indicative of being in control and following their dreams. Flying also indicates freedom and the chance to break away. Perhaps if you have been working too hard, it's time to take a break from your work. Remember that dreams are the subconscious trying to tell you something and this break may be more important than you realize.

FOOD

Food dreams are quite common. We imagine eating a meal generally consisting of our favorite foods. This can signify intelligence and the flow of positive energy in our lives. It might mean that we are desirous of acquiring new information and increasing our knowledge base. Food can

also be a dream that people have when they are dieting. If you are dieting and you are dreaming of devouring mass quantities of food, then you need to look at your diet and be aware of the consequences of breaking that diet. With so many illnesses being related to your digestive system, this could be your body's way of saying it's time for you to take control of your life.

BEING NUDE

Being nude is a nightmare of sorts. Many people dream of being nude in public and being laughed at. This might be indicative of a fear of being judged by people in general. It can also showcase a fear of a secret coming out that you have been trying to keep safe for some time. If you have this dream on a recurring basis, you need to take a real look at your life and find out what it is that is making you feel so unsafe. Are you mixing with people who use you? Do you have friendships that are on a fifty fifty basis or are you doing all of the running? Maybe it's time to look at your life realistically and gain control of your life by choosing your friendships more carefully. It is likely that the dream will end once you do.

INTIMACY

Some people dream of being in bed with their partners. This might signify the person's way of expressing a deep desire. It can also mean that the person is thoroughly satisfied with their sex life and is looking forward to it. Intimacy can come in all forms. If you dream of that perfect synchronization of two people it is certainly much more than about the physical act of sex. It's about comfort and about knowing someone so well that you can trust them with your inner secrets. Beware however that you don't bare your soul to the wrong person. If you are having problematic dreams of intimacy, it could mean that you have not yet found that friend that you can trust in totally and perhaps you need to get out and mix with more people, giving you a better chance of finding that friendship in the future. Intimacy means total trust. Those who dream of this are either those who know that feeling well or those who are looking for that feeling within their lives. You will know which side of the fence you are on and can act accordingly.

PARTNER CHEATING

Some people dream that their partner is cheating on them. They see them in bed with another person. This can signify a lack of trust between the partners. It might also mean that the partner is not spending enough time with you and might not really be cheating on you.

LOSS

The loss of something can generally signify a negative aspect of life. However, it might also portray something positive. It might mean that the person is about to lose something but gain something in return. This is quite a positive aspect. Dreams about loss are not always going to be negative. I cited one dream earlier in the book where I was able to glean some kind of acceptance that a friend had died. You may find that dreams of loss are comforting and in this case will benefit from the dream because you will be able to face your fears of dealing with grief.

HOUSE

Some people dream of being in a house. The house need not always be theirs it can be someone else's house or a house that they once lived in. Such a showing up of a house might signify their state of mind. If you see yourself in the basement of the house, then it means that there is some issue that needs to be resolved at the earliest. Seeing oneself in the bedrooms signifies being in love and looking forward to a great love life.

These form some of the common symbols that people dream of at night. I'm sure you have seen a majority of these and now you know what they signify.

There are a whole lot more meaning which are shown in the dictionary that we have pointed you to although it's worthwhile comparing the translation of your dreams with several dictionaries to get the most accurate picture of what those dreams mean.

CHAPTER 6

CULTURAL TAKE ON DREAMS

Dream interpretation has been a practice since time immemorial. Before scientists began conducting research on the different interpretations of dreams, religious heads would attempt to understand what dreams really signify. Thus, dreams began to be interpreted within a religious context leaving behind propound theories.

In this chapter, we will look at some cultural and religious interpretations of dreams as a concept.

HINDUISM

The Hindus were one of the first people to have a view on dreams. They believe that dreams represent people's way of dealing with the world. It is like they are having a conversation with the rest of the world through their dreams. There is no line of difference between remaining awake and sleeping, and their experiences and conversations keep overlapping between the two states. There is a two-fold concept at play here, where it is not limited to connecting with the rest of the world alone, but also trying to communicate within oneself, in a better way. It is about raising self-awareness by dreaming a lucid dream. Some argue that a few Buddhists adopted the same and some sects in Tibet make use of this very concept to describe dreams.

BUDDHIST

The Buddhist way of looking at dreams is quite different from any other view. They believe in having dreamless sleep and try to practice mental exercises that will help them keep dreams at bay. As you know, Buddhists practice a lot of meditational exercises, which helps them control their minds. Before hitting the bed, they indulge in mind control exercises and prevent any dreams from appearing. And it does not pertain to nightmares alone, they prefer not to dream at all and help the mind avail complete rest.

CHRISTIANITY

The western world prefers not to mix dreams with religion. They believe that it is not important to involve god while interpreting dreams, and profess his message. They are of the opinion that dreams are not rational and trying to understand them would mean exploring the evil side of life. However, contradictory to the previous opinion, there are certain segments that prefer to make a connection between the two. They believe that dreams help people cope with the issues that they face in life. Dreams can also help them connect with god and heighten their spiritual conscience.

ISLAM

Those that follow Islam believe that dreaming allows them to untie with martyrs of their past. They try to understand the martyr's sacrifice and also their very existence. Some also depend on their dreams to find their spouse. They also attach religious significance to their dreams. They think that dreams help them know about an impending danger and will be able to find a way out of it.

These are just some interpretations and there are many more of such. As you can see, each one has a different view on the subject. It is difficult to conceptualize the theory of dreams and should be best regarded as a vast subject with many meanings.

CHAPTER 7

HOW TO DREAM POSITIVELY

Dreams can be used as weapons to tap into the subconscious and know what we truly desire from the inside. It is important that we make an effort towards knowing what our subconscious wants for us and whether we are truly working towards attaining it.

The more that we move away from what we actually want, the more dissatisfied we remain. Therefore, it becomes all the more important for us to work towards doing what our subconscious mind wants of us.

For that to happen, you have to find a platform to unite your conscious and subconscious mind. There are two main ways in which you can do so and that involves training your mind to dream vividly and unite them, and/ or indulging in some meditational practices. We will look at both in detail.

DREAMING POSITIVE

The first and foremost thing to do is to train your brain to be positive. Start by entertaining positive thoughts. You must tell yourself before going to bed that you have a mission and it entails knowing clearly what lies in your subconscious mind.

You have to then increase your sleep time. If you are sleeping for 7 hours now, then increase it to 8 hours. Increasing sleep time will help you increase your REM phase. That is when you see the most lucid dreams and will most likely see what lies in your subconscious.

Next, once you hit the bed, close your eyes and visualize the dream you would like to see. Suppose you wish to see yourself in a high position at office, you must visualize the same and see yourself at the helm of affairs and guiding others. You should visualize it as vividly as possible in order to convert the dream into reality.

