

TRANSCENDENTAL AMNESIA: REMEMBERING OUR DREAMS

Gurinder Singh, FRC



KingaBritschgi on DeviantArt, But a Dream Within a Dream, 2014.

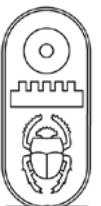
“Mister Sandman,” the 1954 hit song by Pat Ballard, is known to millions around the world for its dreamy harmonies and a chorus that asks “Mister Sandman, bring me a dream.” What if I told you that you don’t need the Sandman to dream? What if I said that every night you’re already visiting realms of profound wisdom, divine guidance, and untapped potential?

Former Emperor Ralph Lewis once wrote:

Dreams are perhaps one of the oldest mysteries of humankind. Perhaps they were likewise the first experience that man [people] had of the duality of their own being. In fact, some authors on the subject of primitive religion and the psychology of religion believe that the idea of soul and of the inner self came

to humankind from their dream experiences.

Like stars that vanish with the first light of dawn, our dreams dissolve at the threshold of morning. We stand at the shoreline between two worlds—one of ordinary perception and one of extraordinary revelation—and as the tide of consciousness shifts, the delicate shells of night wisdom are washed away. Even though science confirms that every single person dreamed last night, studies show that most people forget 95 percent of their dreams within five minutes of waking. This isn’t just ordinary forgetting—it’s transcendental amnesia, the forgetting of our connection to the cosmic consciousness that speaks to us through our dreams.



Most of us experience what I call “transcendental amnesia”—the phenomenon of forgetting these profound mystical experiences as soon as we return to waking consciousness. This article will not be covering where dreams come from, and the various possibilities of interpretation that each dream has. There’s a plethora of good resources like “Dream Psychohistory” by Lee Irwin, a *Rosicrucian Digest* article from the 2022 No. 2 issue; *The Inner World of Dreams*, a book by Phyllis L. Pipitone; and various other *Rosicrucian Digest* articles and videos on the [RosicrucianTV](#) channel on YouTube that cover these topics. Today, we’re going to explore transcendental amnesia specifically—this fascinating phenomenon of forgetting our most profound dream experiences.

This article will help us discover why our dreams matter, how to remember them, and most importantly, how they can transform our spiritual practice. But first, I’d like to invite you to participate in a quick exercise.

If you have something to write with, please take a moment to jot down the first

fragment you remember from any recent dream—just a sentence or two. Don’t worry if it seems random or insignificant. This small act of recording a dream fragment is actually your first step in overcoming transcendental amnesia.

Take a moment to look at what you’ve written. Does it contain a symbol? An emotion? A message? Even the smallest dream fragment can contain profound wisdom when we give it our attention. Throughout your day, I invite you to reflect on this dream piece and notice if new meanings or connections emerge as we explore the mystic landscape of our dreams together.

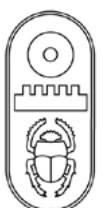
The Rosicrucian Perspective on Dreams

Throughout history, from the dream temples of ancient Egypt to the mystical traditions that influenced our Order, dreams have been recognized as gateways to higher consciousness. As Rosicrucians, we understand that dreams are not random neural firings but meaningful experiences that bridge our inner and outer worlds.

The psychohistory of dreams reveals a fascinating journey across civilizations.



Thomas Cole, Dream of Arcadia, 1890.





kh1martson on DeviantArt, Dream World, 2021.

In ancient Egypt, dream incubation was practiced in temples dedicated to Serapis and Isis, where seekers would sleep in sacred spaces hoping to receive divine guidance. The Greeks established dream temples called Asclepieion, where the sick would sleep to receive healing dreams from the deity Asclepius. The Chaldeans of ancient Mesopotamia developed elaborate systems for dream interpretation that influenced Jewish, Christian, and Islamic dream practices.

This rich historical tradition continues in the Rosicrucian approach to dreams. In her book *The Inner World of Dreams*, Rosicrucian author Phyllis L. Pipitone wrote that dreams are “a voyage into a mysterious world, teaching us about ourselves and the world around us.” This perspective aligns perfectly with our Rosicrucian teachings.

