

Dealing with Precognitive Dreamer Guilt

Jean Campbell

On Friday, September 14th, four days after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Richard Wilkerson commented to an Association for the Study of Dreams online group that, so far the only dreams to be submitted to any of the online collection points seemed to be precognitive ones.

I will admit that my background in dealing with precognitive dreams was what sent me to the computer not minutes after I watched a live broadcast of the second airliner smashing into the WTC tower, even before news of the events at the Pentagon broke. As moderator of the ASD Bulletin Board, I wanted to broadcast the message that dreams could be posted. I was not surprised when the first dream results turned out to be precognitive.

For thirteen years, between 1975 and 1986, as I directed a nonprofit organization dedicated to research into consciousness, I lectured, conducted classes, spoke to dream groups, all around the U.S. I listened to literally hundreds of dreams involving precognition, and I heard the questions raised by precognitive dreamers:

1. Why me? (Which could also be called questions two and three in most cases.)
2. My family says I'm nuts--or spooky. What good is precognition if nobody listens?
3. Why do I only dream about the bad things?
4. What can I do to either stop dreaming this way, or make these dreams clear enough to be useful?
5. What does it mean if I have precognitive dreams? (This latter questions particularly comes from lucid dreamers.)

At the time I was hearing all these hundreds of dreams and the questions accompanying them, I was also working on some answers, and I would like to share them with you in light of the current situation.

Why me? If we look at the collection of dreams presaging Tuesday's tragedy, it is easy to see that, although some of the accounts come from people who know themselves to be regular precognitive dreamers, many more come from people who are shocked to discover their precognition.

The answer to the question seems, in fact, to be that every single one of us has precognitive ability, and that intuition is a human characteristic.

The answers to questions number two and three go hand in hand, and are the ones which actually prompted this article. Although historically there have been

many cultures which welcomed dreaming and relied on the insights of their dreamers, the last four hundred years of Western culture have been far from welcoming toward precognition or intuition of any kind. Whereas churches stopped persecuting citizens for witchcraft by the late sixteen hundreds, by the early seventeen hundreds, scientism and "rational thinking" had taken up the hunt. It is easy enough to understand why, despite the recorded fact that some of the best known individuals in recent history--Abraham Lincoln, Mark Twain, Buckminster Fuller, Isabel Allende, Albert Einstein, Jonas Salk--to name just a few, have recounted precognitive dreams, still the majority of the population refuses to believe precognition exists.

There remains, however, the question of what to do if one has a precognitive dream, or many of them.

It appears that the stronger an event is in emotional content, the more likely it is to be "broadcast" in time and space, at least in some form that catches the attention of "connected" dreamers. Although many people who record their dreams daily talk about mundane or inconsequential precognitions they pick up from their dreams, the majority of precognitive dreams recounted tend to involve strong emotion: birth, death, illness, disaster.

There are many people today who are asking how all these precognitive dreams, recorded both before and after the tragedy, could have happened. In a way this is a reminder to us all that we know relatively little about the mechanics of dreaming, let alone the mechanics of consciousness. I leave the speculation about mechanics to others, believing (although I enjoy speculation) that what we need to deal with is the facts. In part, because of the presence of the Internet, that remarkable tool for communication, we have before us possibly the greatest outpouring of precognitive dreams and awarenesses ever recorded in history.

These precognitions exist. They are a fact. Now, what will we do about them? As intellectuals (and I think it is safe to say that most people who read e-zines consider themselves to be intellectuals), we have a tendency to want to distance ourselves from the emotions of dreams by thinking about them. I strongly suggest that now, in these times, we allow ourselves to feel as well as to think.

It has been suggested to me that some people who posted precognitive dreams to the Internet after Tuesday's events might have been "making them up." I ask you, why would someone do that? What we are dealing with here is a fact in the world psyche. There has been/is a traumatic event, and we are all attempting to deal with it.

If we begin by accepting the fact that many, many people had premonitions of disaster, then possibly we can do something to--I'm almost afraid to say it--change the future.

The first issue we are looking at, I believe, is the one which comes up in question number two. What good is precognition if nobody believes the precognitive dreamer? Or even ridicules or makes light of the dream?

I believe that one of the first things that happens to a precognitive dreamer after recognizing a precognitive dream of some magnitude is what I call precognitive dreamer guilt. The message one gives oneself is, "If I knew about the event (particularly if it's a disaster), and didn't report it, or try to convince others that it was going to happen, am I guilty of allowing the event to happen?" This question, depending upon the dreamer, is more or less a part of conscious awareness, but the tricky part of it, especially for those who are new to believing in this particular

take on reality, is that there is a strong element of truth to the question.

Let me recount one of the dreams I have heard since the terrorist attacks. You tell me what you think. This dream occurred on Monday night, September 10/11. The dreamer was lucid. She was visiting a family whose members she was aware she knew, though confusingly, not in their present forms. It was an ordinary day. The dreamer became aware that it was the day before the attack on Pearl Harbor. Should she tell them what was going to happen?

At some point in the dream, the mother of the family said to the dreamer (or the self she was in the dream), "You look a little upset. Why don't you lie down and take a nap?" Which she did. But then awoke in the dream again, still lucid, feeling both disoriented and concerned about whether she should tell the family about the imminent attack on Pearl Harbor.

I chose this dream for two reasons. One is that it comes from one of the hundreds, possibly millions, of people who experienced precognition before the terrorist attacks, but did not post the dream to the Internet. The other reason is because the dream so clearly illustrates the dilemma we are all facing.

Does the dreamer cause the event to happen? Can anything be changed by "telling" about the dream?

