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# DREAMTIME

M A G A Z I N E



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# Amazing Dreamers: Dr. Stanley Krippner

Clare Johnson, PhD



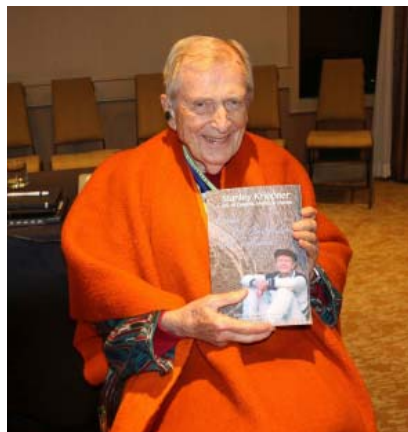
Dr Stanley Krippner's work with dreams has touched many lives.

In my case, it began with a lucid dream of a tree. But this was no ordinary lucid dream, and no ordinary tree. It was the night of the 2004 IASD Dream Telepathy contest and my dreams were flooded with green. As I strolled through a dream park, I heard a woman's voice shouting the word 'TREE!' over and over. In the next dream, I met the telepathic sender, Beverly D'Urso, and lucidly asked her how transmitting the image was going. She told me she'd been shouting the word inside her head and I remarked that in my last dream someone had been shouting about trees. Just before I awoke I stood before a big, leafy tree.

It turned out the target image was a big, leafy tree.

I won the contest and my mind reeled with questions. How could this happen? How is it possible to receive information from another person through a lucid dream? Are minds really so porous? If so, what can this teach us about the nature of consciousness?

Back home, I read up on the subject and discovered that before I was born some enterprising people had spent a decade researching dream telepathy scientifically. Stanley Krippner's major contribution to dream studies was the series of experiments he directed at Brooklyn's Maimonides Medical Center dream laboratory from 1964-1973 with psychiatrist Montague Ullman. Dream telepathy, remote viewing and precognitive dreaming were tested and the results of several hundred attempts were statistically significant at a level suggesting the actuality of remote perception. The experiments and dreams are described in *Dream Telepathy: Experiments in Nocturnal ESP*.



The annual IASD Dream Telepathy contest is based upon the experiments Krippner oversaw at Maimonides. At a dinner for presenters at a 2013 London conference, there was a feeling of coming full circle as I shared my lucid tree dream with him. Recently, when I asked Stanley how he thought dream telepathy works, he replied, "I do not know how dream telepathy works and I doubt that anyone else does. The only people with any certitude are those who

deny that there is any such thing."

In the field of dream studies, as in any other field, the true pioneers are those who continue to search for answers in the face of skepticism, criticism and disbelief. Stanley's work with 'anomalous' dreams has inspired many, as has his valuable research into post-traumatic stress disorder and his deep exploration of shamanism—he has interviewed about 100 shamans from all six inhabited continents.

Here, Stanley shares a dream and his insight into the healing power of dreams.

**CJ: Stan, you've kept dream diaries for 50 years. From all those dreams, could you pick out one 'big' dream to share?**

SK: I do not have many "big dreams." Most of my dreams use symbols and metaphors to alert me to both opportunities and misfortunes that lie ahead, to help me resolve major or minor life issues, to work through problematic relationships and moods, and to review learned activities so that I can use similar strategies once more. But shortly after Montague Ullman's death, I had the most colorful dream I have ever remembered:

*The colors are iridescent and the fabrics in the court are aglow. Montague Ullman is sitting on a throne with a crown on his head and a scepter in his hand. I can*

*see that the time has come for him to retire his kingship. He calls me to his side and hands the scepter to me. I refuse to accept it, saying that I am not worthy. He asks if I am not a worthy recipient, to whom can he hand it? I reply that there is nobody who matches his skills. Perhaps the scepter could be placed in a museum to remind people of his wisdom.*

The dream ended. I immediately wrote it down. I did not want to forget any of the details, especially the vibrant colors that, in retrospect, made such an impression on me that the dream would be difficult to forget.

**CJ: What did this luminous dream teach you?**

SK: This dream taught me a great deal. Many friends tell me that I should have taken the scepter as it would have indicated that I would carry on Ullman's work. However, I take a different view. The meaning of the dream to me is that I made the correct decision. I am not a psychoanalyst. I am not a psychiatrist. I am not a psychotherapist. Ullman was all three. In my writings and in my workshops I do not provide clinical insights or give psychotherapeutic advice. I am a Fellow of four divisions of the American Psychological Association, but these honors are for my research and my teaching skills, not my clinical work.