Similarly, start by vividly visualizing the dream you wish to have and focus on the fine details of it. If you are finding it a bit difficult to start dreaming vividly then you should start by imagining yourself as flying. That will surely kick start your lucid dream. You should start flying towards your goal and stop once you reach it. Don't go into the details of gravity. Your dream does not have to be scientifically correct. Just imagine yourself standing on a high platform and then start flying around.

You can also place a photograph or a picture signifying the dream that you wish to dream or also place an object on your bedside to serve the same purpose.

You have to master the art of being in control of your dream. You have to exercise control over it in order to prevent it from going awry. In fact, you must have such good control that in case it misses its course, then you have to quickly get up.

Some people like to leave a light on when they sleep. But this will only interfere with your dream. You must sleep in complete darkness if you wish to dream vividly.

MEDITATION

Meditation is a great tool that you can use to know what is in your subconscious and also go after what you wish to have in your life.

Most meditational practices are quite simple to carry out and you will find it rather easy to pick a schedule that will fit into your routine. Here are some simple techniques that you can try out.

WORD CHANTING

You can start with a simple meditation known as word chanting. As you know, words can be

quite powerful. You can pick a calming word like Om, Lam or Vam and recite it over and over again. You have to first find a quiet corner, make yourself comfortable and then go about it. With time, you will be able to tap into your subconscious mind. We will look at all of these words in detail in a later chapter of this book.

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

Through mindfulness meditation, you can increase your mind's ability to focus on something in particular and forget about the rest of the world. For this exercise, you can start by placing an object in front of you. It can be a potted plant or a statue of Buddha. Now close your eyes by 3/4ths and concentrate on the object that lies in front of you. You must not be disturbed by anything else that surrounds you. You should slowly drift your mind to the subconscious thought. You can have a pen and paper ready so that you can quickly write down what you see there.

BREATHING MEDITATION

This type is more like the word chanting meditation except that you focus on your breathing and not a word. Start by assuming a comfortable position and close your eyes. Now maintain a straight back and slowly start breathing in and out. You must have your mind on your breath and nowhere else. You should slowly drift to your subconscious mind.

WALKING MEDITATION

You need not always sit in a place and meditate and can move around and do so. Better known as walking meditation, you should find a long walkway and start walking in a rhythmic manner. When you put your right foot forward then you should breathe in and breathe out when you put your left leg forward. Maintain the same rhythm throughout and remain focused on your internal thought process.

These are some meditational practices that you can take up and exploit. You have to meditate twice or thrice a day for 10 minutes each. You will have the chance to relax your mind and send it to the virtual realm.

If you are actually finding it difficult to have lucid dreams despite making many efforts, then you can start playing video games. According to psychologists playing video games on a regular basis helps in dreaming vividly. However, you must avoid playing games that are violent. Pick something that is calming and could help you travel to a dream world.

CHAPTER 8

DRIVING NIGHTMARES AWAY

Nobody likes having nightmares. They leave us feeling horrible and might also spoil our mood. Some people assume that there is no way to control dreams or nightmares, and they come through naturally. However, that is just a misconception!

It is possible for you to put an end to your nightmares. Here are some things that you can do towards attaining a good night's sleep by staving off unwanted bad dreams and nightmares.

DIET

Diet plays a very important role in the type of dreams that you will have. Here are some things you should eat, and also some you should avoid, in order to possess a healthy mind.

What to eat

Remember that the more time you spend not falling asleep, the more susceptible you become to experiencing nightmares. So, you have to consume foods that will help you fall asleep fast. These can include foods rich in tryptophan. These foods will help you relax your mind and you will sleep fast. These include turkey, fish and soy. You must also increase the intake of foods rich in melatonin like tomatoes.

What to avoid

You have to avoid alcohol consumption right before bedtime. You must also avoid having food close to bedtime. Your body will be busy digesting the food, which will interfere with your sleep cycle. Don't eat foods that are heavy for your dinner. Keep it light like a fresh salad.

Supplements

You must also increase the level of B6 in your diet if you wish to fall asleep easily. Some foods rich in B6 include nuts and corn. But if you think you have low levels of it then you must consume B6 supplements. They will be available over the counter and you can buy and consume them regularly.

EXERCISE

You have to bust your stress and reduce it down as much as possible in order to sleep well. One great way to deal with stress is by exercising. When you exercise, you increase the level of serotonin in your brain, which helps you sleep better.

Cardio

You can take up any cardio exercises. As long as it gets your heart rate up, it will make for a good choice. You can pick swimming or running or also play a sports activity. You can also try out some interval training if you prefer that.

Yoga

Yoga is a great exercise technique to take up. It involves twisting and turning your body to stretch it out and relieve some fatigue that might have pent up. You have to look up poses that help with stress and perform them. Some of them include cat-cow pose, bridge pose, shoulder stand, wheel pose etc. Try to do yoga at least 4 times a week and you will see the difference.

Tai chi

Tai chi is a lot like yoga and involves performing slow and easy exercises. You will feel great after performing the moves and most of stress will be driven away.

But remember not to exercise too close to bedtime as your mind will remain extremely alert and

not allow you to sleep.

MINDSET

You must have a clear mindset when you wish to fall asleep. If you don't, then you are sure to experience bad dreams. Here are some things you can do to clear your mind out before sleeping.

Images

It is extremely important for you to not expose yourself to gory imagery. This means that you must not watch television or shows that leave behind violent images in your mind. You must also avoid using your cell phones before falling asleep to improve dream production.

Issues

You must effectively deal with issues that you have with your kin. Whether it is your parents or spouse or sibling, you must sort out your issues and go to bed feeling happy. It is best that you talk it out and also express your gratitude for having them in your life. That will help you have a good night's sleep.

No work

Do not work in bed or work just before sleeping. The stress and tension will interfere with your sleep. Try to finish everything at least an hour or two before bed and then go to sleep.

ROOM ATMOSPHERE

You have to prepare a calm and conducive atmosphere in your room in order to have positive dreams. Here are some things that you can do for it.

Aromatherapy

The first thing to focus on is the type of smell that looms in your room. You can make use of aromatherapy candles and incense sticks to drive away unwanted and unpleasant odors. You can pick scents like vanilla or orange, which helps in relaxing your mind and soothes your thoughts. You can also open a window near your bed to allow fresh air to flow in and any odor to flow out. You can also place a few fresh flowers on your bedside in order to increase the freshness in your room.

Lighting

It is important to not have any light on in your room when you wish to sleep. If you wish to have a night lamp on then it should filter in only 5% light and not anymore. You can also have 5% mood lighting on if you like, as that will help you fall asleep faster.

Music

You have to make use of soothing music to help you fall asleep faster. The music can be white noise, which helps the mind relax and drives away stress. You can download an app that plays white music and you can make use of a timer to switch it off. You can also have singing bowls by your bed where you use a mallet to hit on the bowl to produce vibrations. These vibrations help the mind relax and you will fall asleep faster.

