

Karma in a Dream?

Ram (James Swartz)

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Dan: Hi, James.

In *Introduction to Vedanta*, Swami Paramarthananda wrote:

1. During the dream state (*svapna avastha*) our memory faculty alone is functioning.
2. The waking state (*jagrat avastha*) is collection of experiences, and the dream state is recollection of experiences.

Does this mean that every emotion in the dream is recollected? From these two lines it would seem to be that's what he is saying, but emotion in a dream can very much look like collection. It is not at all uncommon to wake up now actually crying, when before the crying had been dream crying, now actually laughing, when just before you were laughing at the dream, still knowing the emotion. Of course, if I say that this is a sign of collection, rather than recollection, then it would mean *manas* is operational, but he says only *chitta* is operational in *swapna*.

What do you think?

James: Hi, Dan.

Actually the whole subtle body is functioning the dream state: the mind, intellect, ego, memory and the active and passive senses. The dream entity can see, think, feel, smell, taste, touch, remember, etc. It can do anything it can do in waking and some extras – flying, for instance – because it is not hampered by the laws operating on the physical body. This is why you think a dream is real when you are in it.

The point he's making is that you don't create *karma* in a dream. It is only causal body content working out, i.e. recollected. You only create *karma* in the waking state, when the gross body, the *annaymaya kosa*, is operative. If you collected *karma* from a dream, say you killed someone, you would have to account for it in the waking state. You do collect *karma* in a dream, but it stays in the dream state; it is dream *karma*.

However, the waking state entity – *viswa* – creates *karma*, which produces *vasanas* which are stored in the causal body, the unconscious mind. The dream state activates the subtle body, and the content of the dream state entity's experience is only *vasanas* acquired in the waking state, outpicturing owing to *prarabdha*, the momentum of waking-state actions. You actually don't work out *karma* in the dream state, although there is a belief that you do. You experience it only. But since the *citta*, memory, is operational, you can recall your experience, analyze it and resolve it when you wake up. People do dreamwork because the dream state provides access to unconscious content that is not available in the waking state, owing to the extroversion of the mind brought about by activated *prarabdha karma*.

You wake up with the dream emotions because the subtle body is also active in the waking state. But they gradually disappear as new *vasanas* sprout to produce

actions and their relevant emotions.

~ Love, James