



## **The Dream Experience**

**By**

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### **Themes and Patterns**

. A reoccurring theme involves houses. I thought these were dreams of the past but since using a dream journal, I see that they continue. One of the main characteristics is my fascination with the potential of the house or building. As I wander through it, I imagine all of the possibilities it presents but somehow I am never able to do it. Sometimes I find hidden parts of the house or barn that are tremendously beautiful and I am so amazed that no one else has found them. Other times I have discovered kittens in the basement or under the stairs that are ill or deformed in some way. As I wander further into the space, there are more and more kittens and I feel helpless to help all of them. This kind of house dream is very disturbing. Other times, I have found treasure in the hidden parts of the house but I am never allowed to take any with me but I am allowed to sit and examine it.

The other theme that is familiar and so obvious in my dream journal is travel dreams. In a recent one, I am travelling with a woman out west. I think we are hitchhiking. We get hungry so while waiting for a ride, I suggest that I go across the street to the gas station and buy us some candy bars: She agrees. When I get back, she is gone! I get picked up by a man and I am both scared and angry and then the dream ends. Some of my travel dreams are fun. I visit wonderful, tropical places near the ocean reminiscent of my time in Hawaii. There are island people and lots of swimming where I am able to dive deeply for long periods of time. There I find all kinds of strange fish, objects and odd distortions of the land. These open up into caves and some of them are frightening and some are very friendly.

Sometimes my travel dreams involve people I know from other dreams. For instance, there is a building in New York City that looks like an old town hall. Outside on the steps a group of teenagers hang out at night. I know them and when I visit them there is this sense of reunion. We are all happy to see each other again. Although the images are very clear, I have no memory of what else happens there.

### **Dream Recall**

I don't remember most of my dreams unless I write them down or they are strong enough to stick with me. It seems that the really important dreams, the big dreams I recall easily but the more mundane ones evaporate quickly unless I record them somehow. The big dreams become a part of my daily life. They instruct me, guide me, and encourage me or whatever. One of the most important dreams of my life is the following which I had in the early seventies.

## The River Dream

I become conscious in my dream that I am stuck in the mud bank beside a narrow river. The river is singing, "going to the sea, going to the sea" with each wave. I tell the river that I want to go to the sea too. It responds by telling me that I must first get free. I try to get loose but the more I struggle, the more stuck I get. Finally the river tells me to relax and let the sun help me. I lie patiently and as the sun dries out the mud, I start to get released.

While I am in the process, I notice that there is a fellow hanging by his shirt tails on a branch across the river. Some are in the river fighting upstream, floating downstream and everything in between. Some are distressed and some are not.

At that point, a small sailboat comes down river. It has a giant orange sun on the sail and there is a Gandalf type figure on the bow. He is joyful like a child with crooked stars around his head and anciently wise like stones are. He is the master boat builder who teaches us how to build boats to get safely down the river. The next thing I know, I am in a small, green rowboat, rowing down river.

There is a lot happening both in the water and on the shore that is fascinating. One scene I remember well is a congregation of farmers dressed in black long coats and tall hats. They believe that the river is evil yet they are attracted to it so they are always punishing each other. They also are so busy trying they never get anything done.

What I notice is that anything that fear or desire of anything on shore attracts one's boat there immediately and a whole process of detachment must be undertaken

to get back in the river. After several of these, I find myself at the mouth of the river and before me is the ocean. It too is singing "I am the sea, I am the sea." At that point, I develop a leak in my boat and the next thing is a collision with a big rock that throws me and the boat up into the air. I land in the sea and much to my astonishment; I hear the sea song coming out of me too. "I am the sea, I am the sea."