



reality check

There's so much more to life than you realise; other dimensions and levels of consciousness waiting to be explored. **Karen Sawyer** looks into the spiritual inner realms...

The analogy of 'waking up', or awakening, has been used by philosophers and within spiritual traditions throughout the ages to represent becoming fully conscious or aware of the true nature of reality. Scientists tell us that the whole universe is made up of atoms. These atoms are not solid - everything, including the chair you're sitting on, is mostly 'empty' space. We are all made from the same stuff - from planets to plankton. There is no separation and we are all connected to everything in the universe, including what some call 'God'. If we are all inter-connected, then it is not possible that we are co-creating it all? That the physical world around us, everything we see and experience, is not 'real' or 'solid' at all but projected consciousness? Just a thought...

Reality trap

Reality is a subjective term because it's all in your mind. Thoughts are energy. The thoughts you have about yourself and the world create a blueprint for your experiences - drawing situations and experiences to you like a magnet. Life

life you have created? Do you hold other people responsible for your happiness? Do you ever think, "It's just the way it is and I can't do anything about it"? Positive and negative experiences are a choice. Life doesn't control you... you control life. Once you fully accept this, you can begin to change it to the way you want it to be.

The revolutionary work of Japanese scientist Dr. Masaru Emoto, (detailed in his book, *The Hidden Messages in Water*), shows how crystals formed in frozen water reveal changes when they are exposed to specific, concentrated thoughts. He found that water from clear springs and water that has been exposed to loving words show brilliant, complex and colourful snowflake patterns. In contrast polluted water or water exposed to negative thoughts form incomplete patterns with dull colours.

According to scientific research, we have around 50,000 thoughts per day. Try to become more conscious of your thoughts. As an experiment try counting how many negative or judgmental thoughts you have. You may find that certain thoughts keep repeating themselves. If you're constantly bemoaning your state of affairs, for example:

“Life doesn't control you... you control life. Once you fully accept this, you can begin to change it”

responds accordingly to your beliefs, therefore perpetuating the illusion. As Albert Einstein said, "Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one."

Accepting that you are creating your reality can sometimes be difficult to accept, depending on how pleasant your experiences are. Are you happy with the

"I can't afford it", "It's not fair" or "I'm too fat", then you're setting yourself up for more of the same. If you think what you've always thought, you'll get what you've always got.

Once you have identified the thoughts that do not serve you, you can change them to their positive opposite. Positive thoughts are called 'affirmations', and are powerful

and effective tools that will enable you to change your reality. Change your mind and change your life!

It also helps to cultivate appreciation and gratitude for all the things in your life that you already have. Write them down and add some things you would be thankful for that are currently not part of your reality, as what you focus on will grow. When you acknowledge and affirm what you have and want, everything you desire is effortlessly attracted to you. The world we live in is a collective manifestation of thought. If we focus on positive beliefs, not only will we positively change our own lives - we will positively inspire the lives of others and transform the world.

Waking up the spirit within

When I was about nine years old, I lay on my bed and tried to imagine what it would be like to be dead - to be gone, finished... end of story. I lay on my bed and closed my eyes. As I relaxed, I was surprised to discover that there was another 'me' - not the person I thought I was but the part of me that is infinite consciousness... the spirit within.

Most of us grow up believing that everything we need exists outside of ourselves, when it is exactly the opposite. We have lost touch with the Divine within. It is as though we have collective amnesia... we can't quite remember what it is we have lost, so we spend a lifetime searching externally for the 'perfect' partner (or car,

house, latest gadget, alcohol, drugs, and so on) to fill the void. We frequently seek advice from others perceived to be far more enlightened or wiser than ourselves... we are even willing to pay them large amounts of money to tell us what we already know but forgot to remember!

You are not just your mind, your body, or an emotional personality - you are a wise old soul who carries the wisdom of the ages. This ancient spirit is the core of your essence, the real you beyond your personality and beliefs. Even if you're not consciously aware of your divine companion, it is always with you, though you may find that, after years of being completely ignored by the other parts of your psyche that are currently running your life, it's become tired and is gently snoozing away.

Meet the inner you

Your 'sleeping self' likes to be acknowledged and will be very thankful for a gentle nudge. There are many ways to instigate a conversation with the 'divine within' - through relaxed or altered states of consciousness and all creative expression, be it art, literature, music, dance or acting. To have any sort of relationship, it is essential to communicate. Clear communication with your inner self (or anyone else for that matter) will take your relationship to a new level of understanding. Basically, you can achieve a lot more together. It is important to ask the right questions, and it is equally important to be able to listen and to be receptive to guidance.

