

Perception Outside of the Box

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*To see a world in a grain of sand
Or a heaven in a wildflower
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour*

William Blake

The crux of lucidity seems to be about awareness. Part of that awareness is to become conscious of the fact that one is dreaming. But within the dream, can a deeper or different awareness be found?

Recently I had been reading and thinking about life's rules, regulations and expectations. So often we try to make life fit neatly into this box of approved thoughts, but if we were able to transcend these feelings of accepted regulations and conceptual expectations and outside influences, what might the box then look like? While contemplating this concept I had the following dream;

I am holding a box made of stone, though it is light weight. The box opens by itself, but not with the lid opening from the top. Various stone panels move around in different configurations, so that I can see that the box opens in virtually an unlimited number of ways. While some panels open, others close, so that the box is continually reconfiguring itself. A large rectangular-shaped hole opens in the back of the box and I am able to fit my right hand into it. I know that my hand has slipped into another dimension. The box now communicates with me. Though I don't actually hear the box, I understand its words. It says of the hole into which I have placed my hand, "This is the place from which all things come and to which all things will return." I then pull my hand out of the box, at which point the stone panels reconfigure again to close up the box. I become aware of the name of this box, which I cannot recall now, but I know that it is a Sanskrit word.

Over the past several months I have had a series of dreams which I have come to refer to as my 'perception of the event' dreams. These dreams seem typical on the surface, but upon awakening I come to realize that my perception of the event that was going on in the dream may not have actually been the case. As an example, during the recent conference for the International Association for the Study of Dreams in Chicago, I dreamt about feeling the need to defend children against a school bully. Upon awakening, I thought about it and realized that the "bully" didn't actually do anything "bullyish." My perception of him being a bully affected the choices that I made in the dream. I responded to my projection and not the actual situation.

After numerous perception dreams of this type, I began becoming more aware of these perceptions as the dream was still occurring. In these dreams, my stage of awareness often has fallen into the semi-lucid category. Though I'm not fully aware that I'm dreaming, I become aware that I am seeing something based upon my perception of what I think it is - and upon that realization, what I see often suddenly changes.

This kind of perception of reality, as I found out with the stone box dream, sometimes transcends the dream space. About a week after the dream I downloaded an audio book and began listening to it the following day. About twenty minutes into the book, the author described his concept of what he believes God to be. His description of God is the empty space from which all things originate and to

which all things return. So now we add a waking synchronicity into the mix, as well as possible precognitive dream material.

Within days of this synchronicity I had a lucid dream in which the box symbolism appeared. I became lucid as I was standing in a room noticing all the bright colors. My awareness of the colors transferred into an overall awareness that this was a dream. After becoming lucid I audibly asked the dream to, "Show me lucidity!" My focus immediately went to a television on the other side of the room that I had not noticed up until that point. The TV turned on and initially I saw only static, but then I noticed colors swirling within the static with a three-dimensional appearance to it. I shoved my left arm right into the TV. My arm went into another dimension right up to my elbow. I then felt the TV solidify around my arm, holding part of it in one dimension and part in another. This did not scare me; it intrigued me as though the dream was trying to hold me there just momentarily to experience these two types of awareness simultaneously.

What I am beginning to see through this recent series of dreams is that even the concept of awareness itself leaves a big question mark next to it. What exactly is awareness? If we become more aware in one place, are we less aware in another? Or does our focus move through layers of awareness? And if we mentally adopt freer concepts, freer ideas, and let go of limiting expectations, do we set our own awareness free to explore the immensity of other dimensions? By freeing awareness, do you then "hold infinity in the palm of your hand, and eternity in an hour"?