

A Thought Provoking Experience

I had a dream last night, and all I can say is, "Wow!" It was totally amazing. A first glance at it might reveal that it was totally meaningless. It was a bunch of scattered thoughts. But I have come to know that there is meaning in every dream; and that they are given for a purpose. It is one of the means by which the Great Spirit of the Universe communicates with us. It is one of the means by which He molds and makes us into valuable entities in this great life. So I look for the meaning of each dream. I look for that which I am to learn from it. And in this dream I accomplished something that was entirely impossible to me, giving an effective impromptu speech. It was a very thought provoking experience.

The dream began with a classroom that moved next door. This was a Speech Class; and there was a substitute teacher. Immediately as the students filled the room there was an element of fear permeating the air. A substitute teacher in a Speech Class usually means we are going to have impromptu speeches. It has been my experience over the last twelve years that I really botch up every impromptu speech because of fear. My mind goes blank and no deep thinking goes into the speech. In a single sentence, I flop on my face.

The teacher began the class by showing and stating, "I have here a one hundred-foot roll of shelf paper." There was an immediate breath of relief that swept over the room. It was a great expulsion of stress with one great exhale of previously owned oxygen. The great thought was that we are going to fix up the room. We'll be glad to help with lining the shelves was the grateful thought in every mind. The atmosphere immediately became very much less tense.

There had been so much fear in the air that all the chairs had scurried to the back of the room. I selected a chair and boldly placed it front and center, right in front of the teacher. All the other students began to move into place and form rows once more. The pervading aroma on the air became one of intense interest. How wonderful to have a sympathetic teacher! This is a guy who really knows how to prepare a classroom for study. "Okay sir, what is our first move?"

He began by directing our attention to the roll of self-sticking shelf paper. He unrolled a few feet and began to pull the backing sheet off of it. I graciously helped by holding the paper away from the backing sheet. He then curled the paper around to the backing sheet in a loop and stuck it down at one edge. Then moving away from the shelf paper he calmly enacted his next strategy.

He took a banana and meticulously dissected the peeling into 12 parts, drawing on it straight lines that mapped out an array of shapes and sizes. All attention was focused on what was happening with that banana. And in every mind was the wonder of the moment. What was this interesting person up to? What kind of speech class were we having today? Then he asked the fatal question: "Who will volunteer to talk first about this experience? You must speak a minimum of one minute; but you may talk for as long as you'd like." My hand shot up immediately. I reached for the sky with enthusiasm. The meaning of all I had just seen was becoming apparent to me. It was a very thought provoking experience.

I gave my speech a title; "The Great Banana Split" and I began with a high level of enthusiasm to talk about preparing the banana for a delicious ice cream treat. I talked about the health aspects of eating such snacks. Then I talked about dissecting a banana, referring to the teacher as Doctor Scruples. I talked about operating on a fruit, or even a Fruitcake. I talked about how people don't become Fruitcakes until after the operation. I talked about the shelf paper, and how the two events seemed to have no connection, no relation.

I talked about the fear of public speaking, the tension in the air, and the stress inside each person. I talked about the length of my speech, which took the whole hour and a half, and the benefits and hindrances to the other students. I talked about the teacher's two seemingly unconnected events and about all the unconnected aspects of my speech. I talked about the bottom line connection between everything we were experiencing. I talked about our thinking processes and thought provoking experiences. As I closed out the class with my concluding remarks I told them I'd be available for hugs and handshakes after class and even for conversations and dates.

The dream was from God and it miraculously continued after I got up to satisfy a nature call and returned to bed. I couldn't reenact the whole speech here or even remember everything I talked about because it was so much. I was light-hearted and humorous through it all. It was the only time I ever gave an effective impromptu speech, and it was only in my dreams.

I woke up knowing exactly why I had the dream and what it meant. I knew what I was supposed to learn from it. There are things happening in my life that require deep thinking and calm, peaceful action. These things require the love I wasn't able to apply to situations in the past. My first order of business was talking with my daughter about struggles she is experiencing right now. It was to give her calm reassurance that there is a way to reach a solution.

Each event in this life is a thought provoking experience. If we will apply deep thinking to it without being filled with stress and fear we will be able to effectively reach a solution to every challenge. We must handle everything with the minimum being love, but we may maintain as much joy and enthusiasm as we'd like.

by Wes Allen
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