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**Dreams**

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Dreams

William Dement once said, “Dreaming permits each and every one of us to be quietly and safely insane every night of our lives”. Every time we go to sleep, we spend one third of our sleep dreaming. Have you ever wondered if the types of dreams you have been getting has to do anything with your life? All the research and experiments about dreaming has now enabled us to get a deeper insight of this phenomenon called dream. Dream is the series of thoughts, images, and sensations that mostly occur when a person is asleep and sometimes when they are awake. It is yet to be discovered why we dream. However, due to much researches and many experiments, it is certain that dream helps us in learning as well as in dealing with problems and mental stress. We all get dreams but know very little about it. There are many different types of dreams that benefit us in many ways. Three ways that dream benefits us are by helping us to learn new things, deal with the problems in our life, and keep us mentally healthy.

  If we dream about the task that we have learned, we get a lot better at it. Prof. Dr. Sigmund Freud has described dreams as “Dreams tell us many an unpleasant biological truth about ourselves and only very free minds can thrive on such a diet”(6). Researchers say that after learning a complex task or a piece of knowledge our brain makes sense of the things we have learned throughout the day and consolidates it. Researchers also think that the dreams are a sign that unconscious parts of the brain are working hard to process information about the task. Sleep and dreams boost learning and help us to make sense of the real world. Dreaming is an important part of understanding, organizing, and retaining what we learn. While we sleep, the brain replays the patterns of activity it experienced during waking hours, allowing us to enter what one psychologist calls a neural virtual reality. For instance, in a study a group of ninety-nine participants were told to sit on the computer and learn about a layout of a three-dimensional maze. The aim was to find their way to landmark. Those who were given to take naps and dreamed about the task finished the maze in less time. Furthermore, those who dreamed about the task seemed to be ten times better at the task compared to those who did not dream about the task.

  Experts say that our dreams give us insight to deal emotional trauma, and stress as well as to increase happiness. Studies have shown the importance of dreams to our health and well-being. “Whenever I have dreamed about something I tend to perform well on that subject, if I dream about studying for an exam I tend to remember a lot about it.”(Sherpa, Nima. Personal Interview. 9 May 2015) There are many theories about why we dream, but no one knows for sure. Some researchers say dreams have no purpose or meaning and are nonsensical activities of sleep. Others say dreams are necessary for mental, emotional, and physical health. Dreams seem to help us process emotions by encoding and constructing memories of them. What we see and experience in our dreams might not necessarily be real, but the emotions attached to these experiences certainly are. Our dream stories essentially try to strip the emotion out of a certain experience by creating a memory of it. For example, in a study of a recently divorced woman with untreated clinical depression, scientists found that the patients who saw dream about their ex-spouse or relationship scored better on the mood tests. They were also much more likely to recover from the depression than who did not remember dreaming about the marriage.

There are many different types of dreams and they all play their own role in our lives. Recurring dreams are the types of dreams that we see often and occur due to our life situations. Recurring dreams indicates to us about something that is unresolved, like, relationships, school, or even a fear of something. “Recurring dreams repeat themselves with little variation in story or theme.” (N.A, Paragraph 5, Line1) The dream only subsides when we are able to overcome the problem. For example, my brother used to have many dreams about snakes. He had dreams of him being surrounded by snakes and sometimes they would be following him. It was not until he got a little older and as his fear of snake decreased he also stopped getting the recurring dreams about the snakes.

Another way to deal with problems in our life is by lucid dreaming. A lucid dream is a type of dream when we have control of our dream. Lucid dreams help us to visualize and rehearse events in our mind before they occur. This way we can create our own dream and imagine ourselves dealing with the problem we are facing. This helps us to deal with the problem because when we imagine ourselves facing a problem, we want to find a way to deal with the problem.

Lucid dreaming can particularly be achieved in few steps. My friends and me have tried lucid dreaming, but only my friend was successful in achieving that state of mind. He had total control over his dream. As, he explained about his lucid dreams, it was more and more common to what my friends and me had imagined. Something that he experienced in his lucid dream was flying. In his flying dream, the sense of weightlessness, whooshing and wavering in the air was incredibly authentic. This awareness is critical to the experience, and your mind can even play tricks on you, like suddenly falling. The most important thing that he came across in his lucid dream was pain. In his dream he did experience pain, but not the same pain that you would experience in real life. In lucid dreams, although it's most likely the unconscious mind that produces this experience. Pain is a result of pre-conceptions and established neural pathways: if you hit your thumb with a hammer, the brain simulates dream pain because this is its reality. So, if you fall onto a bed of spikes in your lucid dream, you might just find out what it feels like to be impaled. When my friend experienced pain in a lucid dream, it was very different from real pain. It was inconsistent with the cause, and stopped abruptly when the dream moved on. What's more, there was no psychological component, which can make real life pain so much worse.

Dream is the thoughts, images, and sensations that we get in our sleep while we are awake. It plays a very important role in our life. There are many different types of dreams and they play their own role in helping us. Studies have shown the importance of dreams to our health and well-being. Many experts say that dreams exist to help solve problems in our lives, incorporate memories, and process emotions. If you go to bed with a troubling thought, you may wake with a solution, or at least feel better about the situation. Some dreams may help our brains process our thoughts and the events of the day. Others may just be the result of normal brain activity and mean very little, if anything. Researchers are still trying to figure out exactly why we dream. We all get dreams, but most of us just forget about it by thinking that it is not important. Next time when you have a dream ask to yourself what is it trying to confront because that dream you had can help you either learn new things or can help you to deal with emotional stress and problems in your life.

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