
If your **dream** falls down & breaks.

{ a user manual }



This 2020 edition includes a poem by William Butler Yeats,
a short story, FAQs, dream stickers & worksheet

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Welcome to the reality of dreams.

You may have discovered that the more fragile the dream, the greater the chance of it breaking. The more flexible, the least. Be that as it may, it's often beneficial to have a dream break—then you'll no longer be shy of putting it to work. Like a new & beautiful tool you're reluctant to use; once it's scratched, dented, cracked, you can use it in earnest.

Depending on the size of your dream, the options for managing its condition range from “Don't bother picking up the pieces,” to “Build your dream house with them.” Some dreams are actually worthless, but if you're reading this manual, it's not likely you have many of those.

Herein is a selection of approaches that have been used & observed.

First, what *not* to do.

- ◉ Don't sweep it all away.

Someone may find its fragments (even only one) & be inspired.

Someone may see their own reflection & be enlightened.

Some dreams get separated from birth & seek to join again.

Note: Data indicates this is intuitive and/or subconscious on the part of the dreamer. It's recommended you follow both your certainties & unknowns, the pieces you feel or sense without identifying (not yet), while keeping your mind open to nuances, changes, epiphanies.

- ◉ Don't assume you're sleepwalking. (Though you may be.)

- ◉ Don't confuse them with someone else's dream.

Many dreams look alike, especially the ones that end up broken.

- ◉ Don't throw yourself down or sit on the pieces.

A broken dream is bad enough without causing further harm. Take time for tears & cogitation, but don't punish yourself. Besides, you don't want to be removing splinters from your behind-the-scenes anatomy.

- ◉ Don't run with them, or something worse might take place.
You know what your mama said about scissors.
 - ◉ Don't cut your wrists with them.
It's not worth it, friend. Your life is far more precious than any dream. Always remember that, especially the times you don't believe it.
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If you wish to cling to your original dream, gather as many pieces as you can. Expect some to be lost; this is a common occurrence. (They are usually small & weak & hence have no lasting support. See FAQs on “cracks & seams.”) Just as someone might use fragments of yours, you may wish to use fragments of other dreams to enhance your extant pieces.

Note: Combining your dream pieces with those of others is not considered unethical as long as there is no blatant theft & copycatting. (Not to be confused with the “big dream” described on page 4.) Give credit where credit is due.

Like any puzzle where there is no complete picture reference, you must patiently refit each piece. Band-aids are no help. Nor are super glues & instant remedial bonding products. Shortcuts fail.

Tip: Some pieces may at first seem to fit, but chances are they're similar & not exact. You'll know when the right fit happens.

Finally, but by no means last, you can let your dream go. Seasons change. It could be that the fall was the best thing for it. Your dream may have served its purpose & it is time to focus on what's next.

Whatever you choose, let the experience be a catalyst.

What you can do.

Beginning with the most rational & ending somewhere in Neverland, these methods depend on lifestyle, character, experience, ideologies, IQ & EQ & other variables (some of unknown origin).

- ◉ Consult with others who've had experience with broken dreams & consider applying their advice.
Note: You'll get advice whether you want it or not. (Be kind.)
- ◉ Take the biggest pieces with you & leave the rest: You still have the dream's idea, essence & heart.

