

# Dreams

Soul-Centered Living in  
the 21st Century

A dreamlike collage featuring a woman's eyes, a white unicorn, and a white angel against a starry, colorful background. The woman's eyes are large and expressive, looking slightly to the left. The unicorn is shown in profile, facing left, with its mane flowing. The angel is positioned on the right, with its wings spread. The background is a vibrant, multi-colored nebula or galaxy with numerous stars and light trails.

A depth psychological and somatic  
approach to achieving transformation

Laura V. Grace, PhD



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in the 21st Century

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Approach to Achieving Transformation

*Laura V. Grace, PhD*

AEON

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*This book is dedicated to my amazing life partner and husband, Thomas, who provides the loving space to share and explore our nighttime dreams, every single day. And, to my late mother, who believed in the significance of my dreams and encouraged me to write them down and heed their wisdom.*





*PRAISE FOR DREAMS: SOUL-CENTERED  
LIVING IN THE 21ST CENTURY*

Laura Grace speaks to readers in a lyrical voice, inviting us to greet the gift of our dreams with gratitude. Her willingness to share the process of working her own dreams provides a model for self-reflection and dream exploration. This approach to dream work connects us to the language of our souls in a rich and meaningful way. *Dreams: Soul-Centered Living in the 21st Century* guides us in the process of developing a relationship with our dreams that facilitates our ongoing healing.

—Jeanne Mar Schul, PhD, RSMT, Berry College &  
Pacifica Graduate Institute

Have you ever wanted to know what your dreams really mean? Laura Grace's powerful new book explains clearly and simply how to understand what your own inner wisdom is trying to tell you every night.

—James Wawro, author, *Ask Your Inner Voice*

Get out your highlighters! Laura Grace's book is filled with practical yet profound information that will open a mystic gateway into the remarkable realm of your dreams. Destined to be a classic. Highly recommended!

—Denise Linn, author, *Hidden Power of Dreams*  
and founder, Gateway Dreaming Institute

Illuminated with a treasury of personal anecdotes, rich examples, and colorful imagery, Laura Grace beckons us to consider the possibility of transformation through engagement with the realm we navigate every night. *Dreams: Soul-Centered Living in the 21st Century* successfully endeavors to make this strange and often obscure realm intriguingly accessible.

—Michael Stillwater, founder, theGreatSong.net, author,  
*Grace In Practice*, and *Passports: Notes from Borderlands*

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## *ACKNOWLEDGMENTS*

With great respect and appreciation, I acknowledge all the dreamers who have shared their nighttime phantasms with me. This book contains dreams from some special students and clients whose soulful messages will inspire others interested in using dreams as a potent guide for transformation. I also want to thank my editor and friend, Elyn Selu, for tending to the soul of this book with her artful eye, and for the other amazing people who have encouraged me to share my dream work with the world.



## INTRODUCTION

*The overall subject of our dreams is, ultimately, the inner process of individuation. Most dreams, in one way or another, are portrayals of our individual journeys toward wholeness. They show us the stages along the way—the adventures, obstacles, conflicts, and reconciliations that lead finally to a sense of the self.*

—Robert Johnson

Imagine walking into a dark theater. Hundreds of empty seats await an audience to sit in before a shadowy stage. The director shouts, “Lights, cameras, action!” and you are mesmerized as the actors take their places and the storyline begins to unfold. As you watch, you feel yourself both watching the movie and being *in* the movie. The plot twists and turns as you connect with the actors and every dream character is playing a unique role. Feelings of excitement, judgment, bias, disdain, fear, hatred, empathy, love, and compassion arise. The film captivates your every sense and the images feel alive in your body. As the movie ends and the credits roll you realize that this wasn’t just any movie, it is a story about *your* life.

And, so it is.

You are the screen writer, director, producer, casting agent, choreographer, landscape artist, and every character starring in your nightly dreams. You are also the observer who witnesses a comedy, tragedy, romance, horror film called "This Is My Life." All of these creative gestures and more emerge from your unconscious an average of four to five times per night. Every film, crafted by you, reveals your unresolved issues, desires, hopes, fears, strengths, doubts, grief, resentments, beliefs, and connections to the deepest realms of your soul. And it doesn't stop there; dreams are not always purely personal and can encompass the "anima mundi," the Latin term for "world soul."

Dreams are the language of our individual and collective soul. The word "soul" stems from the Greek term "psyche." Carl Jung (1963) declared: "Without the psyche there would be neither knowledge nor insight." During dreamtime, while the ego is asleep, psyche comes to life and reveals information unattainable during waking life.