Our founder, H. Spencer Lewis, had much to say about dreams. In his work *Self-Mastery and Fate with the Cycles of Life*, he explained that, when we fall asleep, a

fascinating process occurs. The physical body rests, but our consciousness doesn’t simply shut down. Instead, it shifts.

In modern society, some have described sleep as a “teleportation mechanism to breakfast”—we close our eyes at night and suddenly it’s morning. But that perspective misses the profound journey that happens between.

Rosicrucians have long taught that not all dreams are mystically significant, but we should use common sense in interpreting them.

Have you ever awakened at 3 or 4 a.m. from a particularly vivid dream? That time—between 3 and 4 a.m.—is especially significant in many mystical traditions. In Rosicrucian understanding, it can be a time when the veil between different states of consciousness is thinnest. When you wake at that hour, it’s often because something important is trying to reach you, like a letter slipped under your door from a world that exists alongside our own but at a different frequency of being.

Lee Irwin mentioned in his article that there's a special category of dreams called "initiatric dreams." These are unsolicited, vivid, and deeply symbolic experiences that constitute about 2-3 percent of all dreams. They can be mythic encounters with archetypal figures, psychic experiences like telepathy or precognition, or mystical moments of direct sacred experience. These dreams don't just happen—they initiate us into deeper understanding.

What makes initiatric dreams particularly powerful is not just their content—their symbols and scenarios—but the states of consciousness they induce. As Rosicrucian scholar Lee Irwin explained, "Initiatric dreams tend to be rather weak in content but much stronger in states." These altered states of consciousness are the true vehicles for esoteric knowledge and transformation.

The Science and Practice of Dreaming

Modern science confirms what mystics have known for centuries—dreaming isn't

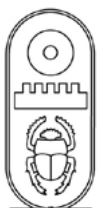
optional. We all dream, every night, during REM sleep. Studies show that dreams help process emotions, consolidate memories, and solve problems. When people are prevented from dreaming, they quickly begin to experience psychological distress. We need to dream.

From an evolutionary perspective, dreams serve crucial functions that have helped humanity survive and evolve. Scientific research suggests that dreaming has been conserved across mammalian evolution precisely because it offers significant adaptive advantages. Dreams allow us to simulate potential threats and rehearse responses in a consequence-free environment. They help integrate new information with existing knowledge, promoting cognitive flexibility and creative problem-solving—abilities that have given humans evolutionary advantages throughout our development as a species.

But to see dreams as merely biological mechanisms is to miss their transcendent beauty and mystery. Dreams can transport us beyond the ordinary boundaries of



Henry Fuselli, The Shepherd's Dream, 1793.



perception into a realm where all humans become brothers and sisters, where the artificial separations between us dissolve. In dreams, we experience the unbroken wholeness of existence as an undivided flowing movement without borders. Dreams reveal that beneath the seemingly fragmented nature of our waking consciousness lies an undivided wholeness—a flowing, dynamic reality where past, present, and future exist in harmonious relationship.

Do you remember when you last felt truly seen? Not the superficial seeing of everyday encounters, but the soul-deep recognition that comes when another being truly perceives your essence? Dreams see us this way—completely, without judgment, beyond our carefully constructed masks and personas. In the words of a beloved poet, “Attention is the beginning of devotion.” Dreams pay attention to parts of ourselves we’ve forgotten or neglected. They attend to wounds we’ve bandaged but not healed.

They notice splinters of potential embedded under the skin of our consciousness, waiting to be drawn out and realized.

Beyond mere biological necessity, dreams appear to be vital for our psychological and spiritual evolution as well. Carl Jung, the pioneering psychologist whose work bridges modern psychology and ancient mysticism, recognized dreams as messages from what he called the “collective unconscious”—a reservoir of shared human wisdom and archetypes that transcend individual experience. Jung saw dreams as a natural healing system of

the psyche, helping us integrate disparate aspects of ourselves and guiding our individual evolution toward wholeness, or what he termed “individuation.”

