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DREAMTIME

M A G A Z I N E



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Dreaming the Dolphins Home



Paul Overman

Dolphin dreams can be some of the most intriguing and delightful dreams to have and explore. A symbolic dream of a dolphin or dolphins can signify a need for, a means to, or the fulfillment of: play or delight for life; loving relationships; inner healing; guidance; or rescue when life is at risk. Some dreams are *about* dolphins, such as after watching a movie or reading an article on dolphins, in which one's mind may explore thoughts and feelings and interests in dolphins. However, there are greater, wider collective dreams.

Dreaming the Dolphins Home

When this title first came to me, at its deepest level I thought it might mean helping to dream the dolphins back to their true home, wherever that might be in the cosmos. But I realized that dolphins have made earth's oceans their home, and humankind has made that habitat more and more uninhabitable through pollution of the oceans; thus we need to re-dream or revision our use and care of the earth's seas. One of the best ways of doing this is through learning to dream with the dolphins—or at least to dream and visualize a workable ecology while reconnecting the ocean life with land life.

There are visionary dolphin dreams, in which the dreamer sees or panoramically explores the state of affairs of the oceans, such as the causes and effects of ocean toxicity on dolphins, other sea life, and the relationship with land life. Such experiences are sensed and viewed as if one's eyes opened from the inside and extended into the distant oceans. These experiences can happen in contemplation, meditation, night dreams, in a waking-dream or vision, or in guided group visionary experiences.

Once I conducted a pilot project drawing upon my training and experience with visionary think-tank groups. A number of dolphins had beached themselves on the shores of North Carolina. Behind the scenes I organized some associates and friends who had never worked together in such a group, but each had special relationships with the animal kingdom and/or some psi-abilities, such as manifested intuition, clairvoyance, etc. Facilitating a telephone conference call, I used a brief protocol that assisted “seeing,” “intuiting” and “sensing” the dolphins, who had been coached back into the waters by local residents and biologists.

The various impressions and information obtained were fascinating, including observations about pollution, food source scarcity, sickness, aging of one or more dolphins and seeking refuge or assistance, being drawn to that particular part of the coast. Some of the visionary team's impressions about the dolphins' health and age correlated with what I had learned from local media, but the visionary team had had no prior access to that information.



Besides visionary dream-state experiences there are immersive dolphin dreams: being in water with dolphins or swimming with dolphins; merging with a dolphin; or riding on the back of a dolphin. Such dreams can be triggered by deep, formerly unseen stirrings of the inner consciousness, ancient memories or relationships, or by close physical working or play relationships with dolphins, such as assisting them or studying them in marine settings.

At a sea mammal conference, I was emotionally touched by the dreams reported by some of the marine biologists about the mammals they worked with when they were stationed at the ocean. Guardedly, they revealed feeling and belief that they were truly there with their mammals in the sea. I saw tears come into eyes, and throats choke while reporting or acknowledging such dream experiences.

Through strong vital-emotional, mental or spiritual bond, the dreamer revisits or meets through dreaming.

I recall receiving, over a decade ago, an email about conflict between the Navy and Hawaiians who were attempting to protect the dolphins from powerful sonar. Shortly after reading this and viewing some photos of fishing boaters attempting to interfere with the Navy ships and the testing, I drifted into a midday dream state. I was projected across the earth to Hawaii, and my consciousness entered the head of a female dolphin. I felt the powerful sound-induced vibrations of the Navy sonar, the overwhelming disorienting sensory effect on that dolphin's consciousness and brain, and the "emotional distress" of the dolphin, through resonance and identification. It was so disorienting and overriding, I felt loss of spatial direction and could sense the dolphin losing sense of self! It felt life-threatening.

Other Extraordinary Dolphin Dreams

Other extraordinary, mutual dolphin experiences in dreams can be: human-dolphin telepathy; dolphin dream visitation (receiving a visit in one's personal dream space); partnered dolphin-human dream exploration; dream healing; and dream guidance, as some dolphins appear to be masters of dreamtime. As evolved beings living in physical bodies, dolphins have the ability to dream in a number of levels of their subtle body—a "dream body" in yogic traditions.

Contact through subtle bodies can occur in night dreaming, in meditation, in waking-dreams or

visionary experiences. It is the "Anāhata Chakra"—the energy center and vortex, behind and supporting the physical heart—that is key to dolphin dream contact: understanding or translating dolphins' telepathic rapport with us; dreaming together; or exploring the places in this world they have made home.

Recognizing a dream as a true encounter in contrast to a symbolic dream creates greater "resonance" for future experiences. Recognition leads to appreciation and respect; and respect creates "resonance" and "response." A relationship is set. This is why indigenous traditions—yogic, healing and shamanic—use song and chants to respect, honor and evoke nature spirits, spiritual guardians and deities for healing, assistance and mutual benefit.

The Great White Dolphin

I was standing in the depths of the ocean with a strange man on my left. We were watching a pod of dolphins. One of the dolphins was all white, and was the pod's leader. There was greatness about him. I began saying, spontaneously, with awe: "He's the Great White Dolphin; He's the Great White; He's the Great White."

