

Where the Dreams come from?

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Everybody dreams. Some remember their dreams while others do not. It is the nature of brain to dream. It never sleeps and so the neural pathways are always active-whether mediated by ego during waking state, or without it as happens during sleep. Activation of neural pathways produces dreams.



During sleep we go [through four or five cycles of deep sleep and dreaming episodes](#). Each of these cycles is of about 90 minute's duration. Electroencephalography (EEG) studies done on human brain (during sleep) show that deep sleep is characterized by production of low frequency (1-4 Hz) [Delta waves](#) which are known to help produce life and mood-enhancing chemicals. This stage is also characterized by us being totally unaware of the surroundings. On the other hand dreaming episodes characterized by rapid eye movement (REM) are of light sleep kind from which one can be woken up quite easily.

Dreams are both internal and external. Since the ego or the director is absent during sleep the neural pathways have a run of their own. Thus the day long experiences or the existing memories are the driving force for the internal dreams. However when there is tremendous thinking activity or [Sanyam](#) on a particular thought during waking time, it leads sometimes to solution dreams. Various [great inventions and discoveries of the world have come through such dreaming process](#).

The externality of dreams comes because brain is both a receiver and a transmitter of human thought. Hence during sleep, memories or signals from [knowledge space](#) impinge on the brain and may modify the neural pathways. Ego during waking state acts like a blocker to such signals. These signals can give rise to strange dreams of events and places never visited or interacted with. This is also the mechanism of

getting prophetic dreams and there are [innumerable instances of prophetic dreams in history of mankind](#). Each one of us sometime or the other in our life has experienced such dreams. Both solution and prophetic dreams are a [result of prepared mind](#).



Why we do not remember dreams [has been researched by lots of brain scientists](#) and there are many reasons – part of it is to do with creating long term memory. Nevertheless it is the dreams that we remember that make life interesting. There are many theories of dreams but we still do not know why we dream and why most of the time we have random and strange dreams. A possible answer may lie in how synapses behave during sleep.

[Synapses](#) are connections between two neurons and they allow the transfer of information through passage of neurochemicals across the synaptic cleft. [Synaptic cleft](#) is the distance (about 0.02 micron) between a neuron and the synapse which exchanges neurochemicals. Scientists have found that during [deep sleep the synaptic cleft widens by about 20%](#). We still do not know why this happens but it is conjectured that it [helps in allowing the cerebrospinal fluid to flow through it and to remove the toxins from the brain](#).

The more we dream during the night the less restful is the sleep. A really restful sleep is deep sleep without dreams. This helps in the flushing out of the toxic material from major part of the brain.

Besides removing the toxins from the brain the increase of synaptic cleft may also help in explaining the dreaming process.

During sleep the neural pathways are active without the ego, the director and hence the circuit production is quite random. However only those pathways produce circuits in which the neural connections are still strong. Thus the “loosened” synapses or those with increased synaptic cleft might not take part in the information transfer and hence in the dreaming process. This results in having dreams which are very random in nature. Besides, this loosening of neural pathways may also explain the removal of some of the memories of day-long experiences. Sleep is therefore necessary to remove the clutter or irrelevant information from the brain.



Too often we have dreams connected with our suppressed desires. Most of them are based on unfulfilled emotional needs and psychological knots. These knots which are based on strong memories do not get loosened during sleep and are the cause of recurring dreams. Resolution of these knots through *vivek* (wisdom) allows the loosening of strong memories and helps in brain detoxification and producing dreamless sleep.

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