

# Dreams and Life-Changing Transitions

PATRICIA ARIADNE, PH.D.



As a licensed psychotherapist, I have a lot of tools to help people through life's difficult transitions. But the most effective instrument of healing is the one clients bring with them—their dreams! Clients bring in their dreams scribbled on scraps of paper, hurriedly-typed into their smartphones, jotted down in casual spiral notebooks, or thoughtfully written in carefully-chosen journals. Regardless of the method that clients use to record their dreams, they serve as invaluable “read-outs” or “litmus tests” of their current outer life situation and inner

condition. Importantly, dreams supply much-needed direction during long-bewildering times of transition.

While the word *change* is applied to the outer event, the inner process of how we navigate the change is called a *transition*. The transition may be triggered by life events common to us all: the end of a marriage, the loss of a house or job, the death of a loved one, an “empty nest,” a wounded heart, a missed opportunity. Transitions can be organized into three stages. While the first stage of a transition involves *endings* (saying goodbye to people or situations) and the third stage concerns *beginnings* (making new goals, new commitments), the middle transitional period is when we most need the guidance of dreams. The middle stage is an *in-between period* or *neutral zone*. This is when deep personal transformation often occurs, but it is also when we most feel suspended, lost and “out-to-sea.” Working with our dreams can give us vital information to help us through the neutral zone.

Following a difficult divorce, a client deeply entrenched in her transition's middle period felt that life was increasingly pointless and purposeless. All that she had once known—social relationships, lifestyle and personal identity—had been swept away, and nothing new had yet emerged to replace these losses. It was during this time that she dreamed of giving birth to a female baby, one who could talk from birth. This girl child had amazingly large, cerulean-blue eyes, which were full of wisdom and light. We understood the baby as a promise that if the client stood firm, she could expect a rebirth and renewal. If she

## PUBLISHER'S PICK:

### **Patricia Ariadne, PH.D- transitional therapist**

Trust in your therapist is an essential ingredient for an effective client/therapist relationship. The first hurdle—which is quite challenging—is

continued to make efforts to use this period to expand her self-awareness, she would give birth to *herself*. The woman felt hope for the first time in months. She knew that underneath the surface of her desert-like outer life was the hidden potential of a new cycle of growth and productivity.

Dreams come to us to teach, to confirm, to warn, to encourage. They are particularly valuable when we are struggling through a life-changing transition. Working with dreams is a way of depending upon our own inner guidance—our personal GPS system—instead of depending upon outside sources. Dreams often point the way when all else fails.



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and find out more about her work at [www.TransitionTherapist.com](http://www.TransitionTherapist.com).

to face your own fears and believe in yourself. Then you have to jump out of your comfort zone even further and trust a total stranger. Patricia Ariadne is a passionate and gentle therapist who recognizes that her purpose is to provide service to others. This creates a safe environment and clear cut path to making your transition. When you are ready and in need, have faith that Patricia can guide you. You can begin knowing and trusting her by reading her book *Drinking the Dragon: Stories of the Dark Night of Soul*.

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*This article appears in the [October 2012](#) issue of SAND*

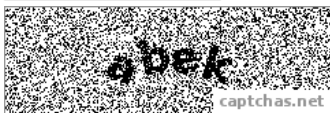
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