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Excerpted from Robert Bosnak's memory exercises in his "*Little Course of Dreams*" (pp. 8-17)

***If you want to work with your dreams, you need to catch them:  
Exercises for improving dream recall***

A dream is a happening in space, an articulation of space. We find ourselves in a space we call "dream" upon awakening... The dream itself is a texture woven of space and time inside of which we find ourselves. During the dream we believe we are awake, in the same way we believe we are awake when we truly are. That's why it is important to remember dreams as spatial structures, so that our experiences in dream space can be most adequately recalled.

***The first four exercises help you develop the "art of memory."***

***Exercise 1: Moving through the Dream World***

The essence of this exercise is to deliberately and intensively explore the physical world, while remembering that even when you're asleep you think you're awake. Practice moving through space, knowing "you are moving around inside an ordinary nightly dream, while at the same time you're certain that you're awake."

***Exercise 2: Recalling Dream Objects***

Pick up an object. Look at it carefully. Move it, turn it around, all the while taking it in as thoroughly as possible. Then close your eyes and "look" at the object. Try to recall how it rotated and what it looked like from different angles.

***Exercise 3: Creating a Memory Storage Room***

Walk around inside a small room. There should be several unique points of interest, and items of different shapes and sizes. Notice everything as deeply as you can. Take things in - handle them, smell them. Then rest and close your eyes, recalling the room and everything in it.

***Exercise 4: An Imaginary Tour of Your House***

Scroll through the homes you've known best and choose the one that you remember most clearly. Now connect into your sensory perception - awake to the experience of your breath moving in you, and notice as many bodily sensations as you can. When you have felt your way deeply into your body, visualize the house you want to enter. Start at the main entrance and take in every detail as you look at the house. Turn around and look at the view - what do you see? Turn back to the door, see the door as clearly as you can, and open it. Let your eyes adjust, and look around. Look up and down, all around. *Make sure to walk slowly.* Take your time and notice everything. If something catches your eye, go take a closer look. Move from room to room.

When you've looked around extensively, you *slowly* move to that place in the house where your bed is. Slowly, much more slowly. Slowing down is one of the most difficult exercises in the volatile world of images (p. 11).

Observe your bed, sit on it, lie down and get under the covers. What is the feeling of being in that bed? Stay for a while. When you get up, look around. Does anything look different? Leave the room and look around some more. Ask yourself if you see more, or differently now.

### ***The following exercises are about recording dreams***

#### ***Exercise 5: Observing the Moment of Awakening***

Begin with the intention of waking up as consciously as possible. Wake up without an alarm, and lie completely still. Let the waking up happen, and be there for it, noticing everything. What changes in your sensations, breath and thoughts as you move from the sleep state into the waking state? Do this every day for a week and decide absolutely to remember no dreams whatsoever. The only thing that matters is observing the moment of awakening.

#### ***Exercise 6: Writing Down Your Dreams***

1. You wake up with a shred of a dream that is still vaguely fluttering around. Remain very quietly in the same position. Stay still while looking at the dream, and write this piece down with your eyes still closed. Float along with the image you already remember - maybe another scene will float up to meet you. Write the second piece down too. At this point, you may be able to "reel in" the rest of the dream.

2. If you wake up mid-sleep with an entire dream and you fear there's so much to tell that you won't be able to get it all down, jot down a few short descriptive words, for memory support. When you wake up the next morning, move through the images as you did in the imaginary tour of your house (exercise 4), and try to write down each detail. You will lose some of these dreams, unable to recover them in the morning, but you will rescue others.

3. If you remember a dream in the morning, it's "ideal to describe the images from /inside/ them, so that you just have to look around."

Bosnak adds some suggestions for keeping the dreams alive throughout the day. Go over it a few times to imprint it. Tell the dream to someone - you may even remember more of it when you do this. Muse on the dream when you have a quiet moment. Walk through the dream space when you're in the bathroom; take a look around. Just before sleep that night, "move through the dream once more."