



Tuning Your Dreams

“A dreamer is one who can only find his way by moonlight, and his punishment is that he sees the dawn before the rest of the world.” — **Oscar Wilde**

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Like a Clock, Not a Clock

Your awareness of the world around you is like the teeth of a gear. These teeth have a certain depth and frequency and you are aware of what meshes with them. Events of the world that are too small lack the power to turn your awareness, and events that fail to occur with the rhythm of these mental gears slip out of your consciousness, such as the roll of thunder and the chatter of birds.

People, too, can be consonant or dissonant with your awareness, and this can attract you to or repel you from them. Most important of all is your ability to shift gears because without this ability you cannot grow in understanding or engagement, and you will be unable to intentionally change your state of awareness.

Understanding is rooted in awareness. You cannot understand what you cannot properly perceive and, to a large extent, understanding is perception: when you “see” something in its deeper forms, then you understand.

We think that to understand is to know what causes the effects we experience, but this is a confusion that arises because of our limited exposure. When you see in terms of cause and effect your understanding will never exceed the scope of what you observe. You’ll never understand what caused the causes or the further effects beyond those you observe. You won’t really understand anything, you’ll only see a few links in a potentially infinite chain. What’s more, given the nature of change, it’s likely that you’ll never see these exact links ever again.

Perception is a frequency phenomena. We misunderstand it as repetition because we’ve been trained only to focus on the boundaries. Imagine life as a movie in which you’re only looking at the outline of the frames lacking the focus to see what’s in them. The greater the detail you struggle to discern, the less you’re able to see of the action that develops. Greater understanding comes from an awareness of the messages that are carried in the ongoing movie. You must focus on the content, move with the frequency, and become aware of the whole of it.

We consciously control our awareness to a degree. That degree defines the realm in which we feel safe and are most able to manage our health. We attend to what we perceive and we cannot attend to what we don’t perceive. Peoples who were more deeply perceptive, both of themselves and the world around them, better understood their world and their power to control it. Our modern world has taken much of that perception away and left us reliant on information of an impoverished nature that is fed to us. As a result, we have lost autonomy in perceiving and controlling our health, our knowledge, and our family and community relationships.

“The wholeness comes to us, it is visible at all only when our minds are open. It is words, and learning, which have the power to distort the wholeness, and to prevent us from seeing it... More worrying, it appears that it is not easy for an educated, ‘modern’ person to recover her or his natural holistic perception... It is extremely difficult to teach a person to see holistically once she has been educated to see sequentially.”

— **Christopher Alexander**, from *The Nature of Order: An essay on the nature of building and the nature of the universe. Book four: The Luminous Ground*, p.455

Sleep as Training

Much of life is an opportunity for growth. In almost everything we do we have the chance of becoming better at it. Learning to feed and clean ourselves and to control our body’s functions was a step toward planning and organizing our resources. Playing games with our minds and bodies is a step toward using them intentionally. Sleep is a basic skill, like eating and walking, and it teaches us how to become silent and disconnect. If you have trouble sleeping, then you likely have trouble disconnecting and silencing yourself. Disconnecting and silencing yourself are basic skills necessary for sleep, but they’re necessary for understanding other things.



As is true for much of who we are and what we do, our tasks and functions are interrelated. It is not true that you work to earn a living, spend time at home to build a family, and go to sleep to get rest. Each of these things informs the other, and your ability at each of these things affects your ability, and your success, in the others. This is why when you have a problem in one aspect of your life, you must look at all aspects of your life in order to find a solution. The mechanistic mind-frame that we have been taught, in which life is just a series of disconnected links, offers no understanding or control.

Getting adequate sleep is a general and widespread problem because the skills of sleep are poorly practiced, and with this failure comes a host of related psychological and physical difficulties including deficits in attitude, identity, awareness, and engagement.

To work to improve your sleep then, is not simply to get more sleep, it's to expand your awareness and elevate your consciousness. It involves becoming more aware and engaged, developing greater engagement and finding a more deeply rooted identity.

My class on therapeutic dreaming knocks on these doors. To engage in therapeutic dreaming requires a greater control of your sleep cycles and your mind. It does not aim for better sleep as a goal but as a means. The goal is greater physical and mental health since, clearly, at a fundamental level the two cannot be separated.

One of the first tasks in the therapeutic dreaming course is to start looking at the world as a rhythmic event. This means recognizing your brain's frequencies of perception and how you're carried on these like a rider on a horse. The world goes past you at a gallop and, for the most part, you are not even aware you're on a horse.

As any horse rider knows, you develop your ability to control the horse by coming into rhythm with it. As you do that, you learn various different rhythms and you teach your body these rhythms at the same time as the horse learns to move with yours.

If you're not managing your states of consciousness, which is to say, you have difficulty with sleep, then you probably have difficulty with your other states of awareness as well. Quite simply, you're poorly self-aware. You're basically living life at the mercy of wild rhythms over which you have little control. Some of these are sleep rhythms but many are awake rhythms which you also don't control: you don't hear, listen, move, think, or feel well. Sleep is not just one rhythm of awareness, it is one of the most basic.

You do many things in sleep, and of these you are largely unaware. But what you are aware of is your role in bringing yourself to sleep, and that simple task is the opportunity your body provides to learn your rhythms of perception. If you want to grow in awareness and evolve your consciousness, learn to sleep. This is the first step in a journey that will take you everywhere.



The Science

In their 2004 paper, “Neuronal Oscillations in Cortical Networks,” Buzsáki and Drguhn write, “Recent findings indicate that network oscillations... support temporal representation and long-term consolidation of information,” but they cannot be specific.

In a 2010 paper Romei, Gross, and Thut demonstrated “alpha frequency has been found to enhance performance in visual mental rotation of three-dimensional cubes or visual working memory.”

In the 2012 paper, Miller, Foster, and Honey write, “There is increasing evidence that low- frequency (2–25 Hz) neural oscillations... reflect an essential mechanism for coordinating brain function.”

In the 2017 paper, “The Role of Oscillatory Phase in Determining the Temporal Organization of Perception,” Ronconi and Melcher affected their subjects’ ability to resolve differences over short times by raising and lowering their alpha brainwaves.

Science is an untrained mob climbing a dark mountain, celebrating progress, and overlooking ignorance. It’s difficult to tell where they’re headed, so I’ll tell you: they’re headed toward understanding that brain rhythms synchronize our thoughts.

You don’t have to wait for them, you can experience this yourself. You can do it now and the results are fairly rapid; your thinking changes. This is a consequence of becoming more aware of the rhythms of your thoughts and emotions.



You Want Truth?

It’s worth taking a moment to consider what this means. It means you become more aware and more sensitive. More is happening, you take in more, and what you were previously aware of has more in it.

The world becomes bigger. There is more confusion, more options, and more obstacles. You hear more in what people say, and become aware of struggle, frustration, and poor behavior. There are many more ways to be wrong than right, and wisdom is knowing both.

There are good reasons for being less sensitive and aware. These are the same reasons people prefer not to think, keep their thoughts hidden, and sedate themselves. All of these are behaviors that dull our thinking. Most people prefer to be dull. In the land of the brutal, the sensitive person’s ears are always burning.

I can teach you how to wake up, but is that what you want? It’s the way to fulfillment, but the path won’t be clear as you’ll see and feel more. Therapeutic dreaming is a process of waking up.

Therapeutic Dreaming Class

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