At first, you may need to take some time-out from the hustle and bustle of life's routine in order to hear these subtle whispers of the soul - perhaps take a walk in nature or meditate. Your inner-spirit's voice speaks the language of the heart, as well as being rather partial to the odd symbol and metaphor. It has a direct-line to your intuition - you might interpret this as a 'gut feeling', a 'knowing', or as an 'aha!' moment.

Listen to the next recurring thought or hunch you have and you will be guided in the right direction. It pays to pay attention! To listen to your true self is to

allow yourself to be carried on the winds of change... who knows where you may find yourself? Coincidences are messages (sometimes seemingly insignificant, sometimes of gargantuan proportions) that offer you the chance to reconnect with the flow of life, intuitively pointing the way towards your heart's desires. To follow a coincidence through is to invite some magic into your life.

Ultimately, reconnecting with your divine self will align you with your true purpose in life, moving you toward fulfilment and happiness. This will take some trust and courage on your part, but have no fear - your inner-spirit knows what unique talents you have been gifted with to share with the world, so it's more than qualified for the job!

Dreaming awake

The truth is that your true self - the spirit, or soul within - is multi-dimensional is capable of being in more than two places at once. You may not be consciously aware that this happens but consider, for example, when you dream... your physical body may be lying in bed not going anywhere while you experience adventures in an alternate reality every bit as real (and often more exciting) than this one. Paradoxically, our inner selves often 'wake up' and truly comes to life when we're asleep...

Most of us learn to dismiss our dreams at an early age when we experienced nightmares as children and our concerned parents told us, "Don't worry, it's only a dream". And so we began to believe that dreams are unimportant and that we probably only have them to keep us entertained while we sleep.

We tend to regard dreams as garbled nonsense because we are not taught to interpret the metaphorical and symbolic language of the inner-spirit. If you need some help and guidance in your life, try asking your inner-self a question - write it down on a piece of paper and place it under your pillow... literally dream on it!

Ancient and indigenous cultures consciously worked with and honoured their dreams. In ancient China and Greece, they built special chambers in which they would 'incubate' dreams to give them answers to specific questions. They practiced the art of learning how to 'wake up' in a dream - of how to dream consciously - gaining the ability to intentionally manoeuvre through dreamscapes. This is often referred to as 'lucid dreaming'.

In our dreams we experience reality in a different way than we normally perceive



We spend a lifetime searching externally for the 'perfect' partner (or car, house, latest gadget, alcohol, drugs, etc.) to fill the void



Take some time out by either taking a walk in nature or by meditating

it to be. Things can shape-shift, we can talk without speaking, and we can even fly! What is that if it is not an altered state of consciousness? You've been doing this every night since you were born! That's how

happened. Whether it was 'real' or 'not real' became an issue for me and a barrier to the process. Realising that my logical brain would always win the argument, I told it that, 'Yes, I am imagining it all.' After that, it stopped interfering and journeying became easier for me. These days, I feel that my logical mind has quietly acquiesced to the simple fact that

whether I decide to journey or dream,

I enter the same space. That's all I need to know. Whether we are

conscious of it or not, there are many dimensions of existence

overlapping and permeating the world as we know it. 'It'

is part of you and you are part of 'it' - you can never

be alone because we are all one.

Living a life awake and alert to the gentle nudgings from these other dimensions can enrich your

life, enabling you to reach your full potential and stretch your capabilities beyond what you thought you were ever possible.

We are here on this planet at a fascinating time in human history. I believe that the 'veil between the worlds' is being drawn aside like a pair of curtains. Our perception

“ If you think what you have always thought, you'll get what you have always got ”

easy and natural it is to communicate with and travel to other dimensions.

Journeying

But you don't have to sleep to dream. Another way to consciously visit other dimensions is to 'journey' to them. This is the way of the Shaman and is very similar to daydreaming. The Shaman enters a heightened state of awareness through the use of sound, usually via the steady rhythmic beating of the drum, sometimes with the additional help of psychotropic plant allies, and always with the help of a spirit, or power, ally. In this way he or she is able to safely enter and navigate other dimensions to seek insight and information.

For the uninitiated Westerner, journeying can be difficult at first, as the logical mind will try to resist and negate the experience. The first few times I journeyed this was indeed the case. I wondered if I was just 'making it all up' and it hadn't actually

is expanding to encompass other, different energies in alternative dimensions. How long will it be before daily interaction with these no-longer-invisible realms will soon become the norm?

You may prefer to go through life in a blissful slumber, rejecting any ideas that may challenge your reality and therefore change your life. Waking up is not difficult - it requires only your intent and desire to do so. Becoming awake is being conscious enough to remember how mysterious and magical life really is. ❖

further info

Karen's forthcoming book, *Soul Companions*, is to be released on January 25th, 2008 (O-Books). To pre-order or for further information, please visit www.o-books.com or the author's website at: www.impish.uwclub.net