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This talk is based upon the Mother's essay “On Dreams” (Words of Long Ago, CWM, Vol. 2, pp. 32–39).

In order to remember something, you must first of all be conscious of it.

I dreamt of an ocean flowing and flowing silently. It gave me a great joy. I could feel it like a physical thing.

It is almost an experience — more than a dream.

There are places one goes to periodically in dreams. One can continue with the same dream, sometimes after a lapse of several months. There are also dreams of warning, which often repeat the same thing so as to compel you to concentrate your attention on it.

I saw X recently. Was it the real person?

What is a person? When you are in a body you always see the body and think it is the person. But in this body there is now the whole being, now part of the being, with the rest somewhere else. Sometimes it is one activity of the being that comes forward, sometimes another. Because you have a body which you continue to see, you think that the being you see is always the same, but that is not true. The centre of the being, the psychic being, rarely takes on the appearance of the manifested being. The psychic being has passed through innumerable bodies and even if it did keep an imprint of all these bodies, the result would be unrecognisable, wouldn’t it? Most often it is a thought of the person who has gone which assumes a form, either in your atmosphere or in your own thought. So a sort of emanation
comes. It is there, and depending on your own condition you see it more or less clearly. But the form you give it is your own creation; it conforms to this person’s physical form as you know it. I don’t say this is an absolute rule, but nine times out of ten it is like that.

And I can give you a very clear example of this. When you see someone you did not see at the time of his death, you don’t see the form he had at that time but the form he had the last time you saw him. Therefore you give the form yourself. I don’t say this is something absolute. It may happen differently, but that is so rare that it is better not to speak of it. Only one person in a million can be objective enough not to add anything to his vision. So it is better not to speak about it, except as an ideal to aspire for.

In everything you see, in sleep as well as in visions in the waking state, there are always a considerable number of subjective details. If you do not see the person as he was when you saw him last, the difference always comes from your own thought. If you think that the person must be older, you will see him looking older; if you think that he must look ill, you will see him looking ill, and so on. An absolutely objective vision, which conforms wholly to the reality, is very rare. The dream you mentioned simply means that you have kept a tender, affectionate relationship with her, and so one part of her being has remained close to you and for some reason you became aware of it in your dream.

*Since I left my family, I dream of them regularly at least once a week.*

This comes from the subconscious.

As I told you, I have studied this subject of dreams in great depth. Unless you concentrate in a very special way you always dream of things you have experienced or felt or been aware of some time before; but you don’t dream of the things that belong to your present life. You may think of them, you may remember
them, but you don’t dream of them. Except in a few very rare instances, a dream is the awakening of something recorded in the subconscious. This recording is made gradually; some kind of assimilation is needed before the thing can manifest of itself, and this assimilation may take time. You dream of things — and people — that you knew a very long time ago; when a very long time has elapsed, it is usually for some special reason. Some things come back at regular intervals and you have a kind of cycle of movements in your dream. If you can find a point at which things that are present have struck you at a previous time in your life, then you can see them both at the same time.

Very few dreams have a meaning, an instructive value, but all dreams can show you what your present state of consciousness is and how things are combined in the subconscious, what the terrestrial influences are, what traces they leave and how they are combined. This is a very interesting subject of study.

*In dreams one is usually passive and one doesn’t react as one does in ordinary life. Why?*

Not always. I have known many people who were far more active in their dreams than in their waking life and who would do things which they would have been incapable of doing in their waking life. For example, I have known people who used to be petrified with fear in their waking life but would express indomitable courage and accomplish truly heroic deeds in their dreams. Sometimes too, if you dream of something unpleasant, instead of having a reaction, you say, “All this is only a dream, it is not true, it is impossible,” etc., and in this way the dream assumes another form. Of course, you must be aware that you are dreaming for this to happen. It is a tremendous field of observation — there is no end to the discoveries you can make in your dreams. But there is one important point: you must not go to sleep when you are very tired, for if you do, you fall into a sort of unconsciousness in which dreams do whatever they like.
with you, and you have no reaction. Just as I said that you should not eat without having taken rest, I would advise everyone to rest before going to sleep. And for that, you must know how to rest.

Now I will tell you a very recent dream of mine which I had just a few days ago. It wasn’t exactly a dream, it was very conscious. (I am not one of those people who dream of things that occurred a very long time ago; I know what to do to avoid that.) I went to a place in the vital world where I knew that many of our boys go to rest — at least, in their physical sleep, they look as if they are resting. But since they don’t really know how to rest, instead of accumulating energy, they lose it. Some of them lose a tremendous amount of energy: instead of recovering their energy, they waste it. So I went there and saw many rows in which there were things that looked like beds but weren’t really beds. I walked about in the room and saw them resting, trying to rest, but since they didn’t know how to do it, they couldn’t. They were all more or less sprawled out, their eyes were open — they weren’t asleep, it wasn’t sleep, it was a state of rest; the vital wasn’t active but in a state of semi-awareness. I got them to understand that I could show them how to rest in such a way as to recover their energy instead of wasting it. And would you believe it, only one of them was willing to learn! The others said, “No, we are quite all right as we are, we don’t want to learn anything else!”