I am convinced that, at some level, we are all connected. Further, I tend to believe that we are quite constantly dreaming the world (many worlds) into creation. But the question of guilt is another one entirely.

There is no doubt in my mind that people feel guilty when they have failed to report (or worse, told and were laughed off) a dream which ultimately "comes true." I have seen too many cases of this to believe otherwise. Precognitive dreamers live with the question, "What would have happened if...?"

I want to tell you my own solution to the question. As it happens, I was one of the precognitive dreamers on the night of September 10th. I awoke from the following dream around 5:30 a.m.

I am standing in the control tower of an airport, maybe JFK International, watching a man talk somewhat frantically into a microphone. There is a feeling of something gone wrong.

End of dream. My first waking thought was, "Huh? What was that about?" I never dream airplanes or control towers.

Was the dream precognitive? Most likely. Was I aware of its connection to waking reality? Only as the events of the day unfolded. Was there anything I could have done to avert disaster?

It would be easy enough to quickly answer no. There was nothing I could have done. My dream was fragmentary, and seemingly unrelated to my waking life. But here is where the question of guilt steps in.

Most of the dreams reported on the Internet as precognitive have a similarity to mine in that they became clear only after the fact. (There are a couple of exceptions to this which I will address later.) Should I have felt guilty that I warned no one, or even that I dismissed the dream as irrelevant? I think not.

Yet what the global dream event surrounding the waking event of the terrorist attacks has done for me is to set me thinking. I believe that, as someone well

versed in the nature of precognition, I had then, and am having now, a responsibility to the dream. And I mean that in the sense that psychic, Edgar Cayce, explained when he talked about response-ability, or the ability to respond.

The response I had to my own precognitive dream was to realize how unresponsive I had become to the storm clouds gathering around me. As a response-able dreamer, there are many things I can do. Writing this article is one of them. There are others.

After all, it was Cayce who, in trance state, told the small group of people gathered for one of the early conferences of the Association for Research and Enlightenment that (when they asked about what could be done to stop Hitler's advance on western Europe), the people in that room could stop Hitler. And he went on to explain how the pure intent of many can change the probability of future events.

When we speak of precognition, we are speaking of probabilities. That is the fact which is most frustrating about precognitive dreaming, and at the same time most uplifting. It encourages the old joke about precognition that goes, "We'll never know if we changed the future because we'll be living in it."

If we tell someone about the precognition, can the disaster be averted? In three separate reported incidents, various dreamers who posted to the Internet said they had told someone. One woman, who had a series of dreams over the summer, repeatedly told family members, who laughed her off as being "weird." Another woman said she and a friend told "authorities" about their dreams, and were similarly ignored or indulged. And yet a third person, who was so traumatized by the powerful dreams of the night before the attack that he woke up room mates and told them to get out of New York, received the same, "Go back to sleep," answer.

Not a very good track record, is it? Nonetheless, there is plenty of recorded evidence of people changing waking reality as the result of a dream. One of the classic cases is Louisa Rhine's (wife of parapsychology pioneer J.B. Rhine and a fine researcher in her own right) dream which saved her child from drowning. In another case, one of the students from a dream class I was teaching, and later wrote about, averted a potential auto accident involving his entire family. There are many other such tales.

I know, and have seen demonstrated many times, that not only dream recall but precognitive skill improves with practice, with attention. Many of the recent dreams, seen after the fact as precognitive, were cloaked in imagery which, before the fact, would have been difficult to interpret. There is always the question of how to dream precognitively in a better, clearer manner.

I believe that no matter what the content, even precognitive dreams have an element of information for the dreamer, an element that can be "interpreted" if you will. And I know that, if we regularly interpret our dreams, work with our dreams, pay attention to our dreams, they can be a key to clearer precognition.

Why was I in the "control tower" during my particular precognitive dream, watching someone else try to avert disaster? This was, on the one hand, quite probably a "remote viewing" of something already taking place or about to take place. But why did my dreaming self choose this particular thing to see? The image has a personal message.

Part of that message is a reminder to me that I am "in control" of particular aspects of my life, not only the present moment, but all of the moments extending from it. I do not need to stand by and watch. This is what the Buddhists call "mindfulness."

It is from this mindful point that I would like to make a few suggestions about precognitive dreaming.

1. Even though the events of September 11th were traumatic and provoked an outpouring of dreams, events did not stop there. We all, particularly those of us with developed dreaming skills, need to be more mindful.
2. We need to encourage, not discourage in any way, the dreamer in ourselves and the dreams of others.
3. We need to encourage not guilt but response-ability.
4. Part of being response-able is to connect with one another, to tell each other our dreams and premonitions, to conduct "reality checks," not just assume that post trauma nightmares (of which there may be many) are predictive. Many practiced dreamers can tell by the "tone quality" of the dream whether it was predictive or not.
5. We can work to develop our precognitive skills and also our interpretive skills. This involves not an inflated idea of ourselves as seers, or a guilty avoiding of possible futures, but a deep, honest, ongoing look at ourselves and our world.
6. And most of all, we need to be kind to one another and to ourselves, in the sense that every act of kindness, every act of listening to one another and to our dreams of probable futures, is, in itself, the creation of a new and different reality. There are many places on the Internet now to record and discuss dreams: psychic dream registries, the Dream Wheels of Electric Dreams, the ASD Bulletin Board and e-groups.

Since the terrorist attacks, I have committed myself more fully than ever to the dream. We, all of us, can spare ourselves the guilt of precognition by recognizing that what happened in dream reality around the September 11th disasters may have, in fact, been a wake up call. What we do, once awake, remains to be seen.

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For questions about dreaming,
[the ASD Bulletin Board](#)

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