Sleep positions

Some scientists are of the opinion that sleeping on your back increases chances of having nightmares. So, you have to try and find comfortable positions that will prevent you from sleeping on your back and keep your mind alert. You must also make use of soft and comfortable linen to sleep better.

DREAM CATCHERS

I'm sure you already know what a dream catcher is. They are Native American objects that people used in the olden days to stave off bad dreams. You can make use of one to hang over your bed and drive away nightmares. You can either buy one or make it yourself. Try to add in objects that are lucky for you and also carry sentimental value.

These form the different things that you can do to increase your chances of driving your nightmares away.

CHAPTER 9

TRIVIA ON DREAMS

The world of dreams is quite interesting by itself. But there are some facts that will further enhance your intrigue on the subject. We will look at some of them in this chapter.

- You will not remember 90% of your dreams. It is quite interesting to know that you will not remember a majority of your dreams. These mainly appear during your deep sleep phase. The REM phase lasts only for about 10 minutes and that is all you will remember out of nearly 8 hours of dreaming.
- It is an interesting fact that we only dream of people that we already know. It is not possible for our minds to generate faces of people that we have not seen. Sometimes we think we have seen a stranger in our dream. But, you would have seen them somewhere or the other and possibly forgotten about them in your conscious mind. In another study, it was found that all people that you see in your life would appear in your dreams at least once.
- Not all people dream in color. Around 12% of the people that dream, experience black and white dreams. This has nothing to do with their sight. They will see normally but their dreams will be in black and white. Even regular people might sometimes see black and white dreams!
- It is interesting to know that most of the emotions that you will experience while asleep will all be negative. You will feel anxious while seeing a dream as opposed to being calm and relaxed. You will mostly be taken aback by the scale or the non-rational nature of the dream and remain anxious all throughout.
- Babies cannot dream about themselves until they turn about 5. Until such time they dream about random images and sounds.
- Did you know that men and women dream differently? Researchers have found that men dream of other men or have another man appear in their dreams more often. Nearly 70% of the people that they see in their dreams are men. Women on the other hand dream of equal number of men and women. Men also experience heightened emotions when they dream as opposed to women, who do not emote as well.
- Although you might not realize it, precognitive dreams are quite common and you keep seeing them all the time. The dreams will tell you about an upcoming event in your life. Some will call it *déjà vu*, which refers to seeing a situation you have already seen in your dream. These can be regular everyday situations mind you and not those that will be out of the ordinary.
- Although there is not enough scientific evidence to prove this fact, some researchers believe that the human mind cannot focus on snoring and a dream at the same time. So, you might not get to dream if you snore.
- It is interesting to know that many adults experience an orgasm in their dreams. This is mostly a male phenomenon and they experience something known as wet dreams.
- Some scientists get sleepwalkers to read something or tell the time to check whether they are asleep. It is not possible for a person to do either if they are asleep.
- Many famous inventors have attributed their lucid dreams for invention ideas. For example, Tesla claimed that he had the idea of making an alternate current generator in his dream. Similarly, Larry page said that he wanted to create Google after seeing a dream. You too might come up with a smart invention plan in your dream!

- The reason why everybody remains asleep when seeing a dream is because a condition known as sleep paralysis comes about. The person will be partially paralyzed and will not be able to move. However, those that suffer from a dysfunction of the same will be able to move around. In fact, their dreams will be so lucid that they will begin to live it out. That is exactly how sleepwalking comes by. In severe cases people start living out dangerous dreams and can end up with fractures and broken furniture. There is also the famous incident of a woman having sex with strangers while sleepwalking.
- Daydreaming is a real thing. Some people will still think that they are dreaming when they are actually awake. This is the opposite of sleepwalking.

CHAPTER 10

MINDFULNESS AND DREAMS

Most people in this world wish to dream positive dreams. And when you experience positivity in your life, you are bound to feel a considerable improvement. The main motive behind dreaming positively is to impact your life in a way that helps draw out the best in you. Bad dreams stemming out of negative thoughts can eclipse your life to a large extent, and is something you must steer clear of.

It is, however, easier said than done since it will take quite a lot to promote an air of positivity. You have to take up certain practices that will help you improve your mental state. You need something that will promote positivity in your life. One great way to enhance the occurrence of positive dreams is to indulge in mindfulness.

Mindfulness is a concept that has existed since time immemorial and helped several people relax their mind and in turn their bodies. A lot of research has gone into studying the impact of mindfulness on people's minds and almost all point to the possibility of routing out negative thoughts and emotions, whilst instilling basic positive feelings.

How would you feel to have a sea of positive emotions sweep through your mind on a day-to-day basis? Will it not completely change you as a person to go to bed every night feeling great about your life and dream positive dreams? Well, you can have that and more just by practicing mindfulness on a regular basis. Mindfulness cannot really be framed in one sentence and will require quite some effort to be explained in detail. It cannot be limited to superficial definitions and requires the reader to approach it with an open mind.

Mindfulness refers to remaining mindful of everything that surrounds you. As you know, all humans are constantly surrounded by people and events, where not a quiet moment passes by. You often find it hard to retract your mind and avail a moment of silence. But being in the middle of such a chaotic atmosphere can cause you to remain confused and promote the generation of negative thoughts. So, in order to get more out of your chaotic life and reel in a sense of calm, you have to train your mind to remain aware of whatever is happening around you whilst also being fully aware of what you are doing. Therefore, the secret to remaining calm lies in remaining alert and not allowing your mind to lapse into a state of unconsciousness.

More often than not, people tend to travel to the back of their minds while engaging in their day-to-day activities. This will only lead to confusion and bring about unnecessary anxiety. There is really no point in going about something that is only making it worse for you, and not allowing you to put in your best. And it is easier said than done, you have to put in the right efforts towards improving your current life situation.

Mindfulness will teach you to cut out on the chaos in a holistic manner. Most of us refrain from engaging in artificial means that do nothing for us in the long term. We cannot rely at the hands of temporary means and must come up with permanent measures. But what exactly are these measures and are they easy to incorporate into day-to-day life? Will you be able to perform them on a regular basis and also go about your life in a regular manner? Well, let's find out!

In order to incorporate mindfulness in your day-to-day life, here are some points to bear in mind.

- First and foremost, you have to understand what mindfulness really stands for. Don't limit yourself to the information present in this book alone and go through other sites and books that will teach you about mindfulness.
- Mindfulness is a mental concept that deals with delving deep into your conscious to remain well aware of everything that exists around you. All of us have just so many things

going on at all times that we find it difficult to concentrate on our own activities let alone the happenings that surround us. That is exactly where mindfulness steps in. It teaches us to focus on the task at hand and also fully understand the situation that we are in.

