

A dream that has not been interpreted is like a letter that has not been opened.
The Talmud

The Nature of Dreams

In working with dreams with different individuals and in group settings, I often hear: “I had this totally weird dream!” I am not at all surprised with this comment. I too thought dreams were confusing—that is, until I began to study them and experience what a difference they make in my life.

For sure, dreams are seemingly baffling, difficult, amorphous, or even paradoxical—but they are not without meaning. Dreams are a natural expression that unfolds in every individual. Over a period of twenty years, with uncanny accuracy, Edgar Cayce interpreted over 1,500 dreams for sixty-nine people. He provided fresh ways to interpret dreams, leaving us a legacy worth studying.

Quite skillfully, Cayce made sense out of bizarre dream imageries. A man saw in his dream “*a watermelon was eating a pig.*” We could easily dismiss this dream as meaningless. Cayce’s interpretation itself pointed out the absurdity of this scene: instead of “the hog attempting to eat the melon, which would be normal, the melon in turn eats the hog, or pig.” This symbolic representation came to show the dreamer that his thinking on a particular subject was just as flawed as the image of a watermelon eating a pig! 294-72

Honoring our free will, dreams do not dictate to us what we ought to do. Instead, they merely point out a condition. The dreamer’s task is to study this condition, then change by applying the highest principles he knows. Consequently, the correct application of the dream message can indeed elevate us physically, mentally, spiritually, morally or financially. In the above dream, the condition revealed by the dream is the flawed or unreasonable thinking of the dreamer. It is now up to the dreamer to make the appropriate correction in his way of thinking.

Another person shared his dream: “*A dummy with a blue lady’s suit and no head was sitting on our day bed.*” This dream referred to the dreamer’s questionable associations with certain individuals. Cayce told the dreamer that it was a warning message, remarking, “Rather seek the association, the counsel and advice, of those who are not as dummies.” 137-97

In a third dream, a man heard, “*Don’t get off while the car is moving!*” This dream warned the dreamer not to jump to quick conclusions. 900-160 From these examples, we can see that dreams with seemingly unrecognizable patterns do indeed have meaning.

Dreams are not merely pointing out the shortcomings or challenges the dreamer faces, for every aspect of a person’s total consciousness is engaged in dreams. They comment on the dreamer’s artistic talents, and give insights into inventions,

discoveries, hobbies, health, friendships, business or marriage. Cayce insisted that through dreams one may “gain knowledge through which the mental, the material, the moral, the *whole* being of man may be benefited...”.

Cayce’s Dream Readings

The dreams presented for Cayce’s interpretations were by no means unique. They were the everyday dreams of Everyman and Everywoman. It was in his interpretations that he departed from most dream theorists. In this we find a parallel to Cayce’s medical readings. Cayce used medical terms in his extensive diagnoses. Over and over again, doctors completely agreed with his diagnoses but disagreed with the treatment methods, however miraculous the cures were. Such swift and accurate analysis, whether of dreams or illnesses, poses an enormous challenge to conventional minds. How can we begin to fathom Cayce’s extraordinary abilities to work with dreams? His skills included, but were not limited to:

- interpreting anyone’s dream with swiftness, sureness and accuracy;
- recalling parts of or entire dreams forgotten by the dreamer;
- correcting parts of dreams incorrectly recalled by the dreamer;
- pointing out a common message among dreams over several nights;
- commenting on the dreamer’s undisclosed intimate details, including those of dreamers he did not know personally;
- correctly predicting what and when a dreamer would dream, sometimes pinpointing the exact night;
- commenting on the symbols within the dream and providing interpretation before hearing the dream.

The depth, breadth and scope of Cayce’s dream interpretation skills remain unparalleled, unless compared with Joseph and Daniel—the two gifted dream interpreters in the Bible. The interpretations demonstrate Cayce’s instinctive gift of connecting with every individual at their level of psyche and spirit, evincing a level of knowing what has been, what is, and what might be for each individual. These skills, he assured, were available to each of us in engaging our own dreams.

A spiritual force operated within Cayce. But that force was not merely churning out data about a topic or a person. Anchored in love, it engaged the person on multiple levels of growth and improvement. Every individual was challenged to grow at the deepest level of his being. And most importantly, Cayce acknowledged the same spirit operates in us that gives us the ability to interpret our own dreams.

How did Cayce engage his dreamers through dream interpretations? Narrating raw facts from past events without reflection and challenge would be mere daydreaming; speaking of current events without regard for their implications to the dreamer and others would be mere idiocy; commenting purely on the future without a framework for engaging the dreamer to grow and change would be mere fortunetelling. Every individual is to work with what he has in hand, within

the place, time, and constraints. Each situation calls for a check on the ideals of the dreamer and the appropriate application of those ideals in the dreamer's journey toward total growth and wisdom.