Now, in reflection I realize I was not just in awe, but I was recognizing the dolphin, giving him respect in my communications with the male dream companion. A resonance was set up, and later I was able to quickly reenter the dream in meditation, and explore tele-dream state communication in a very conscious manner.

The stranger in the dream had identified me in waking-life, and sent me an email in waking-life, verifying for me this mutual extraordinary experience with the dolphin pod. In his email, he said, "We cannot wait for you to return to Hawaii!" He said he had been swimming when he encountered the pod of dolphins, felt energetically effected by them, and "saw" my name on one of the dolphins. An example of how fabulous and mysterious mutual experience can be, when a dreamer (*waters of*) consciousness and that of others in daytime oceans merge!

After the first Great White Dolphin dream, many dolphin dream-state experiences followed. I learned in a couple of dream re-entries, and from my following studies, that the Pacific Ocean was significantly polluted. I eventually viewed it as poly-pollution.

From a yogic perspective, physical waters inherit

pain and suffering of the various life forms, including humans. In yogic and Buddhist traditions certain emotions or attitudes are specifically called “poisons.”

Because of their relationship to physical water, the oceans and rivers, dolphins are in touch with the dream worlds, called the “vital worlds” in yoga, which are of the subtle element of water. Dolphins live and swim in these collective waters and, I believe, are much more sensitive to the purity or toxicity of our collective emotional waters; thus, they are natural healers of emotions.

Healing the oceans is necessary for quality of life and survival of many life forms, and healing the oceans is both an inner-healing process, collectively, and a marine-science process of protecting the ocean from physical pollutants—chemical, biological and noise.

Ultimately, I realized that *Dreaming the Dolphins Home* meant connecting with and dreaming with the dolphins through the inner heart. I realized this can be taught, and possibly *must* be taught at this time, uniting great dreamers of land and water for mutual purpose, well-being and enjoyment of life.

The ‘Aumākua

After my Great White Dolphin dream I met a woman living on Maui. She also reported a dream encounter with a special white dolphin, and said she had heard of similar encounters from other dreamers. She also reported encountering, in a dive off the shores of Hawaii, a white dolphin and his pod in the Hawaiian waters. A photographer was part of this dive and she showed me his photos of the white dolphin and the pod. A local fisherman spoke of encountering this white dolphin and called him an ‘Aumākua, a spiritual guardian ancestor.

I pass this on to the reader, along with this introduction into *dreaming the dolphins home*, just in case you meet a dolphin in your dreams, or, who knows, maybe an ‘Aumākua from Hawaii. We can assist, just as we have been assisted.

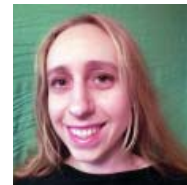
Paul Overman, PhD is author of *Dream Samadhi* (upcoming expanded-edition of *The Shamanic Dream*) and founder of Shamana Dream Yoga and The Dream Listener Program. He specializes in extraordinary, shadow and transpersonal-healing dreams consultation. Paul currently plans East-Coast, Hawaii and Dolphin Dreaming Retreats, and online training programs. Contact: pauloverman@thedreamlistener.com. Visit: www.shamanainstitute.com.

Featured Presenter

2015 IASD Conference

What Do Dolphins Dream?

Heather Spence is a marine biologist researching dolphins, a PhD candidate in Biopsychology and Behavioral Neuroscience at the City University of NY, a founding partner in the Global Research and Arts Center for the Investigation and Advancement of Sustainability Solutions, and leads international collaborative conservation projects in the Mexican Caribbean.



Heather Spence

How can we learn about dreaming in dolphins? We have yet to develop a way to discuss the dream experience with them – although they appear very willing. Perhaps we could use our human imagination, but dolphins’ sensory experiences are very different from ours. Sleep patterns and indications of dreaming have been studied in a variety of animals, including rats, dogs and platypuses. Methods range from purely observational, such as recording sounds or movements made during sleep, to controversial invasive neural techniques to alter dreaming. Most work is done on mammals, which share many features with humans. The dolphin, however, is a mammal that is fascinating in its strangeness. As with humans and other terrestrial mammals, dolphins must breathe air – yet they live underwater. The evolutionary solution is unihemispheric sleep, in which one half of the brain rests while the other is alert. This adaptation enables dolphins to remain vigilant and maintain respiration while fulfilling their need for sleep. Another adaptation for underwater living is the emphasis on hearing rather than seeing. Sound travels better in water than in air and sending and receiving sounds is central to marine animal survival. Dolphins are heavily reliant on sound, and manipulate it for complex communication and echolocation. Additionally, along with humans, bats, elephants, songbirds and a few other groups, dolphins are vocal learners. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that sounds offer a major clue to what and how dolphins may dream. Auditory memory in dolphins is excellent, and necessary for them to maintain their complex social bonds. Research indicates that dolphins at rest may rehearse life events in the form of mimicking previously heard sounds. With advances in technology, the potential for acoustically monitoring soundscapes and vocal behavior of dolphins at night has become a reality and new work is advancing our understanding of dolphin day-night cycles of vocal behavior. As we learn more about these alien creatures from the deep, strange and yet also familiar, we have the opportunity to expand our ideas about sleep, dreams, thoughts and experiences. Learning more about them, we also learn more about ourselves.

Conference Information and Registration:

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