- Mindfulness is mainly adopted to get acquainted with our inner selves. As you know, our dreams are a reflection of our inner thoughts and feelings and the most that we can do is try and understand at least a little of what is actually happening in our minds.
- The events that we experience through the day are what will ultimately affect our thoughts and feelings. They will then form a part of our dreams and remain marginally responsible for what we see. So, by filling ourselves up with positivity, we can surely control our dreams to a large extent and ensure that we dream positively.
- Mindfulness should be turned into a lifetime choice and not mere habit. If you look at it as just a habit then it will surely not stick with you. You have to promise yourself that you will take it up on a day to day basis come what may and use it to benefit your thought process.
- Mindfulness is extremely easy to adopt given you are open to experiencing slight changes in your day-to-day life. You won't really have to go out of the way to practice mindfulness and it will only take a little effort from your end to make it a daily practice.

Let us now look at the different everyday mindfulness exercises that you can take up to increase positivity in your life and experience good dreams.

The following are a set of everyday mindful exercises that you can take up and improve your thoughts and feelings. You are free to take all of them up or pick the ones you think will have a large impact on your life.

MINDFUL WAKING

Mindful waking up is the first thing to do. When you get up in the morning, don't have a cloudy thought process. Try to collect yourself as soon as possible and wait on your bed for 5 minutes. Remain mindful that you are now up and have a great day ahead of you. Avoid the temptation of slipping back in between the sheets for 5 more minutes. You can lie on the bed for 5 minutes after waking if you like but never retire again post rising. Get up from your bed and stretch your body out to its limit. You can now proceed to the next activity.

MINDFUL BRUSHING

The next obvious activity is for you to brush your teeth. Many people have the habit of rushing into the bathroom and quickly brushing their teeth without as much as spending 5 minutes to do a neat job. If you are one such person then you have to change that habit for good. Start by picking up your brush, squeezing out the toothpaste and remaining mindful. Now place it over your teeth and slowly brush while remaining mindful of your activity. Close your eyes and visualize the brush moving over each of your tooth while completely cleansing it. This will have a very calming effect on your mind and body. Once done, gently rinse your mouth and don't be in a hurry to move to the next activity. There is really no need to rush and it is best to go about your activities in a leisurely manner.

MINDFUL EXERCISING

Once you are done rushing, you have to exercise. The importance of exercise in terms of sleep habits was stressed upon in a previous chapter. To perform your mindful exercise, start by picking something that will push your body to the max. It is a great idea to pick something like jogging. Wear your shoes and head out. Keep jogging until you feel the exercise throughout your body. While you jog, your mind should be focused on the activity alone and not be distracted by things and events around you. Once you reach the end of the course, you can sit down and take a few minutes before jogging back home.

MINDFUL BATHING

The next step is to indulge in mindful bathing. Taking a shower is a very therapeutic experience and something that will leave you feeling refreshed. But you have to go about it leisurely and not rush into it. Start by standing under the shower and pretend like it is a waterfall. Now pour the shower gel over your arms or run the bar of soap over it. You can also take a deep whiff of it to smell its natural aroma. Now lather up and take your time in the shower. You have to break the stereotype of showers lasting 5 minutes and must remain in there for at least 30. You are cleaning your body no doubt but you must also focus on cleaning your mind. Once done, you must remove all the excess lather and wrap yourself warm. Take some time and don't rush into the next activity.

MINDFUL COOKING

If you mindfully cook yourself a meal then you are sure to avail its full benefits. Whether it is breakfast, lunch or dinner, you have to spend some time and prepare food that you will thoroughly enjoy. Come up with a meal plan that you can easily follow. You can stick the ingredients and recipes on the kitchen wall and start cooking. Remain mindful when you are cooking your meals. Getting distracted will only cause you to prepare a half-hearted meal. Once your meal is complete, you have to mindfully pack some of it for office.

MINDFUL EATING

Now serve yourself some food and sit down at the table. If you have the habit of eating on the go then you must revise it. Sit at the table with your family members to enjoy the meal together. Breakfast time is not the best to watch the news or have the newspaper in front of you. You have to remain focused on your meal alone. Cut your food up into sizeable portions. Now eat each of these portions leisurely. Don't be in a hurry to move to the next morsel of food. Give everything ample time. Some people close their eyes while eating just to savor every bite and know what has gone into it. You can do the same with your food.

MINDFUL COMMUTING

Once you are ready to go to office, you have to take some time and keep your eyes on the road. Don't be in a hurry to reach the office. You have to indulge in mindful driving or commuting. Again, don't use the time to read something or get distracted by something. You have to be mindful of the road ahead of you. If you are carpooling then observe all the sights and sounds outside and don't go into a deep thought process.

MINDFUL COUNTING

At the office, you have to spend 5 minutes settling in. again, don't be in a hurry for anything. Start by sitting down on your chair and start counting in your mind. You can count up to 100 in a slow pace and take at least 5 minutes for it. Once you reach 100, you can count backwards if you like. The idea is to remain mindful of your office environment. You will see that you are feeling better prepared to handle the rest of the day.

MINDFUL LISTENING

Mindful listening refers to listening to something intently. You have to pay attention to a song or a tune and try and identify its different notes. You can do this before a big meeting to help your mind relax and focus. It is especially important for those that feel anxious before a big presentation. You can carry with you some songs that make you happy and give them a mindful listen.

MINDFUL MEDITATION

Mindful meditation refers to meditating mindfully. We looked at how you can take up the practice and can go through it again if you wish to understand it better.

MINDFUL SLEEPING

Mindful sleeping is the next activity to take up. You have to mindfully go to bed and prepare yourself to sleep peacefully. Don't simply hit the bed and fall asleep. Remain mindful that you are going to send your body into a relaxing stance which will both help you improve your body's healing capacity and also allow you to dream better. Mindful sleeping is a great way to relax yourself and also remember to dream good dreams.

MINDFUL COMMUNICATING

Mindful communication is the next form of mindfulness exercise that you need to take up. It refers to remaining in the moment while speaking to someone. You have to remain absorbed in whatever you are saying to the person and not be distracted by others around you. Listen to them keenly when they say something, reply back to them, tell them clearly what's on your mind etc.

These are some of the mindfulness exercises that you have to indulge in on a day-to-day basis. You need not take up all of them and can pick the ones that you think work best for you.

CHAPTER 11

MEDITATION AND DREAMS

Meditation is an age-old practice that has proven mental benefits. It is one of those practices that help you relieve your mind off of stress and draw in peace and tranquility. Meditation traces its roots to ancient India where seers would put it to practice and combat their negative emotions. It then travelled to the neighboring countries where monks took it up as a means to battle their bad dreams.

The main aim of meditation is to delve into the depths of your conscious mind and look at what lies within it. What you find there is what will tell you what exactly is bothering you. As was mentioned earlier, your subconscious mind is what will determine your dream patterns. If there are positive thoughts then you will have positive dreams and if there are negative thoughts then you will experience bad dreams. You must understand that no person can have a constant supply of positive or negative emotions and the core plan is to reduce the latter to a large extent.