Cayce held to the idea that unless we begin our dreaming journey with consideration and thoughtfulness, spiritual living and willingness to change, we cannot expect to attain much understanding from our dreams. On such a journey, we have to be alert to what our dreams are telling us: our foibles and frailties, our attitudes and aspirations, our culpabilities and capabilities, our fortitude and fastidiousness, our patience and piety. All these and more show up in our dreams in one form or the other at one time or another. But these topics do not show up in dreams randomly. They are perfectly timed and sequenced.

Although dreams cannot always be compartmentalized into physical, mental, and spiritual, dreams often emphasize one of these aspects of the dreamer.

Physical Dreams

Adeline submitted the following dream for Cayce's interpretation.

"I was going in to swim from a rickety platform—very unsubstantial in its structure. As I jumped in or tried to dive in, I made a belly whopper—i.e., landing on my stomach—it hurt." 136-22

The entering or diving into the water and the desire to swim symbolically represents Adeline's desire to become a mother or enter into motherhood. The belly whopper that hurt her signifies a warning to Adeline that she is not physically prepared to become a mother yet. The dream warned Adeline to take special care of her body if she is to become pregnant. Three months after this dream, she reported a miscarriage.

Her subsequent dreams showed her how to care for her body. Adeline also dreamt of having a baby and motherhood. These dreams, Cayce pointed out, went beyond the obvious message of the dream—announcing the arrival of a child—to instruct Adeline about what is important to the arrival of a healthy child: the mother's preparation, and her attitude surrounding the imminent pregnancy and childbirth. Approximately a year later, Adeline gave birth to a healthy child.

We can take a cue from Cayce's dream interpretations. The valuable dream messages we receive show us more than future events or possibilities. They guide us toward realizing our full potential—physically, mentally and spiritually.

Many years ago, I had the following dream:

I saw myself playing basketball in a tournament full of spectators. I was the star player of the team—the "go to guy". I made shots from everywhere and I was playing magnificently. As I was running up and down the court, I slowed

down where my coach was and showed him a time-out sign with my hands. I was very tired and gasping for breath and wanted to take a break. This happened a few times as I was running up and down the court and making difficult but awesome plays.

A good analysis shows that this dream is not about basketball, but a warning concerning my health. In the waking state, I worked very hard and long hours from which my health suffered, despite my excellent results at work. My diet was poor and I lacked exercise. In the dream, the part where I see myself as the star basketball player, making shots from everywhere, shows how well I was doing in my work life. The coach represents the need for me to take charge and change the situation. The part where I am running up and down the court, requesting a time-out, reflects my fast-paced life, and by giving so much to others, I become tired and out-of-breath. In my waking life, although I was cognizant of the need for a break, I had made no concrete plans for it. The dream was calling my attention to this matter.

This was a physical warning dream, the gravity of which I did not grasp fully at that time. Within ten days I very ill and was nearly hospitalized. I was forced to take my time-out and recover fully before returning to work. If I had been sufficiently vigilant and taken care of myself upon having the dream, I may have avoided the illness.

But why did the dream use the basketball imagery? Cayce said that our dreams unfold within our “field of endeavor”. The activities that a dreamer is engaged in and the environment where he conducts his life—his home, hobbies, workplace, travel destinations, associates, friends, family—make his field of endeavor. In the above dream, it makes perfect sense that basketball imagery was used to show an inner dynamic. At that stage in my life, basketball was my principal recreation. The dreaming mind used the basketball imagery to convey a vital message to me.

Mental Dreams

In a dream a man heard a voice tell him, “*Be more careful of your language, more circumspect in your choice of words.*” Again the voice repeated, “*Be more careful in your choice of language.*” Cayce pointed out that this was not only a gentle reprimand to the dreamer but an opportunity for growth in consciousness. Cayce counseled, “a word idly spoken...does create those elements that bring distress to others.” And “words are the expression of the inmost thoughts, and thoughts are deeds, and may become miracles or crimes.” This was a warning to the dreamer to be careful of his language, and if applied correctly, the dreamer would grow in positive ways. 900-284

A single woman once told me of her two recent dreams:

Dream 1: I was playing soccer, and I scored a goal. To my surprise, I scored the goal on my side and not the opponent's. Recognizing this faux pas, I was left with a terrible feeling, and a sense of remorse.

Dream 2: My cat is in the dream and I have to save her, and suddenly I realize it's not my cat! I have the wrong cat. This is a recurring dream.

Usually when dreams end with remorseful feelings, they are telling the dreamer of some flawed thinking. The flawed thinking will bring her remorse, if she does not correct it. It could also mean that she has not applied a truth that she knows, which would have the same effect.

