

Visitation Dreams of Deceased Love Ones

Understanding Their Meaning and Transformative Power



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Preston Ni is a professor, author, presenter, and private coach. For more information, write to commsuccess@nipreston.com, or visit www.nipreston.com.

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*“Thou...dost visit oft my midnight dream;
Thy glory meets me with the earliest beam
Of light, which tells that Morning is awake.”*

— William Wordsworth

"Sometimes dreams are wiser than waking."

— Black Elk

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Eight Characteristics of Visitation Dreams

Many years ago, shortly after my friend Janet unexpectedly passed away, I had a vivid and intense dream about her. During her life, Janet was disabled and wheelchair bound. In my dream, however, I saw Janet moving freely and joyfully. She looked young and healthy. Her entire body basked in radiant light, and she smiled warmly at me. Happy to see her, I exclaimed: “Janet, you look beautiful!”, and reached out to touch her face. The instant I made contact, I woke up, trembling in amazement. I knew that a profound experience had just taken place.

Clinical psychologist Jennifer Shorter defines visitation dreams as “Striking emotionally intense dreams in which a recently deceased loved one returns to provide guidance, reassurance, and/or warning.” These experiences are unique, powerful, and sometimes life-changing. Based on Shorter’s doctoral research, as well as other scholarly writing, below are eight common characteristics of visitation dreams.

1. “It Feels So Real”

One of the most common descriptions of visitation dreams is that they are much more intense, vivid, and kinesthetic than ordinary dreams. “It feels so real” is a common refrain, characterizing experiences both during and after the dream. The intensity of the dream may stay with the dreamer for months or even years, as if the dream had happened only recently.

There's more to this excerpt!

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