You can meditate and drive away your negative thoughts and feelings. But it is important that you consider it a lifestyle choice and not just a temporary habit. You have to persist at it and not give up on it as soon as its purpose is served.

You have to set the right mood for your meditation. The right frame of mind can add to your practice and increase the benefits you avail. You have to pick the right spot and atmosphere to carry out the practice and ensure that you have at least 20 minutes to spare for it.

Let us now look at some of the best meditational practices that you can take up on a day-to-day basis.

KUNDALINI MEDITATION

Kundalini meditation is a type of cleansing meditational practice that you can take up. Kundalini refers to feminine powers and there is a lot of internal power that you can tap into and better your living. This practice is for both men and women. Before we understand how you can go about this practice, we will first look at the concept of chakras or wheels.

The human body contains imaginary wheels that are lined in the center and placed above each other at a little distance. These chakras are imaginary and will not be visible to the naked eye. But proper chakra function is what helps you keep your body's functions in check. They rotate at a certain speed and help the different parts of your body remain healthy.

You have to know their placement inside the body in order to understand how you can stimulate them.

The first chakra is the root chakra and is better known as the Mula Chakra. The base chakra is what governs the rest of the chakras and a blockage here can mean a lot of stress is being taken on by your body. The base chakra deals with a person being grounded and also governs his or her sense of confidence. The first chakra is located behind your pubic bone and rotates in a clockwise direction.

The second chakra is the sacral chakra. The sacral chakra is located an inch below your navel and is closely related to the first chakra. The sacral chakra deals with your reproductive functions and will determine your sexual nature. A blockage here can impact your reproductive capacities.

The third chakra is the solar plexus. The solar plexus is located below your sternum. It determines your courage and power. Many regard this chakra to be extremely powerful and fixing a blockage here can turn your life around. All chakras rotate in the clockwise direction.

The fourth chakra is the heart chakra and is located next to your heart. It governs your love life and the feelings that you feel. The fourth chakra is closely related to the third one and work in tandem. A blockage here can mean loss of feelings and difficulty emoting your true thoughts.

The fifth chakra lies inside your throat in the center. It governs your speech and level of communication. A blockage here can mean difficulty hearing and also speech problems.

The sixth chakra lies in between your eyebrows. It is also known as the third eye chakra and is meant to help you improve your intuition. A blockage here can signify unable to connect spiritually.

The seventh chakra is located inside your mind. It is the last chakra in your body and can directly relate to your dreams. A blockage in this chakra should be eliminated at all costs if you wish to improve your dreams.

Apart from these there is also one chakra that is located right above your head. This chakra deals with your spirituality and how you connect with a higher power. It is also known as the aura chakra.

Once you know this, you can easily take up kundalini meditation. Here's how it is performed.

Start by finding yourself a quiet corner. Now imagine a tiny ball of light originating from your base chakra and cleansing it thoroughly. It absorbs all the negativity and induces positive energy. It then moves to the second chakra and draws out the negative energy from there. Subsequently it moves to the third then the fourth, fifth, sixth and finally the seventh before leaving your body by piercing through the last chakra. Again, a small ball of light originates in the first chakra and follows the same pattern.

This type of meditation is guaranteed to help you chase away negative thoughts and emotions and induce a sense of calm and generate positive dreams. You can indulge in it every day if you like or once a week for 15 minutes.

QI GONG

Qi gong meditation refers to a milder version of the above where not all the chakras are visualized. If you are strapped for time or want something simpler then qi gong is the one for you. It starts out the same way by you sitting in a comfortable position and visualizing your internal chakras. Then, a ball of water originates in the first chakra and cleanses all the negative aspects. It then moves to the fourth chakra where it again cleanses all the negativity. It finally moves to the last one, which is located inside your mind and then moves back to the fourth and then back to the first. It keeps going around in a loop and cleanses your chakras thoroughly.

HEART BEAT MEDITATION

Heart beat meditation is the next type of meditational practice that you can take up and exploit. Here, you focus on your heartbeat, which aids in clearing out your mind. It is a well-known fact that your heartbeat has hidden powers, which you can use it to avail relief from your mental stress. To perform this type of meditation, start by sitting in a comfortable position. It need not be the lotus pose and you can sit on your bed if you prefer to. Now draw in a deep breath and place your hand over your heart. Close your eyes and visualize the heartbeat moving through your hand and to the rest of your body. You should feel the heartbeat nourishing your body and leave you feeling great. You can do this meditation twice or thrice a week.

HYPNOSIS

Hypnosis is the next type of meditational practice that you can try out. You must already be aware of the meaning of hypnosis, but if not- it stands for sending yourself into a state of trance to uncover what lies within your subconscious mind. More often than not, it is tough to induce hypnosis by yourself. You might have to avail the help of another person who will send you into

the state of trance and for that, you can approach a professional hypnotist who will be able to send you into a trance, and help retrieve any hidden information that might be trapped within your inner mind. But if you wish to do it by yourself then you can do so by lying down in a comfortable position and forcefully travel to the back of your mind. Try to understand what lies there and whether it is a thought that is familiar to you. Once you have pondered over it, you can snap your fingers and come out of the trance. You don't really have to hypnotize yourself every single time and it will come about naturally after a few attempts.

GUIDED VISUALIZATION

Guided visualization is a form of meditation that is mostly prescribed by psychologists because of its true potential in helping people beat stress and anxiety. It can also reduce the occurrence of nightmares. Guided visualization is easy to take up and will almost always leave you with positive results. You don't have to do too much for it and can take it up as and when you wish to reduce negative energy. It is pretty simple to perform guided visualization and you have to start by finding yourself a quiet spot. You don't have to do this in your regular meditation room and can perform it anywhere you feel is comfortable for you. Close your eyes and visualize yourself in the future. You have to look at yourself sleeping in an open field or floating in a river. All your stress and tensions have left you and you are feeling at peace with yourself. If you have any illnesses that are bothering you then you must visualize yourself without them. Your life has changed for good and you are now in a peaceful place. Such visualization helps people get over their inhibitions and transient worries that can impact dreams.

ZAZEN

Zazen meditation refers to a form of movement-based meditation much like walking meditation. You can start by sitting in a comfortable position and close your eyes. Most people prefer to sit on top of folded legs but you can assume something slightly more comfortable if you wish to. Now look straight at something and start rocking your body forward and backward. The motion should be consistent and your mind should focus on the movement alone. Once you are done, take 5 minutes to settle yourself down and then start again. You can take this exercise up 5 times a week.

These form the different types of meditational practices that you can take up and exploit. You need not take up all, and can pick the ones that work best for you.

