

Hi my name is Wheeler Bills and I am from a small town in Nova Scotia called Inverness. Most people do not know me in town. In fact, most people at my school wouldn't notice me walking down the hall during school. I am a nobody in my social life. The only people that I really connect with are my best friend Jada and my family.

I live with my family in a two-story cottage. I share the whole upstairs with my sister Sadie. My parents, Tom and Robin, spend most of their time downstairs. I have two dogs, Olive and Cinder. Sometimes I feel that they are my only true friends because they will never leave my side and they know when I am down. That's my social life in short.

Everyone I know has something special that they can do whether its sports or art or even music. I do a little bit of all of these things but they do not give me the joy that it gives everybody else. My life is not that interesting. Anybody could look at me and probably know what I just told you.

There is one thing that is very special to me and no one in my life knows about it. That one thing is dreaming. I know that might sound weird; a person who looks forward to dreaming at night. Most people think of dreaming as just something that randomly happens at night. For me it is the most exciting and joyful thing in my life. I am someone special in my dream world, not just someone people don't think twice about. To be honest, I don't give a damn about my social life. It is in my dream world where I thrive mentally and physically.

In my dream reality, which is more real to me than my waking reality, I am the leader of a small community of people on an island off the coast of Fiji. Sounds weird, right? Me, a leader, someone important! It wasn't easy achieving this position. In order to become the leader, I had to first create this island. I now want to tell you a story about the creation of this island, a fantastic world.

It all started when I entered into my dream world from a long and boring day of waking reality where I went to school and did what people told me to do. I found myself floating in the middle of the ocean. All I could see were bright and colorful fish swimming around me. I started to get scared because I had never been in a situation like this before. I calmed myself down and asked myself what I could do to make this place suitable for me. I realized that I had been longing for a vacation from my waking reality and this would be a perfect opportunity for me to make my ideal escape. Now keep in mind you can do anything in a dream. I started placing earth until it rose to a small island big enough for a minute community of people to live on. Buildings, bridges, farms, and trees started coming from the ground. After a long period of time my island was done and the only thing left was to get the people.

I decided that there needed to be a test to see who could inhabit this land. I created a system that sorted the good from the bad. The test worked like this: a person would arrive in a stuffy room that was pure white with two chairs and a table. After a short wait a man in a black uniform to shield his identity would walk in and place a red sphere in the center of the table. This is where the test would start. I created a machine that would choose the good people from the bad people. If the ball expanded that would mean the person is rejected. If it disappeared you would be welcomed into the beautiful world I created.

This is my real reality. My waking reality is just something to remind me that there are two worlds that my soul can travel to. I now am happier in my waking life because I have this place to escape to every night. You will not believe how others

around you react to the good vibes a person emits by being happy. People grab onto my happiness now and they appreciate me for who I am whether I am in the waking reality of life or in the dreaming reality of life. I have learned to be who I am in both worlds. I now have two whole worlds to look forward to everyday. I don't judge my happiness by what others think of me. I only care about how other people and places make me feel.

I try to remember my earliest memory but it is not a memory at all; what I see is an extraordinary phenomenon that every human in existence has experienced. I remember giant chess pieces coming to life, and jumping around me. One of them landed on me and then it ended. This memory is from a dream, not a drawing or a story I made up. I am happy that this is the first thing I can remember from my childhood because it is unique. It fascinates me that the first thing I can remember only exists within me and no one else.

Dreams are, in my mind, one of the most amazing aspect of life. In everyday life, everything is so planned out for you. You do not have as much freedom as you would in a dream. You wake up, go to school or work, then you come home and repeat this the next day. But incredible things happen when you go to sleep. You start seeing images of places or people doing the most impossible things you can think of. We wake up and, if you can even remember it, you might want to tell your friends about the dream you had that night where you were flying! After this you don't think much more about it and it gets tucked far back in your memory where it will stay. Have you ever thought that there might be more to life than your waking life? Well there is and to find this is not as hard as you think, it is actually so accessible that you do it every night.

Dreams are the part of life that a lot of people don't think much of, but dreams can actually be considered a part of ones own reality. There are twenty-four hours in a day and we are awake for probably about fifteen or sixteen hours of those, but where are we for the rest? In our own personal reality. Don't you think that if 26 years of our life is spent sleeping must mean that seeping is more than just something that we do to get rest? Dreams are a reality that you are completely in charge of. Every single thing that happens is inspired by the tasks you do or the things you say during the day. When we are having nightmares we seek comfort so we leave the dream reality to be in the waking reality, which acts as a shield against the message the nightmare was sending to you. Nightmares are scary because they are what you need to know. When we are dreaming we are at the peak of our potential, we are the most creative, because the world that you see in your dreams is literally constructed from your imagination.