Upon discussing these dreams, their meaning became apparent. She was looking for a life partner with a certain level of intellect and humor, and also someone her friends would approve of. Her first dream was telling her that the latter part of her criteria for a life partner is flawed, just as it was a flaw to score a goal for her opponent. Her second dream further reinforced this message—saving the wrong cat shows the wrong idea she is entertaining. As a result of these dreams, she decided that she would no longer seek a partner based on her friends' approval, but look for someone who cares and loves her. Currently, she is in a joyous relationship!

Spiritual Dreams

Cayce interpreted the following dream:

Discovered iron tub containing layers of manuscripts and gold pieces, after which a voice said: "This is a small amount which if used aright will lead to finding the great fortune. Let's see what you'll do with it." 3812-5

Cayce told the dreamer to work with the spiritual truths he has in hand, and if applied correctly, more will be given. Everyone is given only that which he can bear at the moment and no more is given than he is able to understand.

An astute spiritual student of truth asked Cayce to interpret his dream:

I was giving out dollar bills to people, one at a time. One person would come up to me and say, 'Give me one.' I would hand that person a dollar, then another would come up, and another and another. 900-109

Cayce told him that dollar represents success in material world. In the dream, dollars emblematically represented "grains of truth." As this dreamer gains more and more spiritual knowledge (grains of truth), he is to give them out to those who seek "a more perfect understanding of their relationship with their Creator".

Other Dreams

Other dreams include dreams of one's vocation, hobby, invention, problem solving, or dreams of one's loved ones.

Edwin was a successful stockbroker who sought several dream interpretations from Cayce. Among other topics, he consistently studied his dreams for guidance in stock movements and investment opportunities. Later, he became wealthy through stock investments. He had the following dream.

Dreamed a man was trying to sell me a radio. Then someone put poison on the doorknob of my door and urged me to come and touch it. I was terribly frightened. He tried to force me to touch the poisoned knob. Struggling, I awakened in a cold sweat. 137-17

Cayce said that someone would offer the dreamer certain radio stocks as “a wonderful proposition,” as seen in the dream where a man is trying to sell Edwin a radio. The imagery of someone placing poison on the doorknob and urging the dreamer to touch it, shows the financial danger in acquiring the stock. This dream came to warn the dreamer not to buy into the offer, thus providing him practical help in his business affairs.

The same dreamer had another dream: *Joseph, our chauffeur, took Morton [dreamer's brother] and me out in my car into the woods. He pulled up and ordered us gruffly to get out. I grew frightened at his ugly manner. Morton wanted to get out on the street side, but I was afraid and was urging him that we get off on the sidewalk side. 137-110*

This is showing “an unworthy association”, advising the dreamer to be cautious. The dream message is showing that “not too much confidence or latitude” be given to the chauffeur. The dreamer then asked Cayce if it was best not to rehire the chauffeur coming fall. Cayce answered, “Best not.”

Why study our dreams?

Dreams are an activity of the Spirit, a way in which God communicates with us to aid and help us in our journey toward wholeness. Therefore, it is a safe, sure, and true form of accessing our higher selves. They provide us with opportunities for personal development since all aspects of our life are reflected back to us in an unbiased manner. They provide guidance or correction to our character and attitude and give insights into our personal and professional relationships. Dream messages come to console and heal us during times of grief and mourning. They counsel us about daily habits and activities and alert us to new opportunities. If correctly applied, we are transformed for the better, awakening in us gifts that we are heirs to—gifts of unconditional love, strength of character, patience, faith, compassion, artistic talents, leadership qualities, innovativeness, conflict resolution, and countless others.

Cayce made this staggering claim, “any condition ever becoming reality is first dreamed.” Nothing of significance ever happens to us without it being first previewed in our dreams. Dreams warn us at appropriate times so that we can be

better prepared to meet various conditions or avoid them—to be forewarned is to be forearmed. Hence, anyone who fails to study his dreams stands to lose much.

Once someone asked Cayce, “What state or trend of development is indicated if an individual does not remember dreams?” His answer was poignant: those who do not recall and study their dreams are negligent of their association with God. Thus they withdraw from their right to associate with God. It “indicates a very negligible personage!” The desire to know God and oneself impels the individual to study her dreams. 5754-3

Prayer and meditation help with recall, clarity, and depth of our dreams. With consistent prayer and meditation, we can expect to receive profound messages through dreams. And as we work with and apply our dream messages correctly, we receive more and more dream messages.

Dreams continue to unfold in us whether we are paying attention to them or not. But we will fail to gain from them, until that moment of recognition of their worth and relevance in our lives. We do this by taking up a purposeful, consistent, and careful study of dreams. A good sense of awareness of our waking concerns and longing to learn the lessons that come to us, form the basic foundation to grow through our dream work. Our understanding of dreams will take shape, as all learning does, by study and effort, by recalling and interpreting, by supplication and sharing.