As a prolific dreamer, I became interested in connecting and understanding my dreams when I was eight years old. By age sixteen, I was dreaming about events which inevitably manifested the following day. My mother kept urging, "Write down your dreams, Laura, they are trying to tell you something important," and thus began my personal and spiritual journey with dreams. Now, more than thirty years later, I have bookcases and boxes filled with dream journals. They are treasure troves of thoughts, feelings, and wisdom about my family, physical health, past relationships, finances, life's purpose, shadow aspects, fears, insecurities, self-sabotaging behaviors, desires, strengths, and spiritual gifts. Dreams are the purest form of information. Since they are not censored by our conscious thoughts, feelings, and perceptions, they possess the capacity to provide more support and insight than therapy, and they are free! I am always saddened when people tell me their dreams are nonsensical or that they do not have time to listen to them. Our dreams are wellsprings of information, the language of our soul.

You dream every night whether you remember your dreams or not. The more you seek to understand them, the more likely you will recall them. The first thing to keep in mind is that *your dreams are meant to help you, not frighten or confuse you*. I cannot tell you how many people have secretly shared that they do not listen to their dreams, or remember their dreams, because they are afraid of them, or they will have to make some significant changes. Growth can be messy and change is inevitable



if you wish to grow. You always have the choice to delve inward and move forward, and you have control over when you choose to do so.

Second, all dreams are meaningful despite how ridiculous they may seem, even “snippets” contain invaluable information. Dreams may seem silly but only to the limitations of your waking mind. Even working with one dream image will help you increase your self-awareness and can lead to significant breakthroughs.

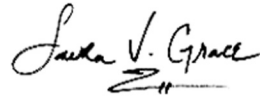
After having taught more than 200 dream courses, the technique I employ is an “embodied” process, meaning I teach people how to connect with the characters, symbols, feelings, landscape—every aspect of the dream as though it is “a living experience.” Therefore, this book does not contain a dream symbol list nor does it provide quick and easy ways to interpret your dreams. Dreams create a link between your daily awareness and the unconscious realm and are highly personal to you, the dreamer. Ultimately, *you* recognize what your dreams are truly trying to convey. You do not need to spend a lot of time and effort in order to understand your dreams, but the intention to befriend your dreams and the commitment to working with them is necessary. *Dreams: Soul-Centered Living in the 21st Century* provides some of today’s most insightful, spiritually and scientifically potent practical teachings for those who are ready and willing to understand the infinite power of their dreams. It covers some basic information on dreams such as dream recall, working with dream characters, and common dream themes. The material reaches into the transformational path of archetypes, alchemy, numinous dreams, Waking Dreaming™ and Somatic Dream Expression™ (two unique dream processes I created which are thoroughly covered in Chapters 8 and 9).

Each chapter uses actual nighttime dreams to illustrate how you can clearly understand your own dreams. And at the end of each chapter you are invited to “Put it into practice!” by applying practical dream practices designed to connect you with your dreams so you may move toward what Jung called “individuation.” The path of individuation is the process of becoming aware of one’s whole self and encompasses the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious. Both of these realms can be witnessed through the remarkable world of dreams.

As I am writing this introduction, I received a dream from a student, a dream of transformation that was painful yet liberating. The touchstone image was a fragmented portrait of Pegasus which I found interesting. Jung regarded Pegasus as a symbol of spiritual energy since

Pegasus is a magical creature in Greek mythology and is typically portrayed as a white horse with divine qualities. Pegasus is also known as “The Thundering Horse of Jove” because he brought thunder and lightning from Mt. Olympus as instructed by Zeus. Pegasus fortified a place as a constellation in the Northern Hemisphere sky in honor of his tenacious assistance to Zeus. The image of Pegasus is unforgettable: a formidable and gorgeous white horse with wings, graced with the strength and ability to fly. Every dream possesses what I call a “touchstone,” an image that provides the dreamer with healing energy. In the case of my student, I encouraged him to continue working with the dream image of Pegasus as an image that is alive and is his touchstone. As he more deeply understands his dream and the wisdom it imparts around some old, unresolved trauma, the image will evolve and may transform from fragmented to whole and complete.

Since dreams are a powerful pathway to transformation, “Pegasus” is the dream image I am relying upon as I write this book. May my words inspire and touch you, the reader and dreamer, and support you on your pathway to wholeness.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandra V. Grace". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.