I would say that dream reality is just as real as waking reality because it is your mind expressing what it needs to vent or visualize. It might scare you but it is something that you need to face in order to know yourself.

There are some reoccurring dreams that I have been having my whole life and I am just now starting to realize that they might mean something that is extremely important. One of the dreams that I have about three to five times a year is one in which I walk into a completely white room with two white chairs and one white table between them. A man in black walks into the room and places a small red ball in the center of the table. He then leaves and I am inexplicably very drawn to the ball. I touch it with my finger and it starts expanding. It eventually expands so much that I am suffocated up against the wall from its mass. I then leave the dream and wake up in the waking world where I am gasping for air because I had felt the sensation of being suffocated in my

dream. I have had this dream so many times that I think there is a really deeply encoded meaning to it. I am currently trying to unpack it so I can better understand it. Hopefully one day I can realize what this dream has to offer me. One interpretation I have for this dream is that it is some sort of test where the red ball decides whether you are worthy or not. If you are not worthy of whatever it is testing it will suffocate you. I think in my dream I am the one being suffocated because it is trying to tell me how to conduct the test. To know how to do something and understand it you need to have had a real experience with it.

Another reoccurring dream that I have been having recently is one in which I am in the middle of an ocean and there is nothing in sight. I start to panic because I think I am going to drown but then I realize that I am in a dream, which makes me feel like I can do anything. I end up creating a mid-sized island that has no problems; everyone who lives on this island is in the best possible mental condition. On this island I created I have no limits to what I can do. I can jump extremely high into the air onto colorful platforms in the sky. I can breathe under water in the crystal clear ocean surrounding the island. This dream gives me the sense of pure happiness. I have never felt this much joy or happiness in my waking life. Having this dream allows me to have something that is really special to me and it allows me to have this special vivid memory that is unique to me and no one else. When I am sad or just unhappy I can think back to a bunch of good memories to make myself feel better and, believe it or not, not one of them never really physically happened. It was all in my mind.

If you asked someone if a particular dream has any important significance in his or her life, most people would probably say no. Most people think dreams are just a random succession of images that pop into their mind at night. This question varies depending on where you are. If it was asked in the United States most people would answer “no” and I believe this goes for most of the developed world where mysticism, spiritual practice, and rituals are not as embedded in the culture. If you asked this question to somebody in a very diverse Native American tribe their answer might be completely opposite because dreams are such an important source of wisdom and knowledge in Native American culture. There was a Native American named Ishi and his story is amazing and inspiring. He was part of the Yahi tribe and he was sadly the last Yahi for a great amount of time. The Americans slaughtered his whole tribe and he fortunately was able to survive. He lived in the wild for most of his life until he was fifty. He had never seen any modern societies in his life. As far as he was concerned he was the only other person alive. When he came out of the shadows he had to adapt to a whole new world of people and machines. People referred to him as the “last Wild Indian” since he had been living an ancient life style for most of his life. The reason I talk about him is because he had dreams about his tribe being murdered before any of it even happened. He even dreamt about the train before he had ever been in modern society. This is amazing because it is a perfect example of how significant and powerful one single dream can be. How would you feel if you dreamt about everyone you loved dying from these weird machines being produced and then it happened? How can that not be proof that dreams have great significance in life?

There were many Native American traditions in which dream like states would be induced. Sweat lodges were and still are in some places a very common technique used to heal the mind. They are meant to help you find out what you need to know in life. A

sweat lodge is not necessarily the same as a dream because a dream happens subconsciously whereas a sweat lodge is designed to trigger the dream state, through a more intentional, ritualistic, process. The main purpose of a sweat lodge in Native American culture is to bring strength to one's spirituality. The experience in a sweat lodge can either be good, or it can be a like bad dream in which you feel trapped. The purpose of a bad dream is to help one conquer one's fears. The truth is often scary but it is something we have to face in order to live a true life. Sweat lodges remind one of his or her true identity, where and what one is meant to live for.

There are many other religions and cultures that allow their dreams to influence their actions but, in my mind, the Native American culture is the most relevant to my experience because I live in a country where many Native American tribes still practice their traditional ways.

There is a long history that is connected with dreaming and reality. Some of the earliest recordings about dreams are from Asia and Europe. Asian cultures had strong opinions towards the dream reality. They believe that when you dream the most vital parts of your soul go on a journey through the most important things that you need to know. Dreaming is considered one of the three states that the human soul experiences during one's life. The other two are the waking state and the sleeping state. Keep in mind that the sleeping state and dreaming state are completely different. The sleeping state is physical and the dreaming state is mental. The two main definitions were that dreams were expressions coming from your inner desire meaning that they told you what you really wanted or desired in life. The other definition was that your soul left your body and was guided by the gods until awakened. Whether these definitions are right, nobody knows. This is something that you have to decide completely in your mind. If you don't believe in it, it does not exist but if you do, it does. Nobody can interpret your life style. In Abrahamic religions dreams are also very important. They believe that dreams are where the real lessons in life are learned. This is because when you dream it is the most honest your mind will ever be with you. Your mind is literally putting a visual of life lessons in your dreams. They believed that the lessons were being taught to you by the voice of god every night.

