

Book Preview: The Sun and Shadow: My Experiment with Lucid Dreaming (A.R.E Press, Virginia Beach, VA)**Kenneth Kelzer**

Though it is difficult to assess or even summarize one's own work, I am offering this advance review for the benefit of those who are particularly interested in lucid dreaming, one of today's more exciting and promising new frontiers of consciousness and of dream studies in particular. (Editors Note: Kenneth Kelzer, MSW, works as a psychotherapist in private practice in Marin county, California. He has worked extensively with dreams in classroom, seminar and clinical settings for over 15 years.)

This book is unique in a number of ways. With an introduction by G. Scott Sparrow, Part I offers a lengthy and detailed autobiographical account of the author's intentional "experiment" to induce lucid dreaming and recounts an exceptional series of lucid dreams and ordinary dreams that he received over a 3 1/2 year period. In this text the dream material alone may seem like a gold mine to serious dream students and scholars, since many of the lucid dreams recounted are extraordinary in their length, vividness, richness of symbolism and implications for cultivating one's inner life. In addition, the author places himself on exhibit in an unusually open way, as he weaves into his personal story a great deal of the "shadow" side of his own personality and individual history. The interplay between light and darkness, the sun and the shadow, is a theme that runs continuously throughout the book. Drawing amply from his personal experiences in the waking state and from certain powerful experiences in the lucid dream state, the author steadily forges his central thesis and sums it up in an axiom attributed to C.G. Jung: "the brighter the sun, the darker the shadow". In essence, this axiom means that the more a person advances into personal enlightenment, through lucid dreaming or any other means, the more will he be called upon to face and resolve the temptation to abuse personal power or expanded consciousness, and therefore the greater will be his need for vigorous self-examination and critical feedback from others.

The author is firmly convinced that this interplay between inner light and inner darkness is one of the paradoxical and more difficult aspects of human development that is frequently avoided, sometimes even in in-depth studies of human beings, both great and ordinary, and often times in serious attempts to resolve human conflict both great and ordinary. The book reinforces Jung's commitment to wholeness as the genuine path to growth and peace, intra-personal, inter-personal and international. It implies that a more public and open acknowledgment of our dark side (formerly known as sins, faults or human weaknesses) will lead to more solid understandings, solid relationships and eventual solid building of societal institutions. Throughout history ordinary people have consistently demanded perfection of their leaders, and they have consistently been given the public image of perfection in return. This unconscious contract has created or deepened the unfortunate split between the inner self and the outer public image of many of mankind's greatest teachers and leaders and subsequently contributed greatly to the sufferings and downfall of many of our most gifted fellows. The author consequently, offers his central thesis as a psychospiritual axiom or principle for countering this age-old

destructive contract based on a shallow understanding of what constitutes genuine human growth the genuine human greatness.

If, as the author contends, "the brighter the sun, the darker the shadow" is a universal human axiom that governs our inner life, then it must be true that the greatest saints were the greatest sinners, the greatest creators could easily have become the greatest destroyers, the greatest lovers the greatest haters, and so forth. If Jesus was the Christ, how close did he possibly come to being the anti-Christ? If Adolf Hitler was the anti-Christ, could he also have been the Christ? Is there a fine, inner thread that many walk through their lifetimes, a psychic tightrope that determines which way their abundant powers and capacities for leadership and creativity will eventually go? Why in recent years, have so many "new age" leaders become cult leaders when they could have become genuine spiritual leaders instead? In addressing these concerns the author attempts to lead the way rather than simply point the way. He describes his experience of being unexpectedly flooded with inner light and with a possible kundalini awakening through certain powerful lucid dreams. Then, correspondingly, he describes his subsequent battles with numerous inner demons: with inflation of the ego, inner rage, violent impulses for revenge and the reemergence of old negative traits from a deeper layer of his psyche which, post lucid dreaming, had to be worked through once again. In spite of all this provocative intensity, however, the account is hopeful and encouraging overall. The author also describes many specific tools and structures for the transformation of the shadow and for using one's shadow as a stimulus and creative prod toward solid, personal evolution.