Jung’s approach to dreams echoes ancient wisdom traditions in fascinating ways. His concept of the collective unconscious parallels the Akashic Records in Rosicrucian thought—a cosmic memory

bank containing all events, thoughts, words, emotions, and intent ever to have occurred. When we dream, we may be accessing this collective wisdom, just as ancient priestesses at the Oracle of Delphi or shamans in indigenous cultures accessed non-ordinary states of consciousness to retrieve information inaccessible to ordinary awareness.

But here’s something fascinating that bridges science and mysticism: dreams operate outside our conscious control. Just as meditation creates the conditions for mystical

experiences but doesn’t force them, our dream state opens us to guidance that comes on its own terms. And like meditation, dreams can be a form of telepathy—not just with others, but with parts of ourselves we normally can’t access.

Rosicrucian scholar Lee Irwin discussed the “psychohistory of dreaming”—a developmental journey that evolves through consistent self-analysis. As he explained: “Dreams and dreaming are not static or simply recurrent or only mapped to a limited ‘immediate’ surface causality.” Instead, they’re dynamic, situational, and developmental. When we take an “existential-phenomenological



John Collier, Priestess of Delphi, 1891.

approach” to our dreams, recording not just their content but their phenomenological characteristics, we allow each dream to manifest its unique value and significance over time.

Think of your consciousness as a vast kingdom with many chambers, or a labyrinth with countless paths. In waking life, you only access a small portion. But in dreams, doors open. Barriers dissolve. Messages come through. The key is not analyzing too hard—it’s simply paying attention.

The psychohistory of dreams teaches us that dreaming is not merely subjective but intersubjective, forming responsive relationships with others and the world around us. As Irwin noted: “Dreams are not simply ‘inner’ or ‘subjective’ but much more intersubjective, forming responsive relationships and reactions with or to others in on-going life events.” Our dreams are like quantum entanglements across the fabric of consciousness where the boundaries between self and other become permeable, revealing the deeper implicate order beneath our seemingly separate existences.

Have you ever felt that your dreams were communicating in a language older than words? Your dreamscape is embedded with symbolic materials that respond to invisible currents of meaning. These dream images aren’t random; they’re precisely calibrated instruments, aligning your personal consciousness with universal rhythms that have guided humanity since we first gazed at the stars.

This brings us to a critical practice: recording your dreams. Keep a journal by

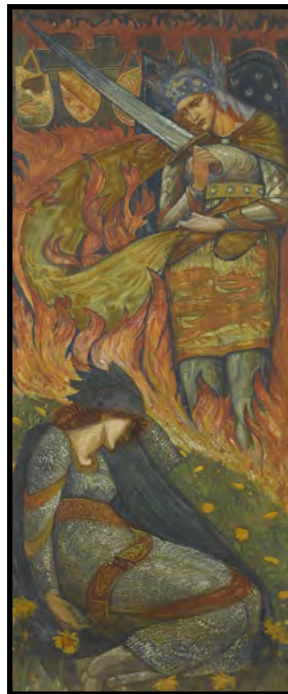
your bed. When you wake—especially from those 3 a.m. experiences—jot down what you remember immediately. Don’t worry about capturing every detail perfectly. You don’t need to recall 100 percent of the dream at 4 p.m. that day. What matters is creating the habit of acknowledgment.

In my own practice, I’ve noticed something peculiar about nightmares. They often come when I oversleep. It’s as if something is trying to wake me, to guide me, saying “Enough rest—it’s time to move into the day.” These aren’t random terrors but messages conveyed in sometimes strange ways.

