

Some time ago, I was reading a book which made a reference to dreams. Essentially, it stated that we cannot will what we will dream at night. In one way I think it's a reasonably accurate statement, but in another I do not think it is correct. Let me explain;

Assuming I want to dream of a specific person tonight, it is highly unlikely that I can force the person to appear in my dreams. Our dreams are not an ala carte menu where we can specifically choose the contents of our dreams. The exception to this is what is known as Lucid Dreaming. Lucid dreaming is when we are dreaming but we are also aware that we are dreaming. Highly skilled lucid dreamers can change the content of their dreams at will.

Lucid dreaming is a skill which can be learnt. Our ordinary non-lucid states of dreaming are less malleable and thus not quite as prone to conscious influence.

However, we are not entirely powerless when it comes to intending or willing certain types of dreams into existence. I have a deal with my unconscious mind in that if there is something important that I need to attend to, that it will alert me. The most frequent way it alerts me is through dreams.

We can ask our dreams to elucidate on a difficulty we are encountering in real life or to propose a way forward in life. If we can continue this intent for a few days, frequently our unconscious will reciprocate with a dream designated to help in that specific area. The key here is to not expect or ask for a very linear step by step solution. Instead just open communication with your unconscious and ask it to help you with the difficulty through dreams. Speak to your unconscious just like you might have a conversation with yourself which is what you are doing.

Keep in mind that the unconscious does not operate on the same linear principles as our conscious mind does. For instance, you might want a dream to help navigate your relationship with a lover. The unconscious conjures up bananas. Your lover is nowhere to be seen, but the bananas are likely to symbolize something important. The bananas might symbolically represent that the lover is driving us crazy. Or they could represent something else entirely. If we ask to dream of a cow, the unconscious might respond with a rose. It can be frustrating because we are so used to the way our conscious minds work.

Dreamwork is akin to learning to speak a different language. If we are English, we need to learn French is a way to think of learning from our dreams.

Our tendency is to forget that there are several distinct and disparate processes occurring in our psyche. The conscious process uses a very different process to the unconscious one. Our dream language is composed of symbols, metaphors and synchronicity and largely is non-linear. Our conscious process is more linear in nature and consists of a mixture of

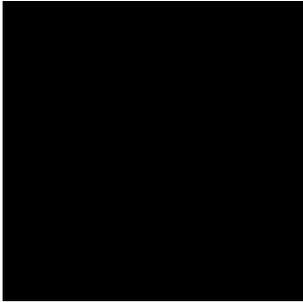
thinking, feeling and emotional states. It is difficult for our conscious mind to communicate with our unconscious mind because of the different language systems each process uses. But we can hold an intention which acts like a bridge between our unconscious and conscious processes. An intention is not a thought. Think of the moment before someone dives into a swimming pool. The intention is the feeling that you are about to dive into a pool of water. It is closer to the potential for energy which is about to become manifest.

The other aspect which is confusing to many people is that very often things are not what they appear to be in dream. For instance, a cow does not necessarily represent a cow. Symbolically it might represent something else altogether. These are the kind of difficulties encountered with interpretation and analysis. Despite the difficulty we often encounter in attempting to understand our dreams, I find that almost always our dreams are rich sources of guidance on how to proceed with life.

It requires work and patience and is not as easy as looking up a dream interpretation manual hoping for the answers to life. Yet when we are working with dreams we are exposing a deeper part of being and utilizing a different skillset than we usually employ. The riches of dreams can be great, not only in terms of self understanding but also in providing some direction in life.

We may not be able to will a particular dream into existence with all the accompanying scenery we desire. But we do not have to. We have to learn to communicate with our unconscious and respect our unconscious messages. Usually they serve us well.

Several clients have commented over the years that being able to ask for guidance type dreams on specific topics has caught them by surprise. But usually it's a nice type of a surprise. It is an ability they did not think they had, but they can now count on to better their lives.



The Art of Observation



Manifestation and Clearing
the Unconscious



A Way to Understand
Shadow and Persona



Foundations for a Better
Life