MEDITATIONAL CHANTS

Chanting is a very important part of meditation. Without chanting, you will possibly not be able to connect with your inner self as well as you would actually like to.

Many find it to be extremely calming to chant something while meditating as it not only works on your mind but also purifies your body.

There are many types of meditational chants to pick from and you can choose the one that best suits your needs. We will look at some of the most common ones in detail.

Om

Om is a universal chant and is meant to be one of the most preferred words in the world. Om is said to contain a universal power and helps in sending down powerful vibrations throughout your entire body. Om is mostly chanted as a solo word and there is a write way to chant it. You must stress on the "O" for the first few seconds and then take the nasal route while saying "M". You must feel the vibrations run all through your body when you say the word. You can enhance your experience by playing a video of Om chanting.

Aim

Aim is generally chanted after Om and is regarded as the feminine counterpart. Aim is said to help the female power rise and enriches the person from within. Aim belongs to the goddess of

knowledge and speech and will leave you feeling mentally energized. Aim is also quite powerful in helping you relax your mind before going to bed and can help generate positive dreams.

Hrim

Hrim is another powerful chant and is regarded as something that aids in the creation, destruction and preservation of life. Hrim helps in increasing your productive skills and can leave you feeling quite powerful. Hrim is also a great word for all those that wish to tap into their hidden potentials.

Shrim

Shrim is a devotional word that helps people connect with the almighty. Shrim is said to generate devotional vibes and can also increase a person's faith in god. Shrim is generally recited when people are keen on invoking lord Vishnu. But you really don't have to be a Hindu to recite these chants. They are universal.

Krim

Krim is meant to help you enrich your adrenaline function. Many people suffer from an adrenaline dysfunction that causes them to develop stress and anxiety and the best solution is for them to recite the word Krim as it helps in reducing some of that anxiety.

These are together known as seed mantras meaning they help in planting the seeds of compassion in your mind and body.

As was discussed before, the human body consists of 7 chakras that are all placed one above the other in the center of the body. These chakras are all interconnected and work towards helping your body remain in good form. However, they can develop blockages from time to time and you have to work towards removing these blockages. One great way to do so is by reciting calming chants that can help you remove some of these blockages and increase the circulation of positive energy in your body.

Hum

This is mostly pronounced as "hoom" and is meant to help you remove any negative energy from your body.

Lam

The first chakra cleansing mantra to recite is lam. Lam is the first word that you have to recite when you wish to cleanse the first chakra in your body. The first chakra is the base or root chakra that is located at the bottom most point of your upper torso and deals with you being grounded. If you are used to reciting Om then it will feel a little different to chant lam but you must recite it if you wish to cleanse your first and possibly most important chakra in your body.

Vam

After lam, you have to recite the word vam. Vam is for your second chakra also known as your sacral chakra. This chakra deals with your sexuality and how you find a way to release it. Vam also enriches your feminine power. It helps you meet with your inner female self.

Ram

The next chant is Ram. Ram helps you remove blockages that might be present in your third chakra. The third chakra is also known as the solar plexus. It controls your power and confidence. Ram is meant to energize your central chakra and you have to recite it with complete passion.

Yam

The next chant to recite is yam. Yam will help you remove any blockages that might be a part of

your fourth chakra. Your fourth chakra is what deals with your love and emotions. It might be necessary for you to remove any blockages from here if you wish to emote your true emotions.

Ham

The fifth chakra in your body deals with your speech and communication. A blockage here can impact both of these aspects. You can chant the word Ham to remove the blockages and also increase the way you communicate with someone.

Om

Om was discussed earlier and is being reiterated because of its true benefits in helping you cleanse your sixth chakra. You can easily remove any blockages present in it by chanting Om repeatedly. Some also prefer to pronounce it as Aum.

Remember that all of these chants will together work towards improving your life. You have to recite them together in order to affect all the different chakras in your body. Just reciting one will not work for you.

CHAPTER 12

AURA CLEANSING AND DREAMS

Dreams are a part and parcel of all our lives. When we fall asleep, we tend to emote our true inner feelings. If there are negative feelings then it is obvious that we will experience bad dreams. But if there are positive ones, then we will most definitely see better dreams.

However, it is not possible for us to remain positive always, and there are many different things that can affect our frame of mind. Some of these things will cause us to develop negative feelings, thoughts and emotions, which will mostly show up in our dreams.

In this chapter, we will look at an important aspect of our life that needs to be pondered over, if we wish to beat the negativity that surrounds us and promote an air of positivity.

WHAT IS THE AURA?

All of us human beings have a force field that surrounds us. This force field is an imaginary bubble that clings to our bodies and remains with us all through our lives.

I'm sure you have come across charts that showcase a slew of colored lights that surround a person's form figure. That array of colored lights is better known as your Aura.

Aura is not limited to humans alone and anything that has cells or molecules in constant motion will display an Aura.

So you don't really have to be "living" to have an aura around you and inanimate objects will also possess one.

The aura is said to be a result of your rotating chakras. These chakras, as you know, lie in the center of your body and spin at a certain speed to help the respective connected organs remain healthy.

Each of these chakras is represented by a particular color in the aura. Individual auras differ in color and size and are determined by the person's state of mind.

Apart from an individual's chakras, aura is also affected by what is absorbed from the surroundings. Say for example you spend time with a negative person. It is highly possible for your aura to absorb some of that negative vibe and turn negative.

Imagine having a great time with your friends at the mall but feeling low and anxious at bedtime. During the course of the day, you would have absorbed a lot of negativity from others around you, which will cause your aura to turn negative.

It is important for you to understand here that the aura is closely related to your chakras and any change that occurs in your chakras will impact your aura.

READING THE AURA

It is possible for us to read the aura. Although there are professional aura readers, you don't have to consult one and can start reading your aura by yourself. The only difference there will be that the professional reader will advise you on what you can do to fix an existing issue. But if you read up on what needs to be done in a particular situation then you can heal yourself.

You will have to go through a process to be able to identify the aura. Here are the steps that you have to take.

Start by picking a lifeless object like a book. The color of the book has to be a little bright.

Now place it against a pale wall or table and place your hand over it.

Next, look at something that is placed slightly away from the book. You have to stare at a dot or

speck.

Keep staring at the dot until you spot a rainbow of colors around the book.

Sometimes, the colors might diffuse into each other and will not clearly separate.

Once you perfect it, you can move to a tree. The tree should lie under bright sunlight as the sun makes auras expand.

Once you do so, you can move to your own body. You can hold your hand out under the sun and try to observe your aura. It is surely easier said than done and you have to pay keen attention to it in order to spot the aura.

You can also have a friend stand in sunlight and then look at their aura. Pets will also exude an aura and you can observe that as well.

Once you spot the aura, you have to make a note of it.

COLORS OF THE AURA

The aura has 7 distinct colors that represent each of the 7 chakras in your body. They are described as follows.