When we see you in dream, where do we see you? Is it always the same place?

There are many different places, many. It may be in the subtle physical, for all of you live in my physical atmosphere and so it is in the subtle physical that you see me most often. And there you feel that what you see is almost material, but with a slight distortion. Because it is the subtle physical, you can quite easily remember what you have
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seen. Very often, in the middle of the night, I take care of you (I don’t want to boast about it!) and I remember many things that are of some importance—I don’t remember everything because it is not worth burdening the memory with a lot of useless things. And I have noticed that several of you are able to remember, but the thing takes place in your consciousness with a slight distortion—it wasn’t exactly the same.

Some people can see me vitally, some people can see me psychically (this is quite rare), some people can see me mentally and some people can see me in the subconscious and, in certain conditions, in the unconscious; but that is rare.

Others may have a revelation about me and see me as I am, but not many can do that.

What is the way to take rest before going to sleep?

There are many methods, but I will give you one. First, your body must be comfortable, on a bed, in an easy-chair — anywhere so long as it is comfortable. Then you learn how to relax your nerves one after the other, until you achieve complete relaxation. You should relax all your nerves — you can relax them all together, but perhaps it is easier to relax them one after the other, and this becomes very interesting. And when that is done, you must make your brain quiet and silent and at the same time keep your body like a rag on the bed. You must make the brain so still and absolutely quiet that it is not aware of itself. And then, don’t try to sleep, but pass very gently from this state into sleep without being aware of it. When you wake up the next morning you will be full of energy. But if you go to bed very tired and without even trying to relax, to calm down, you will fall into a heavy, dull and unconscious sleep and the vital will lose all its energy. Perhaps this won’t have any immediate effect, but it is better to try it than to plunge into sleep when you are very tired.
If you relax very gently before going to sleep, you will feel great pleasure in going to sleep. If you manage to relax the nerves, even of only one arm or leg, you will see how pleasant it is. If you go to sleep with your nerves tense, you will have a very restless sleep and change position very often during the night. That kind of rest is no good.

*I have noticed that if I go to sleep on one side, I wake up on the other. Is it always like that?*

No, not necessarily. There is no rule. If you think it is like that, it will be like that!

*I have noticed that if an interesting dream wakes me up, I can go back to sleep and continue the same dream.*

Yes, this can be done and it means that you are partially conscious of your night activities.

*I used to know someone who went on having the same dream all the time, until he could no longer distinguish between dream and reality.*

It sometimes happens that when you go out of your body, when you exteriorise yourself during sleep and are conscious in the vital world, you can live a vital life that is just as conscious as the physical life. I have known people—not many have this capacity of going out of their body—but I have known people who had such a strong interest in their experiences in the vital world that in the end they refused to return to their body, they went on sleeping almost indefinitely.

If you are conscious and self-controlled in the vital world and have a certain power there, the things that happen are wonderful, infinitely more varied and magnificent than in the
physical world. It is true that some regions in the vital world are wonderful.

Now I will tell you how this happens. When you are very tired and in need of rest and if you know how to exteriorise yourself, if you go out of your body and enter consciously into the vital world, there are regions there, in the vital world, which are like a marvellous virgin forest, with all the splendour of a rich and harmonious vegetation, and beautiful, mirror-like pools. And the atmosphere is filled with the living vitality of plants, with every shade of green reflected in the water... And there you feel so much life, so much beauty, so much richness and plenitude that you wake up full of energy. And all this is so objective! I have been able to take people there, without telling them anything at all about how it would be, and they were able to describe the place exactly as I can myself, and they had exactly the same experience. They were absolutely exhausted before going to sleep and they woke up with an absolutely marvellous feeling of plenitude, of force and energy. They had stayed there only a few minutes.

There are regions like that — not many, but they exist. On the other hand, there are many unpleasant places in the vital world and it is better not to go there. Leaving aside those who are so attached, so rivetted to their bodies that they don’t even want to leave them, those who can easily learn to go out of their bodies ought to do so with great care. I haven’t been able to teach this to many people, for that would mean exposing them, sometimes without protection — when they do it alone, without my presence — to experiences which can be extremely harmful to them.

The vital world is a world of extremes. If, for example, you eat a bunch of grapes in the vital world, you can go for thirty-six hours without feeling hungry — fully nourished. But you can meet with certain things, enter certain places that drain all your energy in a trice, and sometimes leave you with illnesses and after-effects that belong to the vital world.
I used to know a woman who was absolutely wonderful from the occult point of view. She was absolutely conscious of herself, of all the regions of her being; she could go from one region to another — in short, she was marvellous. Well, she had an accident in the vital world. She was fighting some beings from the vital world in order to save someone whom she was very fond of, and she got a blow on the eye. And when I met her, she had lost an eye. Many people have these accidents in the vital world, and they keep traces of these accidents for hours after they wake up. That is why you can’t tell just anyone, “Learn to go out of your body”, for there are many requirements before you can do it safely. If you have any affinities with the forces of falsehood and violence, it is better to stay in your physical body.