- ◉ Donate them to a homeless shelter for people in despair.
- ◉ Take them to Sad Willie's to see if he'll barter or buy.
- ◉ Rebuild your dream while you sleep.
Have a spouse or friend watch your eyelids for rapid eye movement. If REM is absent or infrequent, the process may take longer. However, non-REM sleep might be handling it. Either way, you must eventually take action. Set the alarm.
- ◉ Place them in your pathway & see where they lead.
- ◉ If the edges aren't too sharp, thread your pieces on a fixed thought & wear it with both pride & humility.
It proves you ran the risk of trying out your dream & are not afraid to show it. Accept compliments.
- ◉ For scientists & engineers, the possibilities are limited only by your brain.
You can make calculations, such as the distance the dream fell & under what conditions; write a hypothesis to share among your colleagues; design a dream-puzzle game app.
- ◉ Shoot a video of the event & post it on YouTube.
- ◉ If it's the kind of dream that makes a big crash, to recover the costs & your dignity, sell book & media rights (imagine your favorite actor playing the main part & an awesome music score).
- ◉ Put them in a box & market them as the "Impossible Dream."
- ◉ Put them in a box & market them as the "American Dream."
- ◉ Put them in a box & put the box in the attic for your heirs to discover.
- ◉ Make a mosaic that reflects yourself in various ways, or the world around you, or other dreams.
- ◉ Place them end to end to end to see into the past & occasionally the future.
- ◉ Construct a disco ball & dance beneath its light.
- ◉ Assemble a wind-chime-prism mobile & enjoy the magic it makes.
New parents can hang it over the baby's bed.
- ◉ Parents with older children can have them bury the dream in the backyard (supply shovel & gloves) & say a prayer.
- ◉ Paint each piece a different color & call it modern art.
- ◉ Pulverize them, add a bonding agent, & pour or shape however you want.
- ◉ Pulverize them & pour the powder into bottles & sell them for a song.
(Including an ingredients/nutritional label may get complicated. However, a warning label, such as, "May not be safe for consumption," wouldn't hurt.)

As to starting over, starting from scratch, or alternative approaches, the following are known to be used. (Please see Disclaimer.) (See also the “just starting out” question in FAQs.)

- ◉ Hire an arborist & architect to create a dreamscape environment.

As with any growth, proper nourishment & nurturing are required, applying abundant water & light, cool or steamy climate, fertile soil. No dream will flourish when either force-fed or neglected. Allow the dream to take root in the heart. Mindfulness is key. Be informed & continue the nurturing process.

- ◉ Get a dreamweaver.

Keep in mind it is you who supplies the material & threads. As the saying goes, *You build with what you've been given*. If you're unsure of your fabrics & colors, use the work sheet included with this manual to define & describe your dream or dreams. The important thing is to ponder & begin gathering. You may not use all that you gather, but your dream plan will be more open to you the more there is at hand.

- ◉ Tie it to a star and wish, wish, wish, wish, wish.

REQUIRED GEAR: 5-LIGHT-YEAR-LONG ROPE. (Need we say more?)

- ◉ Create a dreamcatcher.

Use either the ancient traditional design or come up with your own. According to myth, the best place to hang one is over your bed, although windows, doorways, rooftops & trees are said to be suitable. (Some testimonials regarding this method have been proven unreliable. Such is the nature of the pursuit of dreams.)

- ◉ Spread your wings & fly.* (Interpret however you want.)

* Suggestion from the custodian.

Some dreams begin nebulously, others are sharply defined. It's their nature to be shaped, like clouds, by many variables, some within our control & grasp, some not. This manual is by no means exhaustive. But there are at least 2 other options worth sharing.

- ◉ Open your dream to others.

There is the one-in-a-million dreamer whose seemingly impossible dream actually reaches the stars. The big dream. It's both a collaborative & an isolated process, but the rewards & benefits are great & far-reaching. Be prepared to work long & hard, undergoing many trials & errors. Be sure those who rise to the occasion with you believe in & share the dream. Not for the faint of spirit.

- ◉ Consider the possibility that you, dear dreamer, may be somebody else's dream.

(It it real? Is it true? Are *you* true?) Though related in some ways, this is a matter requiring its own material & is not covered in this manual. Also, see “Know thyself” answer in FAQs.

*You may choose to simply say life is but a dream, come what may.**

* From anonymous note in suggestion box.