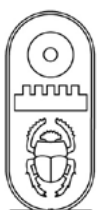
There is a sense of urgency in these dream messengers, reminiscent of nature’s own rhythms and cycles. Have you ever witnessed how the world transforms at dawn? There is something infinitely healing in these repeated refrains—the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter. Dreams, too, have their seasons and cycles—periods of darkness followed by illumination, confusion followed by clarity. They are the cosmos whispering

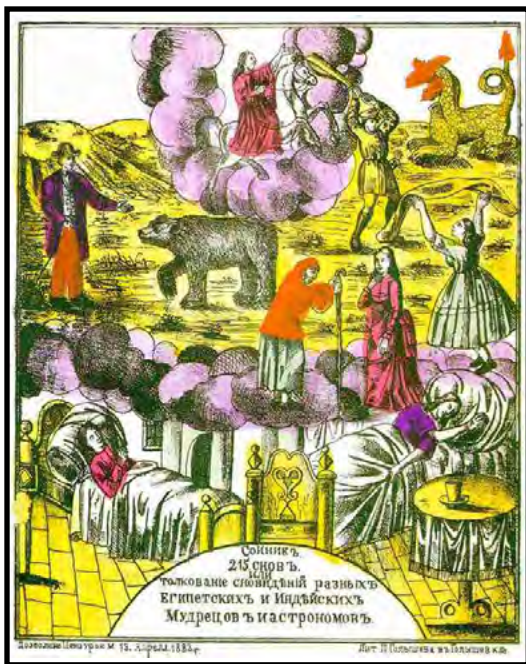
to us in the language of symbols and emotions, creating a momentary harmony between our conscious and unconscious selves.

Like a rare leopard that appears at the edge of our vision, only to vanish when we turn our head, our most profound dreams often elude our grasp. Yet their footprints remain in the sand of memory, their presence felt long after they’ve disappeared into the forest of forgotten things. What elusive messengers visited you last night, leaving only the faintest trace of their passing?



*Bernard Sleigh,
Brunhilda's Dream.*





Lubok-style cover of a Russian dream book, 1883.

Think of yourself as a messenger—a rainbow bridge between different states of consciousness. In dreams, you’re not just receiving guidance; you’re actively participating in cosmic communication.

H. Spencer Lewis’s Water Bowl Technique

One of the most powerful yet simple techniques passed down through Rosicrucian tradition comes from H. Spencer Lewis. He recommended placing a bowl of clear, fresh water near your bed before sleep.

This isn’t merely symbolic. Lewis understood something profound about water’s molecular structure—it acts as a psychic receiver and amplifier. The water molecules are extraordinarily receptive to subtle cosmic energies and thought vibrations. As you sleep, the water collects and magnifies these energies, potentially enhancing your dream experiences.

Lewis taught that water serves as a threshold or gateway between dimensions of consciousness. Just as we physically cross water to move between lands, the

bowl by your bed creates a symbolic crossing point for your consciousness during dream states.

The practice is simple yet powerful. Before sleep, place a small bowl of fresh water on your nightstand. As you prepare for bed, gaze quietly into the water for a moment while holding your intention to remember your dreams. Lewis recommended a specific breathing technique—breathe rhythmically while visualizing cosmic energy being drawn into your psychic centers with each inhalation and directing this energy toward the water with each exhalation.

You might even whisper your intention to the water. In the morning, observe if the water has changed in any way—ripples, bubbles, or even a subjective sense of the water having a different “energy.” Many Rosicrucians report that this simple practice dramatically enhances dream recall and increases prophetic or initiatic dream experiences.

What makes this approach particularly fascinating is that Lewis didn’t view it as merely mystical. He attempted to explain it through scientific understanding, discussing electromagnetic fields, vibrations, and resonance—bridging esoteric knowledge with emerging scientific concepts of his time.

The Physical Foundation for Mystical Dreams

While Rosicrucian practices like the water bowl technique prepare us psychically for significant dreams, we must also prepare physically. The body and spirit work in harmony, not opposition. H. Spencer Lewis himself emphasized that psychic experiences require both spiritual and physical preparation.

A personal experience beautifully illustrates this principle. When my German Shepherd was a puppy, I

discovered something fascinating about the relationship between physical energy and rest quality. If I didn't take him for at least a mile run every single day, he would transform into a whirlwind of restless energy—barking incessantly, pacing anxiously around the house, and developing a particular fondness for destroying my socks!