Red - the first color of the aura is red, which sticks to the skin of the person. It belongs to the first chakra and stands for passion and energy. Those that have a dominant red color will be quite passionate.

Orange- orange is the next color that sticks to the red. Orange stands for euphoric energy. It belongs to the second chakra and controls a person's self-confidence.

Yellow- the third color is yellow and sticks to the orange. It belongs to the third chakra. It deals with self-worth and confidence. It also deals with power and command.

Green- green deals with how you bring about a balance and harmony in your life. If someone's aura is displaying green brightly then it indicates that their life is well balanced and they have many things working in their favor.

Blue- blue is the color of loyalty and belongs to the throat chakra. It can also signify how well communicated the person is and how they emote their feelings to others. It will also signify their honesty and loyalty.

Indigo- the next color in the aura is indigo. Indigo represents bravery and how a person handles a particular situation. It showcases a person's outlook towards life and how they interpret the different situations that life throws at them.

Violet- violet is the one that lies on top of your head or just inside and signifies a person's creativity, awareness and self-belief.

CLEANSING THE AURA

If you spot any holes or black dots in any of the colors of the aura then it means that you have to cleanse it. Cleansing the aura need not be an elaborate process and can be done quite easily. There are a few standard steps that you have to follow for it and they are as follows.

- You can start by taking a cold shower on a regular basis. Taking a cold shower almost immediately better your mood and will also get rid of a lot of negativity. The water need not be icy cold and anything that is comfortable to the touch of your skin will do. It is best for you to take a cold shower at least twice or thrice a week.
- You can also cleanse your aura by using herbs. You can place sage, thyme and rosemary into a bowl and then set it ablaze. Once a majority has burnt, you can blow it out and place the bowl under a fan and sit beside it. It will effectively drive away a lot of your negativity.

- You can use a salt cleanse to cleanse your aura as well. You can take a large bowl of sea salt and rub it all over your skin to get rid of negative energy. If the salt is too crystalline and rough then you can consider using table salt as well.
- A mud cleanse is also a good way to cleanse your aura. You can collect some pure mud from the ground and add in a little water to make a paste. Apply the paste all over your body and allow it to harden a little. Once done, you can take a cold shower to take it all off.
- Lastly, you can also do a sun cleanse. You can spend time under the sun, as that will fix the holes in your aura. You can play outdoor sports if you like or simply spend some time under the sun.

These form some of the things that you can do to cleanse your aura and fix any problems in it.

CHAPTER 13

CRYSTAL HEALING AND DREAMS

Crystal healing is a process where you cleanse your body and mind to get rid of any negative energy.

It has been harped upon several times in this book that your nightmares are a result of your negative energies and you have to cleanse your systems from time to time in order to remove some of it.

One great way of doing so is by making use of cleansing crystals. Crystals are not just colored stones as they are generally meted out to be. They are much more than that and contain powers. These powers are what you can use to cleanse your systems from the inside out.

In this chapter, we will look at the different crystals that you can use to cleanse your chakras and why it might be important for you to do so from time to time.

We have already looked at the different chakras in detail and where they lie inside your body. Let us now look at what these crystals really are and how you can use them to cleanse your internal systems.

CRYSTAL THERAPY FOR BEGINNERS

Our chakras spin at a constant speed and their main aim is to help our bodies remain healthy. But oftentimes, many blockages can come about, which will cause our bodies to not function optimally. In such a case, we have to cleanse our chakras and get rid of as much negative energy as possible.

Although there are many ways to do so, one of the best and most effective techniques is to cleanse it using crystals. As was mentioned earlier, these crystals are colored stones that possess the power to cleanse our bodies. It can sound a little bizarre but there are many study results that conclude the same. You have to believe in their powers in order to help them help you.

These crystals are derived from natural settings and therefore possess natural powers. You have to try and find yours from a place that is well reputed for selling original crystals. You can find them online or can also check for them at a local specialty store.

Once you find them, you must know which ones you need to buy. Here are the stones that pertain to the specific chakras in your body.

Chakra 1

The stone associated with the first chakra is the red jasper. If you think there is an issue with your first chakra owing to the presence of dark spots in it then you can use this stone to fix it. It can be quite powerful and you can remove negative energy from your root chakra. Apart from using the stones you can also perform activities that will leave you feeling grounded. This can include sleeping on the floor, sitting on the floor and eating food, walking around bare footed etc.

Chakra 2

The stone associated with the second chakra is the carnelian. The carnelian is a red stone that helps in removing any blockages from your second chakra. A blockage here means that you are unable to express your sexual desires. Apart from using the crystal, you can also speak with your partner and try to resolve any issue that might be present between the two of you.

Chakra 3

The stone associated with the third chakra is the yellow aventurine. This chakra deals with power and self-confidence. Apart from using the crystal, you must also attend a group class where your self-confidence can increase. Choose something that is in keeping with your interests and will boost your confidence.

Chakra 4

The stone associated with the fourth chakra is the green aventurine. The heart chakra deals with your emotions and feelings. If you have been having fallout with a loved one off late then you can use this stone to fix the problems. You must also speak with your loved one and sort things out with them. You must try to put an end to all your unnecessary quarrels.

Chakra 5

The stone associated with the next chakra is the blue agate. The agate has the power of removing any blockages that might lie in the throat chakra. As you know, this chakra deals with your communication skills and the best way for you to fix it is by placing this stone above the chakra. You can also indulge in other activities such as speaking freely with others and voicing your opinions to them etc.

Chakra 6

The stone associated with the sixth chakra is the sodalite. Sodalite is quite powerful and it will surely help you increase your intuitive powers. Sodalite can be placed between your brows.

Chakra 7

The final crystal to consider is the amethyst. You can use amethyst to cleanse your crown chakra. It will promote good health and will most definitely help you stave off bad dreams.

The right way to use these chakras to cleanse your body is to place the stone right above the chakra and cover it with a pyramid. You can use a cardboard or plastic pyramid. The pyramid will trap the energy within itself and help promote the health of the chakra.

CLEANING THE CRYSTALS

It is just as important for you to cleanse your crystals. They have to be cleansed from time to time and you should know how to go about it. Here is how you can cleanse your crystals.

If you are in a hurry then you can hold them under a running tap, as that will get rid of most of the negative energy that lies within the stones.

You can add them to a bowl containing salty water as well but ensure that the salt is finely dissolved.

You can lay them out on a towel and place them under the moon as the rays of the moon will cleanse them.

Placing a large black sodalite in a bowl of water and placing your stones in the water can also help you cleanse them.

But remember not to place them in hot water or under the direct rays of the sun as that can damage the stones.

Once they are clean, you can wrap them in a towel and then store them back safely.

CHAPTER 14

POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS AND DREAMS

Negativity can manifest in your life in many ways. You have to remain positive in order to remove some of that negativity out of your life. If you wish to promote positive dreams and pursue ambitions in your life then you can resort to positive affirmations.