*The dream that became this manual
began with a self-imposed desire to gift the author-dreamer's friends,
and the need for self-promotion; to show the range of ideas he develops and the
quality of work he does. (It's also an annual tradition of his.)
As the deadline approached, which was roughly New Year's Day
(dubbed D-Day), new and improved ideas sprouted and hence,
a glittering wrench flew into the works.
No harm done—only more pressure, time, four additional pages,
sleeplessness, and a breath of contented relief.*

NOTE ON THE SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

- ◉ Use the dream sheet to define and develop your dreams.
- ◉ Cut and place the dreamcloud images anywhere you want—bathroom mirror, phone, computer, car window, forehead—to remind you (and others) of your dream.
- ◉ Besides expressing the beauty, fragility, and purity of desire, the Yeats poem emphasizes the importance of protecting both yourself and your dream.
- ◉ Make what you will of “Fragments.”

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q My dream slipped but didn't break. Is there anything I should do before chasing it again?

A Why chase it? Perhaps that is the cause it slipped: it was out beyond your reach and not truly yours to begin with. Check your motives, desires, intents. But perhaps this is what you meant: Though the kite is in the air we've got our feet on the ground (sometimes running) with the string firmly held in our hand. It's good to have a game plan (even if it's seat-of-the-pants), but if the plan is working us and not the right way around, consider the affect the dream may be having on you. Some dreams need realigning, redesigning, identifying. Or even abandoning. Typically, a good dream just needs a good dusting.

Q I finally got my dream put back together, but all those cracks and seams! They look like crap.

A We recommend you don't hide them or try some kind of cover-up. Those breaks and mends make the dream more meaningful, inspiring, valuable. They are to be respected, because they prove our mind and heart, our resolve. They also reveal particulars: They show what parts took the fall, what is strong, what is fragile, weak, areas that need support or special care, or perhaps eliminating altogether.

Q I've had so many broken dreams I've lost count. I've re-dreamed and re-dreamed and re-dreamed. When do I call it quits?

A We're sorry this has been your experience. It happens from time to time—it's the nature of dreams. (It's our guess that if you have this manual, you're not a quitter.) Opinions range widely on this question. The first that comes to mind: If we're counting our losses instead of living each moment with some positive emotion, such as gratitude, our dreams are likely to slip. Some say you quit when your dream lies with you in the grave. A few say don't dream at all (statistics indicate this outlook is increasing), then you'll have nothing to quit. We believe the worse that happens are those dreams that are brought to fruition, only to become clear they were not what we believed. Some dreams become torments, fever dreams. Some are bad from the start, appearing harmless in daylight but are in fact nightmares posing in shiny cloaks.

Q I'm just starting out. How do I know what to dream? How do I know what's for me and what's not? I don't want a big mess on my hands.

A Dreamer, know thyself. What quickens your heart? Turns your head, catches your ear, lightens your step? What touches your thoughts, when you pause to drift? Do you pause often enough, think your own thoughts? What do you believe in? Who do you believe in? Who believes in you? Do you believe in yourself? What do you want waiting for you, around the next few bends? Around the lifelong bend? Chances are if you're reading this manual, you already have dreams, or some fragments you've found, and need to take the next step: Try one. Bring it out. Seek, and ye will find. You won't know until you do.

Q I have a dream but my responsibilities (a special needs individual I care for) prevent me from ever realizing it.

A If no reasonable solution is possible, such as sharing your care with others and delegating your work, consider that what you are doing helps keep your special-needs someone alive. Perhaps that's their dream, their only dream, and it's big as life itself. It is life itself. We all have special needs, and fortunately some of us are stronger than others. While weariness afflicts our bodies and minds, we should guard against any deep negativity that poisons us, which is counterproductive to all. Our hope is that you find a manageable solution and once again encourage your dream.

Which brings us to the final purpose of this manual, to be answered by each one: What is the point of your dream? What is it all about?

DISCLAIMER: THIS MANUAL IS INTENDED TO INSPIRE, INFORM AND AMUSE. THE AUTHOR-DREAMER IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR MISHAPS RESULTING FROM APPLICATION OF THE CONTENTS HEREIN. DREAM RESPONSIBLY.