

A Picture Paints a Thousand Words



Even in our daily conversations we use symbolic language, which is not intended to be taken literally. Many dream imageries are also symbolic.

Want to get active in an A.R.E. Dream Group? Visit EdgarCayce.org/dreams.



JERRY LAZARUS is a spiritual counselor, author, and speaker. He has a master's degree in religion and meditation, and leads lectures and workshops on meditation, dreams, and other topics. He is a speaker for A.R.E. conferences across the United States. His new book, *Dreams: Listening to the Voice of God*, is available at his Web site: jerrylazarus.com



NO STUDY OF DREAMS is complete without a discussion of symbols, for most dreams are symbolic. Dreams make use of words—we have conversations, see ourselves writing and speaking. Animate and inanimate objects, familiar and unfamiliar things, people and places, abound in our dreams.

Even in our daily conversations we use symbolic language, which is not intended to be taken literally. Many dream imageries are like figures of speech, such as metaphors, idioms, and similes. In his book, *The Careful Writer*, Theodore Bernstein writes that metaphors are a “compressed and colorful way of expressing a relatively elaborate idea.... If we say, ‘She is a tigress,’ we have condensed into a single word the connotations of possessiveness, belligerency, alertness to danger, savagery, and whatever else you associate with a tigress....” Idioms such as “I had to eat my words” or “I was up against a wall” do not have a literal meaning. When Cayce had a dream where “a watermelon was eating a pig,” the imagery was conveying an elaborate idea—that his thinking on a specific matter was just as flawed as that of a watermelon eating a pig. Dreams are efficient in conveying large ideas using symbolic language. They have to be, since longer discourses would be difficult for us to recall. As the saying goes, a picture paints a thousand words.

At a time when individuals sought Cayce's clairvoyant aid to hunt for hidden treasures, Cayce dreamed he found his grandmother with vines growing all around her. He began cutting away so that he could easily locate her when he gave her a reading. Then he saw three dogs, and one got loose. He ran after the dog, and suddenly realized he had to get back to his grandmother. At that moment he knew he was letting the “work go to the dogs”! (294-94)

Symbolically the dream was telling Cayce to get back to helping people instead of using his gifts for treasure hunting.

In another dream, Cayce saw fenced in animals such as hogs and fowls. As Cayce entered the cage through the gate, he prevented a hog from escaping, and wondered how he might stop the other hogs from getting out. Then he saw a peacock flying up on a fence, “strutting and holloing [shouting hallo?].” This dream was

warning him to take stock of the motives of certain associates. He should not put confidence in those who would hog his time any more than in those who would “make a great deal of cry... yet accomplish nothing...” (294-49) The noisy peacock represents those who would make “flowery speeches,” instead of doing anything useful. (294-50)

Morton Blumenthal received many dream interpretation readings from Cayce. He once dreamt:

I was giving out dollar bills to people, one at a time. One person would come up to me and say, ‘Give me one.’ I would hand that person a dollar, then another would come up, and another and another. (900-109)

Symbolically, dollars represent “grains of truth.” Just as dollars represent success in the material world, spiritual truths represent a seeker's spiritual advancement. As Morton gains spiritual knowledge little by little, he should pass them along to those who seek “a more perfect understanding of their relationship with their Creator.” (900-109)

Dominique, a student in my ‘Wisdom of Dreams’ course (Spring 2012) at the Osher Life Long Learning Institute at Duke University, shared the following dream she had many years ago. At that time she took a workshop with Gina Cerminara (author of the best-selling Cayce book, *Many Mansions*) at San Jose State University in California. Dominique and Gina Cerminara remained friends until Cerminara's death in 1984. She believes her dream was triggered by the workshop, which she considers to have been a spiritual experience.

I dreamt that I was sitting on a larger than life-size book. I was small in comparison. The book had writing at the beginning and ending, but the inside pages were completely blank.

Upon waking she realized that this was the book of her life that she was writing as she lived her days on Earth. The dream was a very positive experience for Dominique because she realized that what went into her “book of life” was entirely her own choice. She could choose to lead a meaningful life and be caring for others or she could be self-centered. To her, this is what “free will” is all about. Since then she had led a more positive and meaningful life, which she accredited to her dream. 🙏