

### **Seven Rules of Thumb for Esoteric Dream Interpretation**

I thought that a little progress was a lot of progress. I *had*, after all, managed to formulate the following rules of thumb, using to some extent Ashish's words:

1. Although on occasion dreams can tell us about others, we need to look at them as if they apply only to us. In fact, almost all our dreams do apply only to us. Even if a dream appears to involve another person, we should mainly take the dream as showing us something about ourselves. The other person in the dream is usually a symbol for a characteristic that we need to see in ourselves.
2. The Self (which we are but don't know it), is giving us direction through our dreams and is urging us to growth, maturity, and wholeness.
3. We should take dreams as giving us useful criticism about ourselves, about things in us that need looking at and changing. Yes, dreams can appear to be complimentary, but when they are, they are not necessarily of therapeutic value. The good stuff takes care of itself, so we need not bother with congratulating ourselves when our dreams seem to compliment us.
4. We need to see the bad qualities in us that our dreams are trying to show us. We need to be ready to look at the lowest and most disgusting parts of ourselves as shown to us by our dreams. Because the Self (the unchanging real), with which we seek unification, includes everything in the universe and beyond, nothing can be excluded from it. We must look at everything with which we as personalities (our lesser self) identify, for example, all manner of anger, rage, sexual problems, fear, greed, and the whole long list of other personality identifications. We can take as a guide to these identifications whatever features there are in us that capture our attention. We need to let go of all these features of our personality.
5. The purpose of releasing repressed material in us through dream interpretation is not just to help make our lives better here, although it is certainly valuable for that. These things are blocks to our entering into higher states of consciousness that are the characteristic of unification with the Self.
6. If we take as a hypothesis that our dreams are guided by an intelligence greater and wiser than our ordinary waking state, the intelligence of the Self, we need to honor that intelligence by acting on its guidance. We should not take dreams as ordering us to do something, but if advice is given us through our interpretations, we need to see what the advice is and then act on that advice in an intelligent manner.
7. Everyone dreams. If we claim that we do not dream, it is a question of not making sufficient efforts to remember and record our dreams.

*The Masters Speak: An American Businessman Encounters Ashish and Gurdjieff*, pp. 40-41.