

Philosophic Encyclopedia

Questions Concerning Sleep And Dreams

Question: Can a person be influenced in a natural sleep as he can in hypnotic sleep, or is there a difference?

Answer: Yes, there is a difference. In the natural sleep the Ego, clothed in the mind and desire body, draws outside the physical body and usually hovers over the body, or at any rate remains close to it, connected by the silver cord, while the vital (etheric) body and the dense body are resting upon the bed.

It is then possible to influence the person by instilling into his brain the thoughts and ideas we wish to communicate. Nevertheless, we cannot then get him to do anything or to entertain any idea except that which is in line with his natural proclivities. It is impossible to command him to do anything and to enforce obedience, the same as it is when he has been driven out by the passes of the hypnotist, for it is the brain which moves the muscles, and during the natural sleep his brain is interpenetrated by his own vital (etheric) body and he is in perfect control himself, while during the hypnotic sleep the passes of the hypnotist have driven the ether of which his vital body is composed out of the brain, down to the shoulders of the victim, where it lies around his neck and resembles the collar of a sweater. The dense brain is then open to

the ether from the hypnotist's vital (etheric) body, which displaces that of the proper owner. Thus in the hypnotic sleep the victim has no choice whatever as to the ideas he entertains or the movements he makes with his body, but in the ordinary sleep he is still a free agent. In fact, this method of suggestion during sleep is something which mothers will find extremely beneficial in treating refractory children, for if the mother will sit by the bed of the sleeping child, hold its hand, speak to it as she would speak when it is awake, instill into its brain ideas of such a nature as she would wish it to entertain, she will find that in the waking state many of these ideas will have taken root. Also in dealing with a person who is sick or is addicted to drink, if the mother, nurse or others use this method, they will find it possible to instill hope and healing, materially furthering recovery or aiding self-mastery. This method may of course be used for evil, but we cannot refrain from publishing it, as we believe that the good which can be done in this way will much more than offset the few cases where some misguided person may use it for the wrong purpose.

Question:What are dreams? Have they all a significance, and how can we invite or induce dreams?

Answer: In the waking state, the different vehicles of the Ego, the mind, desire body, vital (etheric) body and dense body are all concentric. They occupy the same space, and the Ego functions outwardly in the Physical World. But at night, during the dreamless sleep, the Ego, clothed in the desire body and the mind, withdraws, leaving the physical and the vital (etheric) body upon the bed, there being no connection between the higher and the lower vehicles, save a thin, glistening thread, called the silver cord. It happens, however, that at times the Ego has been working so interestedly in the Physical World and the desire body has become so stirred up that it refuses to leave the lower vehicles

and is only half withdrawn. Then the connection between the sense centers of the desire body and the sense centers of the physical brain are partly ruptured. The Ego sees the sights and scenes of the Desire World which, in themselves, are extremely fantastic and illusory, and they are transmitted to the brain centers without being connected by reason. From this condition come all the foolish and fantastic dreams which we have.

It happens at times, however, that when the Ego is altogether outside the dense body, as in dreamless sleep, it sees an event concerning itself about to materialize, for coming events cast their shadows before, and before anything happens in the material world it has already happened in the spiritual worlds. If, upon awaking from such an experience, the Ego succeeds in impressing the brain with what it has seen, we have a prophetic dream, which in due time will come true, or which the Ego, if its Fate permits, may modify by a new action. For instance, if warned of an accident, it may take steps to counteract the impending calamity.

Regarding the second part of the question, "How can we invite or induce dreams," we may say that, of course, it is of no advantage to invite or induce dreams of the confused and fantastic kind, and, as for the other kind, there comes a time in a man's life when he begins to live the higher life. Then, gradually, by certain exercises, he evolves the faculty of [leaving his body consciously at night or at any other time. He is then perfectly conscious in the invisible worlds.](#) He can go wherever he pleased to the ends of the earth in minutes of time and as he learns how to consciously work in those invisible worlds, he does not "dream" any longer, [but lives another life that is fuller or more real than the one he now lives.](#)

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Question: What is sleep and what causes the body to go to sleep?

Answer: During the daytime the vital body specializes the colorless solar fluid which is all about us, through the organ we call the spleen. This vitality permeates the whole body and is seen by the clairvoyant as a fluid of a pale rose color, having been transmuted upon entering the physical body. It flows along every nerve, and when it is sent out by the brain centers in particularly large quantities it moves the muscles to which the nerves lead.

The vital body may be said to be built of points which stick out in all directions, inward, outward, upward and downward, all through the body, and each little point goes through the center of one of the chemical atoms, causing it to vibrate at a higher rate than its natural speed. This vital (etheric) body interpenetrates the dense body from birth to death under all conditions except when, for instance, the blood circulation stops in a certain part, as when we rest a hand upon the edge of a table for some time and it "goes to sleep," as we say. Then, if clairvoyant, we may see the etheric hand of the vital (etheric) body hanging down below the visible hand as a glove, and the chemical atoms of the hand relapse into their natural slow rate of vibration. When we slap the hand to cause it to "wake up," as we say, the peculiar prickling sensation we feel is caused by the points of the vital (etheric) body which then reenter the sleeping atoms of the hand and start them into renewed vibration.

The vital (etheric) body leaves the dense body in a similar manner when a person is dying. Drowning persons who have been resuscitated experience an intense agony caused by the entrance of these points, which they feel as a prickling sensation.

During the daytime, when the solar fluid is being absorbed by the man in great quantities, these points of the vital (etheric) body are blown out or distended, as it were, by the vital fluid, but as the day advances and poisons of decay clog the physical body more and more, the vital fluid flows less rapidly; in the evening there comes a time when the points in the vital (etheric) body do not get a full supply of the life giving fluid; they shrivel up and the atoms of the body move more sluggishly in consequence. Thus the Ego feels the body to be heavy, dull and tired. At last there comes a time when, as it were, the vital (etheric) body collapses and the vibrations of the dense atoms become so slow that the Ego can no longer move the body. It is forced to withdraw in order that its vehicle may recuperate. Then we say the body has gone to sleep.

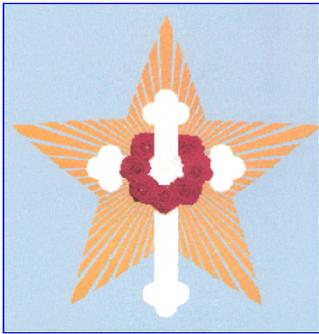
Sleep is not an inactive state, however; if it were there would be no difference in feeling in the morning and no restorative power in sleep. The very word restoration implies activity.

When a building has become dilapidated from constant wear and tear and it is necessary to renovate and restore it, the tenants must move out to give the workmen full play. For similar reasons the Ego moves out of its tenement at night. As the workmen work upon the building, to make it fit for re-occupancy, so the Ego must work upon its building before it will be fit to re-enter. And such a work is done by us during the nighttime, although we are not conscious of it in our waking state. It is this activity which removes the poisons from the system, and as a result the body is fresh and vigorous in the morning when the Ego enters at the time of waking.

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- Reference: The Rosicrucian Philosophy in Questions and Answers, Vol's. I and II, by Max Heindel (1865-1919)

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