



How to Remember Your Dreams

By Kezia Vida

KEZIAVIDA.COM

How to Remember Your Dreams

1) BE OPEN TO ALL DREAMS

To start remembering your dreams, you need to release any and all judgment or ideas you may have about the kind of dreams you want to have or think you should be having. The practice of dreaming is the practice of being present to whatever is. So even if you just remember a tiny snippet of a dream—that's still a dream! Even if you just remember a feeling you had upon waking up—we can work with that! The key is to stay open minded.

ACTION STEP:

Take 5 minutes to write down everything you think about dreams—what they mean, to others, what counts as a dream and what doesn't. When you are done your list, go back through each item and consider the question, what if the opposite is also true?

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2) SET THE INTENTION

This is one of the most important steps to remembering dreams. You must set the intention within your own mind, and truly mean it, in order to start regularly remembering your dreams. The best time to do this is right before you go to sleep. Setting the intention can be as simple as stating out loud or to yourself, "I want to remember my dream tonight". As long as you truly mean, you are well on your way to improving dream recall.

ACTION STEP:

Select a dream talisman. Whether is a dream pillow, stone, or other small object, recognize it as your dream talisman and direct your intentions of your dream practice towards the object. Keep the object near your bed as a reminder of your intention before you go to sleep.

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3) EXAMINE SLEEPING HABITS

There are certain habits that may make it difficult for you to remember dreams. In general, people who drink alcohol or smoke pot directly before going to sleep often find it hard to remember their dreams. Going to sleep intoxicated in any way can make it challenging. Consider making your rest a priority in your life and cultivating positive and rejuvenating rituals before sleep.

ACTION STEP:

Just for the next three days, plan the 2 hours before you go to sleep in the morning. Include any activities that you find relaxing and supportive to your true self. Include some amount of time to set the intention towards your dreams.

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4) AWAKEN GENTLY

The minutes right after you wake up are some of the most tender and vulnerable minutes of our day. When you wake up, try to avoid any outside distractions like your cell phone, alarm clock, partner, etc. Focus instead on your own inner state of being and be open to any dreams that might trickle in. Don't put pressure on yourself to remember your dream at this time, just allow yourself the space you need to be fully present to whatever is on your heart and mind and trust that the dreams will come as needed.

ACTION STEP:

Set aside at least 5 minutes to really sink into whatever feeling might be present when you wake up. Then return to that feeling at least 2 times throughout your day. How has it changed to go back into that feeling once your day got started? Did it trigger any more dream memories?

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5) GET IT OUT

If you don't take the time to speak about, write about, or just express your dream in some way fairly soon after you receive it, you will most likely forget about it entirely. Invest in a particular notebook or just have a designated place where you will record your dreams. I've kept a record of my dreams within my own email for the last 8 years, which is fun because I can go back in time and look at old dreams whenever I want. If you don't have time in the morning to write the whole thing, even just jotting down a few key words or sentences can help you recall the entire dream later.

ACTION STEP:

Take the time to draw one of your dreams.

Whether it is the entire dream or just one scene, giving your dream some kind of visual representation is a creative way to jog your memory of the dream. You don't have to be a great artist to do this! Any kind of artistic expression of your dream is great.

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6) SAVOR YOUR DREAMS

When you do remember a dream, remember to take the time to savor it fully. Dreams long to be experienced, cherished, and embodied. Focus on the feelings throughout your dream, especially as they shift and change as the dream continues. The more time you spend tending to and considering your dreams, the more likely you are to continue remembering them.

ACTION STEP:

After recording your dream, take the time re-write it. This time, after every sentence of describing what takes place in the dream, write a sentence describing how you felt. Really try to feel into the experience of the dream from an embodied place as you describe these feelings. As a bonus, reflect if any of those feelings are familiar, and if so, when.