

www.asdreams.org

Spring 2017

DREAMTIME

M A G A Z I N E

Inside This Issue

- John Van Daam
- Eugene Kovalenko
- Robert J. Hoss
- Jeannette Lambert
- IASD Board VOTE Edition



A Dream of Surrender and Hope

Kristen Backstrom



All dreams invite us to shift our perspectives, question our assumptions, and open our minds—but some dreams go further. Some dreams call us to surrender certainty itself and experience authentic change. Surrender is not the same as submission. We are not asked to submit to an outside authority, but to give up our attachment to the brittle and limiting ways we defend our lives and ourselves. Surrender means becoming vulnerable, so that possibilities beyond the imagination of the old identity may be born.

Right now, the world is presenting many of us with political, environmental, social and interpersonal challenges that call us to surrender. When we are confronted with monumental injustices and threats to our integrity and survival, submitting is not an option—but reacting impulsively in familiar, self-protective ways just leads to further harm. There will be no new possibilities unless we can stand up to injustice and threats, but also bow down to a deeper potential for healing and hope. Dreams sometimes give us direct experience of surrender as a path to new life:

The Grieving Warrior

We are a group of travelers following a path through dense forest. Night is falling, and I'm in the lead, feeling my way, finding openings between the trees. But then there are no more openings, only thickets on all sides. Even the way we came has closed behind us. Trapped in the dark, we come under attack, and are lifted up in the air where we fight for our lives. We cannot see the enemy.

Apparently, we are Japanese Samurai. Our leader is an older warrior who has survived many battles. I experience everything from his perspective. Suspended in the air, he fights fiercely against the invisible enemy, but is weakening, and recognizes that he is probably going to die. He will face his death bravely. Yet, somehow, he survives after all. Instead of dying, he sees his brother, his nephew, and finally his son, all killed in the battle around him. It is more than he can bear, and much worse than if he had died himself.

The battle is over, and the dead are being buried, the wounded are being tended, and the beleaguered survivors are resting in some stone ruins. The exhausted warrior leader walks among them, looking for someone. Finally, he finds her: his daughter-in-law. She sits leaning against a wall, uninjured, but heartbroken because she has lost her husband (the warrior's son). The warrior stands before her, and they look at each other. She is supposed to get up, keeping her gaze lowered to honor her father-in-law, so they may exchange formal condolences. But, before she can rise, he kneels beside her, breaking protocol. He bows deeply, then gently rests his forehead against hers, and they cry together, overcome by their shared grief.

The daughter-in-law is pregnant, and the child will be a girl. The old warrior will live, now, in a new way, for the future of his family. EOD

When a dream feels "Big," it reverberates with personal and universal significance. Such a dream requires my personal attention, as it speaks to the core of my life experience, my unique perspective, and my deepest longings and learnings—but it also calls for sharing, as it is not meant only for me. Such a dream makes a lens of my life, through which the larger world can be seen—so rather than looking at that lens (focusing on myself), I can look through it.

This dream came when I needed it. I'd reached the end of a 500-mile pilgrimage, which had exhausted all of my inner resources—at least the resources I recognized. Although I'd hoped that two months walking across Spain with thousands of other pilgrims on the Camino de Santiago would change me, it first tested my resistance to being changed. I faced the journey like a warrior, and fought bravely, until there was no

fight left in me. I struggled against the rain, heat, and wind, against the crowded hostels and unfamiliar food, against my body's pain, illness and weakness. More than once, I felt completely lost. I fought hard, but was always up-in-the-air, without any solid place to make a stand. Then I came to the end, where I could rest. It was time to surrender. It was time to feel the heavy grief I'd been carrying (for my parents who'd recently died, and for other losses in my life), and it was time to bow down to a new way of being in the world, a softer way. So the dream came—for me, and for something more than me. The dream came to help me define myself differently.

Everything is always changing, and that is both frightening and hopeful. We all need dreams like this one now, as we face the future. What is our place in this world, and how can we surrender to the new possibilities that will be born from our hard battles and long journeys? Perhaps we've reached the limits of the warrior's path; it will no longer take us forward, and we can't go back the way we came. Many of us find ourselves "up in the air" and "under attack." We think it is the end for us; our strength has been exhausted. But instead of dying, we have to survive our losses and grieve the pain of unrealized potential. The warrior is defeated and his lineage is swept away. But even in grief, there is relief in surrendering our privilege, power and position; there's a blessing in kneeling down beside those we love, "putting our heads together," crying together, and committing ourselves to new life.

Where do our dreams lead us? I try to bow down to the deepest sources of gentle strength I can find in myself, other people, the earth, and our dreams. The baby yet to be born is invisible to us now—but we have a future. And in the present, we have each other. We have big dreams to share.

Kirsten Backstrom is a dreamwork facilitator and interfaith spiritual director who has been exploring dreamwork as spiritual practice for over thirty years. She has a background in hospice and eldercare, and regularly works with people experiencing loss and deep change, where dreams can be especially meaningful. Contact her at kirsten@compassdreamwork.com



Get Social with IASD

Look at all the ways to keep connected to the dream community!



Facebook Group 4,500+ fans
facebook.com/groups/5493995967/



Twitter
twitter.com/DreamScholars
twitter.com/PsiberDreaming



Pinterest
pinterest.com/studyofdreams



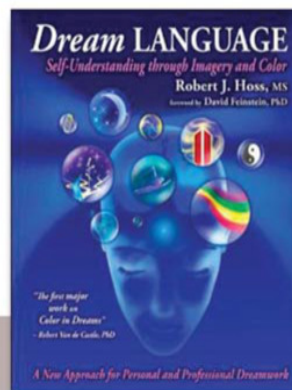
Reddit
reddit.com/r/iasdreams



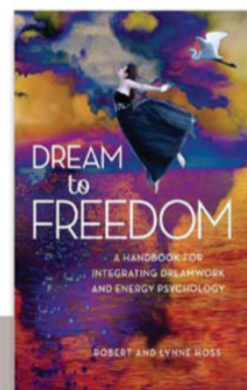
You Tube
youtube.com/user/iasdreams



www.asdreams.org



Handbook for Dreamwork
from Innersource
covering the Science,
Psychology and
Spirit of Dreaming



Handbook for Integrating
Dreamwork and Energy
Psychology
from Energy Psychology Press

Publications from
Robert Hoss, MS and Lynne Hoss, MA CEHP
Available in bookstores, Amazon or Kindle