But on days when he received proper exercise, the transformation was remarkable. Instead of that frenetic energy, he would settle into deep, peaceful sleep. You could almost see the dreams flickering behind his eyelids as his paws would occasionally twitch in response to whatever adventures his dream-self was having.

Our bodies aren't so different. When we deny ourselves proper physical expression during the day, that unexpressed energy doesn't simply disappear—it manifests as restlessness during what should be our most receptive state. Just as my puppy couldn't access deep, restful sleep without physical release, we can't access the deeper realms of dream consciousness when our physical energy is creating static in the system.

Consider your evening meal. Heavy foods, especially those rich in fats and proteins, require significant energy to digest. When your body diverts energy to digestion, it has less available for dream consciousness. Rosicrucian tradition suggests a light meal at least three hours before sleep, preferably consisting of easily digestible foods like fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

Practical Techniques for Dream Recall

The following are some practical techniques to overcome transcendental amnesia and remember more of your dreams.

Lee Irwin recommended dream recall with “the three R's of dream work”: Record, Reflect, and Research. First, record your dreams immediately upon waking—whether through writing, audio recording, or digital means. Second, reflect on the symbols and emotions without rushing to interpretation—some dream meanings may reveal themselves over months or even years. Third, research the symbols and themes that appear in your dreams, recognizing that while they have personal significance, they also connect to collective wisdom.

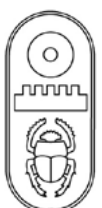
When setting your intention before sleep, affirm silently: “I will remember my dreams tonight. I will recall them clearly in the morning.” This simple practice dramatically increases dream recall.

Second, remain still upon awakening. When you first wake up, don't jump out of bed. Don't check your phone. Instead, lie quietly and ask yourself, “What was I just dreaming?” Often, fragments will surface if you give them space to emerge.

Third, keep that dream journal within reach. Write down anything you remember, even if it's just a color, a feeling, or a single



Redrawdigital on DeviantArt, Child's Dream - In the Clouds, 2023.





Kyla-Nichole on DeviantArt, A Midsummer Night's Dream, 2012.

image. Over time, these fragments form patterns.

You may notice that some dreams feel qualitatively different from others—more vivid, more symbolic, more meaningful. Rosicrucian scholar Lee Irwin calls these “psychonoetic dreams”—literally “soul knowledge” dreams that impact you deeply on a soul level and transform your awareness. Pay special attention to these dreams, as they often contain the most profound guidance.

Fourth, practice “the three R’s”: Record your dreams in detail, Reflect on the symbols and emotions, and Research their meanings through Rosicrucian texts and your own intuition.

Fifth, consider the timing of your dreams. Those that come just before waking often contain the most accessible guidance. If you consistently wake at certain times—especially that 3-4 a.m. window—pay special attention to the dreams that precede those awakenings.

Thomas Edison, one of history’s greatest inventors with over 1,000 patents, deliberately utilized the hypnagogic state—that boundary between wakefulness and sleep—to solve problems and generate

creative insights. His method was brilliantly simple yet effective.

Edison would sit in a chair holding steel balls in his hand, positioned over metal pans on the floor. As he began to drift off to sleep, his muscles would relax, releasing the balls, which would crash into the pans and wake him. At this precise moment of transition between consciousness states, he would often have breakthrough insights about whatever problem he had been contemplating.

This “in-between sleep” method allowed Edison to access what he called “a spiritualistic source” of knowledge. He once remarked: “Ideas come from space. This may seem absurd, and I cannot explain what I mean. . . . the ideas that come to me are not thought out in my mind at all, but seem to strike me from without... they are revealed to me.”

Edison understood what Rosicrucians have long taught—that deep insight often comes not from the straining of the conscious mind but from allowing yourself to receive wisdom from beyond ordinary thinking. He created a practical method to capture the inspirations that typically fade

away as we cross the threshold into deeper sleep.