Dreams are frequently featured in literature. Dreams are more in fiction because they are so creative but there are also non-fiction books about dreams. One of the Fiction stories I read was called *The Night Face Up* by Julio Cortázar. This was a short story about a man who got in a motorcycle accident and spent a while in the hospital. In the hospital he was in and out of consciousness all the time. When he was awake he was very groggy and couldn't do much. When he was asleep he was in a crazy dream world where it was both pleasant and also terrifying. In his dreams he is a part of a Moteca tribe and an Aztec tribe is chasing them. The Aztec tribe is slaughtering anyone they can get their hands on. He is tripping and getting caught in the shrubbery while he is running so it was very scary. In the end of his dream he is caught and killed by the Aztecs. He is not clear on what happens after that but you can guess that him dying in his dream also symbolizes that he died in the hospital from a high fever. This story is great for my research because the whole time you are very confused on what is reality and what is not reality. There is so much jumping around from one another that you cannot say which reality is real anymore. It was also very powerful that they made him die within his dreams and not in the hospital.

The children's book *Alice In Wonderland* by Lewis Carol may just seem like a cheerful kids book but there is actually much more meaning in it than you think. In the book, Alice, the main character, falls through a rabbit hole and appears in a spectacular dream world. She meets many mythical creatures and many other weird beings. She experiences a whole lot of strange and unreal events. In the end, she wakes up right back where she had dreamt falling into the rabbit hole. This story is amazing because her dream makes the question "what is reality?" very valid because it felt so real to the point where she had feelings for all of the characters she met. The experience she had was very similar to someone who is tripping on mushrooms or acid, everything is just very warped and spectacular. Everything is amplified to its most potential. In *Alice In Wonderland*, there are many drug references or visuals. Cocaine, speed, LSD, nitrous oxide, crystal meth, MDMA, marijuana, mushrooms, opium, and nicotine are all of the references or visuals that are thought to be in *Alice In Wonderland*. This is a topic that has many sides, some people think that there are no drug references and others think that there are. It is all based on how you perceive things. This list of drugs may be confusing because you might be thinking what do drugs have to do with dreams? The state you are in when you are in a dream is very similar to experimenting with drugs. Drugs are just a way to be sure to experience these unreal experiences because in a dream you might not remember having the experience the next morning but that wouldn't happen with drugs.

The book *Einstein's Dreams* by Alan Lightman is also fiction but it is written in a way where you would expect it to be real theories. The whole book is all fictional dreams that Einstein was said to have. Each of the dreams has a huge relationship to the idea of Time. One of the points that he really tries to express in the book is that every human has a great connection to time whether you know it or not. Some of the chapters are very scientific and talk about relativity, but a lot of the chapters are also completely fantasy.

Sigmund Freud wrote a book called *The Interpretation Of Dreams*. This book goes a lot into the consciousness and asks the question what can dreams tell you? Freud believes that dreams can give us the answer to our deepest problems whether they took place a long time ago or very recently. He says that dreams are the only door we have to going that deep in our consciousness. Therefore dreams are the only way we can channel the answer we seek.

A question that I have been asking very actively is *what is reality?* Many people argue that there is only one reality: the waking reality where our bodies are physically active. The truth, as discussed earlier in this paper, is that consciousness is the only reality because you are undeniably conscious of your own reality. Consciousness is such a huge topic that you could have multiple realities within your own consciousness. We have simultaneous and disparate realities, all within a common framework. In my case I have two realities, one being my waking state and then the other being my dreaming state. The reason I consider my dream world as a reality is because I am dreaming just as regularly as I am up in my waking reality. Couldn't the waking reality be fake and our dream reality real? This is something that is very personal and hard to think about. Choosing what your realities are is up to you. Reality is something that can be altered creatively in your mind because if you are dreaming you can alter your reality to whatever you want and if you are in your waking life you can change how your reality will work out. It is one of the most flexible and solid things there are. I think that our mind is most elaborate and creative when we are dreaming. When we are awake I feel

that we can still be creative but it is much harder because it is naturally muzzled if you do not try as hard as you can.

Dreaming is something that I could talk about all day and there would still be so many unanswered questions. I urge you to pay more attention to your dreams because they are so much more important than you think. I have had so many reoccurring dreams that to this day I can still not understand. As Freud said, dreams are the only way we can unlock a certain part of our consciousness. This is completely true because you can find the most important things in life through your dreams. Dreams are the most amazing phenomenon because it is your mind having a mind of its own.

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