I've given workshops on dreams in a dozen countries around the world. However, I teach techniques that help participants to interpret their own dreams. Among other procedures, I use Ullman's "if this were my dream" method, which allows group members to project themselves into a dream

report briefly, giving the dreamer some insights that usually assists his or her own interpretation. Ullman always gave dreamers the responsibility of deciding what their own dreams meant, and I do the same.

I do not intend to go beyond the limits of my expertise and my qualifications. This is something that I learned from my colorful, vivid, and emotionally vibrant dream. One can be a member of the Court of Dreams and be of service as a knight, a prince, or even a jester. But one cannot be a king or an emperor without being "called to the purple," as the right to kingship is known. I am not a king on a throne who dictates the dream's meanings. But neither was Ullman.

**CJ: That makes sense. The dream belongs to the dreamer, and sometimes to a whole community, as shamans recognise. What is the most valuable thing you have learned from your years of shamanic dreamwork?**

SK: Just about everyone dreams, but shamans engage in lucid dreaming, in dream incubation, and in other ways to obtain the information, power, and spiritual assistance they need for healing a sick person, for ending a drought, for resolving a social dispute, or one of the other practical problems that are part of a shaman's duties. So the most valuable gift about dreams that shamans have given me is how useful and practical they can be if they are respected, listened to, and cultivated.

**CJ: How do you feel dreams can benefit the healing process?**

SK: Dreams can benefit the healing process in many ways. Dreams can be especially useful in healing PTSD, especially by revealing the

deep dimensions of the traumatic experience. When I listen to nightmares associated with PTSD, it seems obvious to me that the dreamer has never been able to work through the negative emotions and feelings associated with a traumatizing event. The combat veteran is especially vulnerable because his or her existential worldview has been shattered; in other words, the personal mythology regarding security, benevolence, fairness, and justice has been torn apart and the pain that has resulted has never been able to work its way through the dreaming process in a way that would lead to a resolution.

Imagery Rehearsal Therapy and other ways of working with PTSD nightmares can initiate a therapeutic process that heals the entire organism. To treat PTSD effectively, a psychotherapist must heal the brain. Drugs change the brain temporarily at a superficial level, but skillful psychotherapy can change the brain at deeper levels and create changes in the psyche that will produce long-lasting healing, resilience, and the capacity to love. Dreams can be an integral part of that psychotherapy.

**CJ: That is very inspiring. Moving to a personal level, could you share one recurring message your own dreams have given you?**

SK: The recurring message that I receive from my dreams is "Don't ignore us. We will help you whether you remember us or not. We will assist you whether or not you work with us. We will honor you whether or not you discuss us with other people. But if you remember us, honor us, and work with us, the benefits will astound you." And I continue to be astounded by my dreams.

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sharing of dreams with others. This study addressed whether dream socialisation might help to explain the gender differences in dream recall frequencies in adolescence and adulthood. 170 children/adolescents (age range 10-15 years) took part. Gender-specific effects regarding the frequency of communicating about dreams, especially for same-sex friendships, were found, supporting the hypothesis that these variables might be of importance to dreaming in later life.

.....  
continued from page 34 *Laurel Clark*

see intuition and reasoning working hand in hand.

It seems to me that as a community of dreamers, we can help each other cultivate the talent of drawing upon dream intuition. Sharing our discoveries inspires others. Hearing about lucid dreamers who cast spells and experience miraculous healings fuels my desire to learn how to do so myself. Other people tell me they want to connect with deceased loved ones in dreams after hearing stories of my visitation dreams. Participating in group-dream incubations can be affirming and supportive.

I appreciate IASD for providing opportunities to be so inspired!

**Laurel Clark** is a teacher with the School of Metaphysics, author, speaker, counselor, and minister. A member of IASD since 2008, Laurel currently serves as Secretary of the Board and has presented at the annual conference and the PsiberDreaming Conference. She is a member of the World Dreams Peace Bridge and author of the book *Intuitive Dreaming*.

.....  
continued from page 36 *Amazing Dreamers Interview with Clare Johnson*

**Clare Johnson, PhD** (Clare Jay) has written two lucid dream-based novels, *Breathing in Colour* and *Dreamrunner*. (See [www.clarejay.com](http://www.clarejay.com)) The first doctoral researcher to explore lucid dreaming and creativity, she is currently writing a nonfiction book on this topic. Clare's workshops combine dreams, art, yoga and her Lucid Writing technique.

**Stanley Krippner** will be an invited presenter at this year's IASD conference, where he will be speaking on PTSD nightmares.

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