

## Remembering Daydreams

Jerome Singer has noted that daydreams are more conscious and controllable than night dreams and that they are a much neglected source of information about a person's inner life and potential.

Singer suggests that keeping a diary of our daydreams will help us to better understand ourselves and may even lead us to change some aspects of our lives.

You are to keep track of their fantasies over two or three days, by carrying a pad of paper or 3-by-5 cards and during idle moments of the day—before class, waiting for the bus, during a coffee break—recalling fantasies or what they've just been thinking about.

To understand the meanings of daydreams, Singer notes, you should look at certain specific attributes. For example, do some scenes and themes recur? He also suggests scoring daydreams from 1 to 5 on the following characteristics.

1. Is the fantasy purely visual or do other senses come into play? For example, in fantasizing about a banquet do you hear the speaker, smell the food, taste the roast beef? Some daydreams consist entirely of conversations with another person. Do you see the person and listen to his or her comments or do you simply do all the talking? Score 1 if only one sense was involved but up to 5 if more senses come into play.
2. Are your dreams personal or impersonal? In dreaming about a bank robbery are you a spectator or are you actively involved as a perpetrator or victim? Score 1 if you are merely a bystander and up to 5 if you are actively involved.
3. Was the dream relevant to your real life? If you daydream about visiting the harem of an Arabian sheik, you are probably just seeking escape from today's problems. However, if you are rehearsing a conversation you will have with your employer tomorrow, you are dealing with an immediately relevant aspect of your life. Again score 1 to 5, with 5 representing extreme, obvious relevance to your current life situation.
4. How vivid was your dream? Did you see it through a thick fog or was it clear and sharp? Were events in color or black and white? Could you clearly hear what was being said? Score from 1 to 5, with higher scores representing the more vivid experiences.

Singer states that by averaging these ratings for a whole series of dreams we can get a sense of our underlying motives. For example, to what extent do our fantasies reflect achievement? If we have been doing poorly in school and telling ourselves that it doesn't matter, while all our daydreams show us overcoming incredible obstacles, we may have misjudged our deepest wishes. Similarly, if our daydreams consist of passionate love affairs while in everyday life we have focused on career success, we may be suppressing a deep need for affection. Does power play a part in our dreams? dependency? escape from danger? These and other motives may be reflected in our dreams. In each case, Singer instructs us to ask ourselves whether or not the dreams coincide with real-life efforts and goals. Is it possible we are hiding certain motives from ourselves and need to reevaluate our life efforts?