Conclusion: Transcending the Amnesia

Time works differently in dreams. What feels like hours can be minutes. What seems like a moment can contain eternity. In much the same way, our amnesia about dreams isn't permanent—it's fluid, changeable.

As Oscar Wilde so beautifully put it: "A dreamer is one who can only find their way by moonlight, and their punishment is that they see the dawn before the rest of the world." Dreams show us what's coming before others can see it. What looks like punishment—being awake when others sleep, seeing what others miss—is actually a profound gift.

But Wilde also reminded us: "They've promised that dreams can come true, but forgot to mention that nightmares are dreams, too." This balanced perspective acknowledges that not all dream guidance comes as gentle whispers. Sometimes we need thunder to wake us up.

Think of dreams as letters from your higher self. Sometimes these letters are

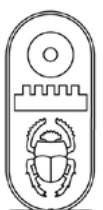
written in code—symbols personal to you. Other times, they're written in the universal language of archetypes that Carl Jung explored so deeply. But always, they contain wisdom if we're willing to receive it.

And remember, as a Rosicrucian lesson taught us: "It is quite impossible for another to interpret your dreams." Dream interpretation must be personal. If a dream holds real significance, you must interpret it yourself, for only you understand the unique symbolic language of your psyche. As our tradition advises: "If your dream means anything at all, it must be interpreted by you; and if it seems unusually significant, the thing to do is to analyze it as best you can and make a note of the date and day, recording your brief analysis of it."

The practice of remembering dreams isn't just about collecting interesting stories to tell at breakfast. It's about healing the split between our waking and dreaming selves. It's about reintegrating wisdom that belongs to us but that we've forgotten through transcendental amnesia. To be human is to live suspended between



Sebastiano Ricci, Dream of Aesculapius, ca. 1710.



the scale of snails and the scale of stars. In our dreams, we traverse these scales effortlessly, being at once infinitesimally small and cosmically vast. We experience standing on the threshold of two eternities, in the past and future—a sacred liminality where the membrane between worlds thins and the cosmos can speak directly to our sleeping souls.

Have you noticed how differently time flows when you're dreaming? How a lifetime can unfold in minutes, or a moment can stretch into eternity? Dreams inhabit what neuroscientists might call the "space between stimulus and response"—that infinitesimal gap where time dilates and our truest freedom resides. In that space, dreams reveal the body's ancient wisdom, bypassing the cerebral pathways of stress and anxiety to speak directly to what one might call our molecular autobiography—the story written not in words but in the very chemistry of being. The body remembers what the mind forgets, and dreams are its most eloquent language.

When we work with our dreams consistently, something remarkable happens: the line between dreaming and waking begins to blur in the most beautiful way. We start to bring dream wisdom into daylight hours. We recognize symbols and synchronicities in our waking world. We become more fluid in our consciousness, more receptive to guidance regardless of our state.

I want to conclude with a lighter perspective from Dr. Seuss: "You know you're in love when you can't fall asleep because reality is finally better than your dreams." There's profound wisdom here. When we integrate our dream guidance into waking life, reality itself becomes more magical, more meaningful. We fall in love with existence in a new way.

Tonight, as you prepare for sleep, I invite you to try these Rosicrucian



William Blake,
The Song of Los, copy D, object 5, 1795.

practices. Place a bowl of water by your bed with intention. Ensure you've had some physical movement during the day. Keep your journal ready. And remember that you're not just resting—you're embarking on a journey to the inner kingdom of your consciousness. You're entering the labyrinth of your highest wisdom. You're accessing guidance that can transform your path.

Set the intention to remember. Keep your journal ready. And perhaps most importantly, approach your dreams with reverence but also playfulness. Dream work is serious mystic business, but it's also a cosmic dance of symbols and stories.

Mr. Sandman isn't bringing your dreams—you're creating them together with the Cosmic Consciousness. You are both the dreamer and the dream. And when you overcome transcendental amnesia, you'll discover that the wisdom you seek has been with you all along—night after night, dream after dream—like stars that have always been there, shining in the darkness, whether or not we lift our eyes to see them.