

## Generations

# Dreams and what they mean

People, including yours truly, wonder where some of their most unusual dreams come from, why they remember only certain parts of a dream, and how dreams interact with their particular everyday lives.

For example, when our heads hit the pillows and we drift off to sleep, the last thing one would imagine dreaming about is a yellow-bellied sapsucker, and yet, the next morning, the colorful bird is the only thing remembered from a disjointed dream.

Well, a team of dream experts doesn't take this stuff lightly. Psychologist Michael Lennox, who has more than 20 years' experience in analyzing dreams and has even written a best-seller, "Dream Sight: A Dictionary and Guide for Interpreting Any Dream," tells us that dreaming about birds means that you are expecting a message or hoping to hear from someone.

How did he come to that conclusion? Easy, because birds have always been symbolic messengers of information going back for centuries, our brain knows that, and it decides on the subject of our dream using every tidbit of information stored in it and comes up with a planned dream scenario whether we like it or not.

Dreams occur when

the brain enters a state of rapid-eye-movement sleep. The occurrence is natural, subconscious and, according to the National Sleep Foundation, it happens up



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to six times per night to adults.

According to Lennox, seeing an alien in a dream might mean that there exists some unknown or mysterious part of your personality that you probably don't know about. The more fear you feel with the alien, the more frightened you may be of any change in your life.

If you're dreaming of flying in a plane, your dream is trying to tell you that you're feeling the effects of fast changes in your life because of the dramatic way an airplane leaves the ground and speeds toward a destination.

According to Ian Wallace, another psychologist who has interpreted more than 150,000 dreams over three decades of practice, dreaming about unused rooms or empty houses might be telling you that you've got untapped talents. The more time you spend exploring your dormant talents, the more likely the doors will be open in the room or

house.

What about if in your dream you're driving an out-of-control car? Simple: You're losing control of your life, love or career and need to stop, slow down and consider all options.

And how about if your car is stolen or you can't find it in your dream? The car is our ability to get to where we want to go, so, according to Wallace, "if we dream about searching for our car, then we have lost our drive and ambition in waking life and are looking for ways to recover it and continue on our journey." I wonder if the same holds true if you dream about lost car keys?

If you're searching for someone in your dream, you're missing something in your past — and it could be a person, place or thing (including lost car keys).

Have you ever felt the sensation that you were falling in your dream? According to Wallace, it means you're hanging on too tightly to a particular situation in waking life. You need to relax and let it go.

If you miss a plane or train in your dream, arriving just as it takes off, it may be that you feel you are being weighed down by too many other commitments. Relax, remain calm and take the next train.

If you dream your teeth are falling out (this is very popular, according to surveys), it's a sign that you feel powerless. According to Wallace, "Your teeth symbolize how confident and powerful you feel, so some situation is causing your confidence to crumble in waking life."

If you're running away from something in your dream, "there is an issue in your waking life that you want to confront, but you don't know how to," according to Wallace. If you're having a dream of this kind, your dreams may be trying to tell you that it's time to face your fears and pursue something that you have been putting aside.

If there's a bridge in your dream, all the experts agree: You're looking to make a transition in your life by crossing over that bridge.

Most of my bridge dreams get disturbed by a barking beagle at all hours of the night, so I'm not sure if I'll ever get to the other side of my bridge.

Acclaimed novelist Gail Godwin probably sums up the meaning of dreams best: "Dreams say what they mean, but they don't say it in daytime language."

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