

Dream Recall: How to Remember Your Dreams

by Nicole Rose

Having trouble remembering your dreams? Well, you're not alone. And believe me, even if you think you're not dreaming.... You are.

Adults generally dream between 4 to 6 times per night (a bit less for children), yet an article on sleep.org indicates that most people forget 95 to 99 percent of what they dream. Being a very active, vivid dreamer, myself, I considered how crippling it might be if I suddenly couldn't recall my night-time adventures into a vaster awareness..... An awareness that so often has been the harbinger of conflict resolution, healing, insight, and spiritual transformation.

When people hear that I'm a dreamworker, they nearly always have immediate commentary about their own dream lives. I hear everything from, "I have the craziest, most vivid dreams--I just don't know what they mean," to, "I've never given much thought to my dreams." But by far, the most frequent comments I receive have to do with people not being able to remember their dreams. Having worked with my dreams for 30 plus years, I know the deep value a dream exploration can bring to healing the psyche of anyone who's willing to put their attention on it. So, I'm going to share with you some tried and true methods to improve your dream recall.

The first thing to employ is your desire to remember your dreams, and the openness to working with them. The next thing is to become comfortable with the idea that you can actively communicate with your deep unconscious, or what psychotherapy might call the "subconscious" and what my first dream teacher called The Dream Body. Realize that you have a dream body, a deep well of awareness into the depths of every aspect of your being, all aspects of humanities collective unconsciousness (Jung's dream archetypes), and the entire pulsating beingness of the Universe. Your dreams are portholes into the great mysteries of what you are.

Sound interesting? Ready to buckle your seatbelt and embark on the incredible journey of you, the great unknown? It's time to discover the unknown realms of you that are trying to make themselves known by delivering you messages through the porthole of your dreams each night.

The next step is to keep a dream journal. I recommend an actual journal that you will write in versus a method of digital recording, because there tends to be greater recall through the written process. However, if you are averse to writing or find yourself pressed for time, using a microphone/recording mechanism on your cell phone, tablet, ipad, or dictaphone is another effective way to record your dreams.

Set your dream journal and a pen (or recorder) right next to your bed within easy reach. As you go to sleep each night, state to your dream body your intention to remember your dreams. I often will also ask my dream body to please deliver my dreams in symbols that I can readily understand. That is all the prep you need before drifting off to sleep. You'll be surprised at how easily this can work when you start putting earnest attention on wanting to recall your dreams.

There are a few things to be aware of that can affect dream recall. Drugs, whether prescription or recreational can affect the nature of your dreams and the ability to remember them. Alcohol can inhibit

the deeper REM cycles, the sleep states needed to produce dreaming. So, drinking at night will likely prevent your dreaming life from flourishing.

When you wake in the morning, resist the urge to turn over or move in any way. Staying in the same position that you were in during the dream helps dream recall. Then, after allowing the memory of the dream to flood into your awareness, immediately grab your dream journal and write it down. Pay close attention to any emotions, colors and fine details in your dreams and write them down. The commitment to recording your dreams has a way of spurring on more dream recall in the nights that follow. So, make sure you stay dedicated to recording them in some way, even if in brief notations.

Some people don't want to wake up enough, in the middle of the night, to record a dream.... This is a decision you'll have to make. I personally record my dreams in the middle of the night if I am stirred awake by them. I consider the possibility that my psyche is waking me intentionally so that I might record a dream that might otherwise be lost by morning.... and so I wake myself to write.

There is a great deal that can be elaborated on with regards to dream recall, but this article will suffice as a very effective beginning to remembering your dreams so that you can start to tap into the endless well of insight that awaits you each night.

Sweet dreams.....