

The Complete Dream Book: Discover What Your Dreams Reveal about You and Your Life (Book Cover May Vary)

By Gillian Holloway

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The average person will dream over 150,000 dreams in a lifetime--each one a complex web of imagery and deeper meaning. The Complete Dream Book uses the interpretation of 28,000 actual dreams from contemporary dreamers, just like you, to help you access the substance and meaning of your own dreams.

Discover:
--Who's who in your dreams
--Which dreams recur during certain life stages
--The true meaning behind your nightmares
--Why you have certain dreams again and again
--How to tell if a dream is worth interpreting--and if you've done it correctly
--The phenomenon of precognitive dreams

The Complete Dream Book is the only dream interpretation book based on concrete data about real people's dreams and how the real events in their lives relate to their nighttime visions.

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The Complete Dream Book: Discover What Your Dreams Reveal about You and Your Life (Book Cover May Vary) By Gillian Holloway Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #86903 in Books
- Published on: 2006-07-01
- Released on: 2006-07-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .75" w x 7.00" l, 1.23 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 352 pages

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Editorial Review

About the Author
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Excerpt from Chapter 1

The Dream You Can't Forget
The dreams in this chapter include themes that are reported to me most often and answer questions that many have asked. Although there are individual variations of these themes, I've included and commented on the general interpretations that are most often meaningful. You will probably recognize several of these dreams as identical to or very similar to your own. This doesn't guarantee that you are going through identical experiences as the dreamers in my practice and database; however, it is likely that some of the same stresses are impacting you or that your own high standards or particular set of coping strategies may be accentuating certain aspects of your experience.

With respect to these modern dreams, folkloric interpretations tend to present confusing explanations that don't hold true for large numbers of people. (Many people have heard, for example, that dreams of losing teeth mean that a member of your family is about to die.) Psychological interpretations borrowed from early psychotherapists tend to focus on potential symptoms of illness or dysfunction. The approach offered in this book is different in that we start with commonly reported themes; the life situations of the dreamers who reported them; and the stresses, feelings, and hopes they experienced. Where certain factors are consistent, I've formulated interpretations that have been widely endorsed by students, clients, and research participants.

Each dream in this chapter is like a road sign with a somewhat universal meaning. Some of those signs say, "Slow down, you're working too hard," while others say, "Draw the line and stand your ground." Understanding your dreams is often a matter of reading these signs and considering what they imply in your situation. By recognizing what parts of our lives and feelings are reflected in our dreams, we become better able to cope with challenges and use opportunities to greater advantage.

Each of these classic dreams is described as it is most often reported, followed by an explanation of what it means. Don't be disturbed if your dream is slightly different. After you read the information on the dream, the significance of any differences you notice between the dream described and your dream will make intuitive sense to you. Try on this information as you would a hat: decide how it looks and feels to you and don't let it obscure your point of view.

It is important that you maintain your authority to gauge how well any interpretation matches your situation and feelings. While the most probable meaning of each dream is given, you remain the ultimate authority on your own life-your case may be different. Most people have no trouble discerning when an interpretation makes sense to them because they feel astonished, excited, or relieved when an explanation is accurate. By keeping an open mind and trusting your common sense and gut reactions, you will get the most from these descriptions.

Unprepared for the Exam

It's a familiar theme for many people. You go into an examination room for a test, such as a high school or college final. Upon opening the test materials, you realize that through some crazy mix-up you registered for this class but completely forgot to attend any of the lectures. It's too late to do anything about it and explaining what happened is out of the question. Who would believe this kind of oversight?

Strangely enough, people who dream of being unprepared for an exam are actually the folks least likely to go into any arena unprepared to excel. For that reason, I sometimes refer to this as "the overachiever's nightmare." It is common for both men and women, usually between the ages of twenty-five and fifty-five. People who have carved out high-profile careers and those who have high standards of excellence in what they do are those most likely to have this dream sporadically throughout adulthood. This theme often arises when an individual moves forward into a higher level of performance or takes on responsibilities that increase what he expects of himself.

Since this person rarely fails at what he does, the dreams are not warnings of impending mistakes. Instead, they illustrate how accountable the dreamer feels for the success or failure of the projects around him. This theme dramatizes the individual's belief that performance is crucial to achievement and preparation is necessary in order to perform well in situations that test your knowledge and judgment.

This perspective is realistic and works well in life; however, there can be an edge of anxiety present beneath the high performance. Sometimes this person expects too much of himself, for instance, feeling he should know the answers to material he has never studied. Although real-life situations bear little resemblance to the examination chamber of these dreams, positions of responsibility, promotions, and other spotlight situations tend to catalyze this dream.

This dream can act as a barometer of internal pressure. As someone who handles numerous tasks well, you may not always know when to say "enough already." The no-win scenario of the test can let you know when you feel you've signed up for too many things at once. Since you set yourself up for dramatic high-pressure situations, you also have the option of taking a more moderate approach to your accomplishments. You are probably so far ahead of the pack that no one will even notice the difference if you set your sights on being a happy mortal instead of a frazzled superhero.

Not Enough Credits to Graduate

You are called back to high school or college because it's been discovered you missed a particular course and have to make it up immediately. This discovery places your status as a graduate in jeopardy and could also nullify your other credentials. Ultimately, your job and entire lifestyle could be at risk. Feeling a keen sense of frustration and embarrassment, you plunge into school again, wondering how things like this happen and hoping you can clean it all up before anyone finds out.

Men and women both have this dream; however, it is most common among people between the ages of thirty-five and fifty who have a definite career focus. This is a dream about progress and the factors that make it tougher to get into the arena where you really want to operate. The graduation represents crossing a mental threshold into another level in your career, a different sort of relationship, or a more satisfying lifestyle. The thing that really blocks the progress is a lack of credit, which translates into lack of awareness of past accomplishments. This dream is particularly common to highly creative people who secretly feel their gifts are flukes and fail to realize they have earned and are entitled to the results of their efforts.

Maybe you do not truly give yourself credit for significant accomplishments and knowledge. There may even be some area in which you hold yourself back by doing tasks or staying with experiences you have

already outgrown. Although you are likely a risk-taker who can summon the enthusiasm to meet a challenge, it's possible that you come across as much more confident than you really feel.

When we are striving toward a goal, there is often a particular thing that we would prefer not to address or some aspect of our lives that we resist changing. It is almost as if you would do anything but that one thing in order to fulfill your goals. This is a time to open up and become willing to do the things you've avoided so far. Use this dream as a checkpoint, like a thirty-thousand-mile tune up, to realistically update your position and options. It's time to dwell not only on your accomplishments, but also on the purpose, passion, and desire that motivate you to graduate to bigger and better things.

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