Part II of the book is devoted to theory, to a deeper understanding of and a broader definition of the lucid dream. It offers three chapters with the titles: "Toward a Descriptive Definition of the Lucid Dream", "Understanding the Benefits of Lucid Dreaming", and "Expanding the Circle: The Availability of the Lucid Dream". The author suggests that the basic definition of the lucid dream might currently be expanded to include the "energy shift" that the dreamer usually feels at the onset of lucidity, and that this shift might be, in some cases, the initial arousal of the kundalini energy as it is called in exoteric, Eastern spiritual traditions. He also offers some new theoretical concepts, perhaps appearing in print for the first time. Chief among these is his assertion that the experience of being "in charge" in a lucid dream is quite distinct from being "in control" in a lucid dream. He discusses this point at length, showing how the distinction is more than semantic, and calling for a general moratorium on the use of the term "dream control" because of its misleading connotations. Above all, he applies this key distinction to human experiences in the waking state showing how it is crucial for human health and happiness and how the concept of trying to be "in control" in one's life may foster neurosis, conflict and needless struggle. Since being "out of control" is not the answer either, this implies that another framework exists beyond the control framework. This framework, or level of consciousness, could be called an "assertion framework" or a "being in charge framework", and he shows how the lucid dream state provides an extraordinary, psychological laboratory in which to learn how to be in charge in one's life and how to understand and resolve different kinds of human conflicts great and small. The book also offers some meaty rebuttal to those who claim or fear that the

deliberate inducement of lucid dreaming would harmfully tamper with the spontaneity of the unconscious mind and thereby exert a negative influence upon one's psychological balance. The author presents a strong case to show that this common theoretical objection to lucid dreaming, while sounding solid in theory, is not born out in actual practice, and that achieving the lucid state does not enable the dreamer to "control" the unconscious as some critics have assumed.

Throughout the book the author goes to great lengths to apply lucid dreaming to the waking state, and the waking state to lucid dreaming and to ordinary dreaming. He attempts to integrate all these states of mind, viewing them as distinct threads that can nevertheless be woven together into single tapestry of a unified life. His chapter on the availability of the lucid dream includes dream material from various students, clients and colleagues who also deliberately attempted to induce the lucid state. These accounts and some analysis of their content show how the lucid state is probably more available to us than most people presently assume.

As another subtheme the book also applies the principle of the "conscious ownership of the shadow" to current international relations and to world-wide disarmament. When political leaders continue to brand the leaders of other nations as evil, as the enemy or hated adversaries, the outcome of such dark rhetoric is often war. And when national or ethnic groups continue to view foreign nations as the embodiment of greed, lust for power, imperialism, cut-throat competition, sexual perversions, etc., this too keeps the international crucible boiling. By implication, then, the building of a true and lasting peace between nations will have to include the willingness of ordinary people as well as their leaders to acknowledge their own darkness rather than collectively displace it or project it onto those regarded as "foreign". The author implies that the 1980's is a time that is increasingly ripe for a bridging of the inner world and the outer world, for the application of depth psychology to international relations and big business. Accordingly, the book is dedicated to the Founding Fathers of the American Republic as "men of vision" who sought to build a new nation-state on the highest of ideals and the highest of spiritual principles. Just as in the 1780's when there were many who did not regard their "truths to be self-evident", so too in the 1980's there are many who do not regard the acknowledgment of one's own inner darkness as an essential prerequisite for lasting peace. Therefore much work still lies ahead as we continue to extend all these principles into concrete forms. Through the "conscious ownership" of one's own inner light and inner darkness, the author of this book believes that many will advance a significant step closer to a deeper understanding of the basic sameness, basic oneness and the basic spiritual equality of all creatures. He also advocates that the lucid dream state be seen and regarded primarily as a psychospiritual tool, perpetually connected to its ancestral roots in Tibetan Buddhism where it was originally known as "the yoga of the dream state". The term yoga means "union", and in this sense, the lucid dream is ultimately a special pathway to inner union, union with the Light, union with the higher self, and in its highest form, union with All-That-Is.