

GUIDED SLEEP

Sleep accounts for approximately a third of our existence. It is a regular and important feature of our lives, which has immense physical and emotional value, yet it is largely left to its own devices. As a result, it has created within itself a haphazard and mysterious culture, in charge of its own affairs. Isn't it amazing how such an important aspect of our lives is left unmanaged and unutilised, detached from our conscious/awake state as if there were no connection or relationship between the two? Sleep when understood and guided is a powerful mechanism for change and a priceless resource and ally.

Sleep takes us into another realm of consciousness, the maze of the subconscious. Our subconscious mind is the archive that contains a record of all the experiences we have had during our lives, whatever their complexion, both significant and seemingly insignificant moments have been logged and stored inside us. These recordings have an audio-visual format, arranged as a catalogue of images and sounds which can be quite organised and precise in their detail, but equally can be collaged together in an imprecise and erratic manner, it is this cocktail of audio-visual information that is commonly referred to as memory. Our subconscious mind also contains our deepest desires, fears and frustrations, which we often do not express publicly.

The private faces of our personality, which in the main we suppress and deny, are freely able to roam in sleep since they are given no other forum for expression. Is it any wonder then, that our dreams are often nonsensical, disturbing, full of fantasy and extremes? Due to our 'conscious ways of being', we have sculptured the mayhem, with some help from outside influences, that currently exists within our subconscious. So, sleep rather than being a truly restful, rejuvenating and enlightening experience is often inadequate, leaving us dissatisfied, confused and unaware of its invaluable messages and benefits.

Guided sleep is where the individual consciously seeks to influence and mould their sleep in accordance with their desires and aspirations; rather than letting the amazing, complex and massive resources of the subconscious randomly drift like sand particles blowing in a storm. This conscious choice to direct one's sleep is underpinned by the realisation that there is immense energy in sleep which is not currently being harnessed.

One way of changing the role that sleep plays in our lives would be to ensure that each night we have a constructive and positive dialogue with ourselves, which can be absorbed as we go to sleep. This can be done by repeating a particular statement over and over, e.g., "I love myself, I believe in myself and I deserve the best life has to offer". Or, we could listen to a tape we have assembled using our own voice, or the voice of someone we are comfortable with, reciting a series of positive statements, which we repeat in our own mind as we lie in bed, and then carry with us into sleep. Whether we use a tape or thoughts generated by our own mind is of secondary importance, what really matters is developing the discipline of making sleep work for us by the thoughts we allow to flow through our mind as we drift into the subconscious realm.

As we go to sleep the conscious mind and subconscious mind connect in a way they do not at any other time; this is why as we go to sleep we are most able to influence our subconscious and guide ourselves towards peace of mind and fulfilment.