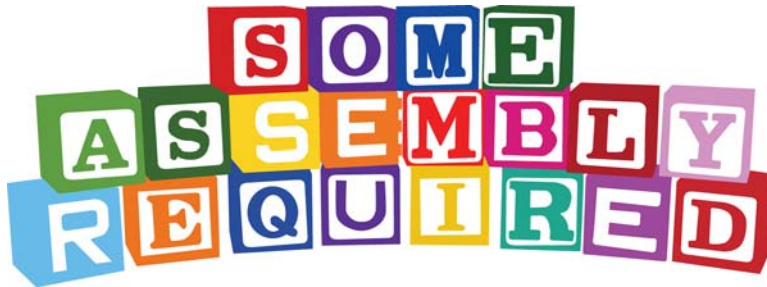


## Operating Manuals

by Patti Allen

Do you remember the first time you bought an appliance? Maybe it was when you went off to university or left home to live on your own. When you made your purchase and brought it home, you learned that the three most feared words (“some assembly required”) always came with assembly instructions and an operating manual. And although those manuals were no guarantee of success when it came to actually operating your purchase, at least you knew you had a fighting chance at making it work.



Often we come to rely on these manuals so it's strange that the one area in which we would most benefit from an operating manual, there is none. And the needy area to which I refer is our inner world. How we feel, what we fear, what we are passionate about and how to handle all the challenges of being human and getting along with the people in our lives, is left to the chance of wise and good parenting and lucky breaks. But my interests are in dreams, and for your consideration I suggest that dreams are the missing operation manual that we need for our lives.

How do dreams offer you a way to navigate and operate your life? Dreams will always tell you the truth about your feelings. You may think that you're adjusting to university, an empty nest, a new job or a difficult relationship, but your dreams may tell you where things can be improved if they can, or let you know precisely what the problem is. Alternatively, you may have strong, positive feelings about someone new in your life that you might not have realized were it not for a powerful dream.

Betty\* was an older woman in my dream group who never remembered very many dreams. However, she did remember one nightmare that she wanted to understand so she signed up for the course to understand that particular dream and hoped to generate some new dreams along the way. She was disappointed when the ten-week course ended without any new material to work with, yet she was an eager student and one day hoped to use what she learned in the dream group. Then one day, long after the course ended, she went on a blind date with a man that friends wanted her to meet. She came back from coffee with Bob and didn't think much would develop from the meeting and that he wasn't her type. No one was more surprised than Betty when she had a dream that night! She remembered how to work with the dream and was able to unravel and understand the dream's message. It told her to take another look at Bob. She did, giving the relationship a chance and later that year they were married. I had the pleasure of being invited to their celebration! Betty and Bob are still together years later.

When you are unsure as to your next step in life, or what is the right decision for you, then sleep on it! Everything you need to know about yourself and your life is available to you through this magnificent source of self-knowledge. And to understand the dream's message requires learning how to decipher the code that is in the dream's symbols. This is easier than trying to set the time on your electronic devices and a lot more fun, guaranteed! Dream resources are available on line and if you've found this website you may already be familiar with what is available. Most cities have professionals who are skilled in dream work or, short of local talent, you can join a tele-conference type class in dreams. You can also simply gather a few trusted friends around your kitchen table and start sharing your dreams. And of course, I am available to teach you how to "operate" your life as a dreaming human! Whatever route you choose, before you know it, you will be skilled in operating your own life.

\* Note: Betty is not her real name.

*Patti would be happy to hear from you and can be reached by phone or email.*

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