Positive affirmations refer to positive thoughts that you have to believe in in order to get what you want. These positive affirmations may seem like mere sentences that are recited repeatedly but they go much beyond it. These affirmations will help you dream positively and go after what you wish to have in your life. Let us look at some of the positive affirmations in this chapter.

I WILL DREAM POSITIVELY

The first positive affirmation to swear by is that you will dream positively. Positive dreaming is all about thinking of the best things and wishing to have the best in your life. Many people don't understand that it is really possible for them to control their dream patterns and just by wishing it they can improve their dreams. The best way to start doing so is by re-affirming their thoughts.

I LOVE DREAMING LUCID DREAMS

Just wishing to dream positive dreams might not work for you and you should tell yourself to dream lucid dreams. As you know, it is possible for people to dream vividly and convert their virtual realities into realities. You can chant this as many times a day as you like in order to dream lucidly. It is best that you chant this repeatedly just before falling asleep.

I WILL DREAM OF THINGS THAT I WANT IN LIFE

The next positive affirmation to recite is, I will dream of things that I want in life. This affirmation tells you that you have to consciously dream of those things that you wish to have in your life. You will obviously want to dream positive achievements that you need in your life and dreaming them can bring you closer to them.

I AM IN FULL CONTROL OF MY DREAMS

The next affirmation to recite is "I am in full control of my dreams". As was mentioned several times before, it is possible for you to not just control what you dream but also dream what you want to have in life. If you remain in full control of your dreams then you can get what you want in life. Many people also have the capacity to wake themselves up in the middle of a dream. That is only possible if you consciously tell yourself to get up especially if you are seeing a negative dream. It is hard to say whether or not you will successfully wake up but you have to at least make an effort towards it. There is a difference between waking up with a startle and waking up consciously. You have to aim for the latter as much as possible.

I WILL STAVE OFF NEGATIVITY

You have to tell yourself to stave off negativity from your life. Saying a positive affirmation is more likely to give you the desired results. So, just by saying that you want the negativity in your life to disappear can greatly help you get rid of most of the unwanted bad dreams that might occur. Don't think these dreams will not impact your life. Even if you are consciously not thinking of it, it will surely unconsciously affect you.

I WILL PROMOTE POSITIVE THOUGHTS

I will only think positive thoughts and promote positive emotions. Saying it on a regular basis is sure to help you stave off bad dreams. This is especially necessary if you are experiencing a lot of bad dreams. You must tell yourself that these dreams are all just a phase and it will pass.

Once it does, your confidence will return and your outlook towards life will take a turn.

I WILL REMEMBER MY DREAMS

It is also important for you to tell yourself that you will remember your dreams. As was mentioned earlier, you have to remember your dreams in the morning in order to analyze them. Many of us are incapable of remembering our dreams in the morning and so; an effort should be made to remind ourselves to remember the dream when we wake up. It is of course easier said than done and just by chanting a few words will not get you anywhere. You have to make a conscious effort towards it and ensure that you direct your mind to do the needful, every single night.

I WILL ANALYZE MY DREAMS

The next affirmation to say is "I will analyze my dreams". The whole point of this activity is to get yourself to remember your dreams and also analyze them. You have to prepare to write down your dreams and then go through them. It is best that you write the dreams down in a notepad and go through them as soon as you wake in the morning. Once you do this for a month or so, you will start to notice a pattern in them that will help you understand how your subconscious mind is actually working. Maybe there are hidden clues there that will tell you what exactly is going on in your mind and whether you have to rectify something to put an end to your nightmares.

These form the different positive reaffirmations that you have to recite in order to dream lucidly.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Dreams are virtual reality and what everybody in this world is bound to experience. Dreams have existed since time immemorial and continue to intrigue us to this very day.

Dreams are often described as a projection of our inner selves. It is believed that we dream whatever is resent inside our subconscious minds. However, there is no scientific backing for the same and people wonder if there is more to dreams than being just a reflection of our inner thoughts and feelings.

Right from babies to elders, everybody dreams when they fall asleep. There are really no limitations and anybody that falls asleep is sure to see a dream.

Most people sleep for 8 hours and this time is split between 5 phases. During the rapid eye movement phase is when people view vivid dreams. They will also remember these dreams well once they wake up in the morning.

It is obvious that not all dreams will be good and people will also experience nightmares. Nightmares are bad dreams that most people dread. It is believed that negative thoughts, emotions and feelings give rise to nightmares.

There is, however, a way to combat these nightmares and you can make use of talismans such as dream catchers to reduce the occurrence of such bad dreams. You can also reduce your level of stress and anxiety, which can further promote their occurrence.

We looked at how religion looked at dreams and how each individual faction looked at it. We understood that it is not possible to generalize a concept and that everything opinion has a place of its own.

It is interesting to know that both diet and exercise have a bearing on a person's dream pattern. It is actually possible for you to dream differently by changing your diet and exercising. You must consume fresh fruits and vegetables and also certain supplements that are good for your body. Taking up cardio exercises will also go a long way in helping you rest better and have peaceful dreams.

Meditation is a must for all those that wish to promote the occurrence of positive dreams. It is obvious that meditation alone will not work for you. You have to try and entertain only positive thoughts and feelings and pull a stop on your negative feelings.

Apart from meditation, you must also indulge in mindfulness. Mindfulness is a technique where you focus on your current surroundings and don't slip into a subconscious mind. You have to remain alert and know everything that is happening around you. There are many mindfulness techniques that you can take up and we looked at each in detail. You can try all or stick to the one that suits your needs the best.

We looked at the different chants that you can recite when you meditate. They are meant to help you enhance your experience. Many people chant just Om and don't realize that there are many more that can be recited. You can pick the one that you think suits you best.

The human aura can be used to treat any sleep problems and also better your dream pattern. The aura is a force field that surrounds us and we can improve our lives by fixing any issues in it. We looked at how you can read a person's aura and also how it can be cleansed. Although it is not possible to completely get rid of nightmares, you can try to reduce them down to a bare minimum.

We looked at some interesting facts about dreams. They are meant to help you widen your perspective on the topic and learn more about your personal virtual realities.

CONCLUSION

I thank you one again for choosing this book and hope you had a fun time reading it.

Dreams are some of the most mysterious occurrences of life and yet quite beautiful in the way they present themselves to us.

Although it is easy for us to think that our subconscious mind is supplying us with ideas to dream upon, it is not really possible for us to know the truth unless we conduct a thorough research on the same.

And although a lot of research has already been performed, the answer is still quite elusive and refuses to help us understand the concept properly.

However, with the knowledge that we have, we can form our own opinions on the topic and continue to dream vividly!

I hope you will put in an effort to concentrate in your sleep and write it down to analyze their meaning and interpret them.

All the best!

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