

# Kabbalah and the Power of Dreaming

2005  
*S&P Award  
Winner*

Awakening the Visionary Life

By Catherine Shainberg

*An excellent resource designed for those who want to make the most of their imagination through inner-vision exercises.*

**Book Review by Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat**

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Catherine Shainberg is a psychologist, healer, and teacher with a private practice in New York City. She spent ten years studying the Kabbalah of Light in Jerusalem with Colette Aboulker-Muscat, a direct descendant of the thirteenth-century kabbalist Isaac the Blind and spiritual heir to his teachings. Shainberg then collaborated with Colette for 20 more years. In 1982, she established her own School of Images in New York City, dedicated to teaching the revelatory dream and kavannah (intent) of this ancient Sephardic Kabbalah tradition. Jean Achterberg once said: "The image is the world's oldest and greatest healing resource." Shainberg agrees and has put together an excellent resource on ways to tap this power.

Dreamwork offers a key to wholeness and well-being in a very chaotic and fast-paced world. For Shainberg and the Jewish mystics, dreams act on the physical world. She explains:

"The images may be 'fantasy,' but their effects are real. Imagination affects the physical and vice-versa. The two worlds interact through the body. The way a great band of nerve fibers, the corpus callosum, connects your right and left brain hemispheres, your body also connects your inner dream world with the outside physical world.

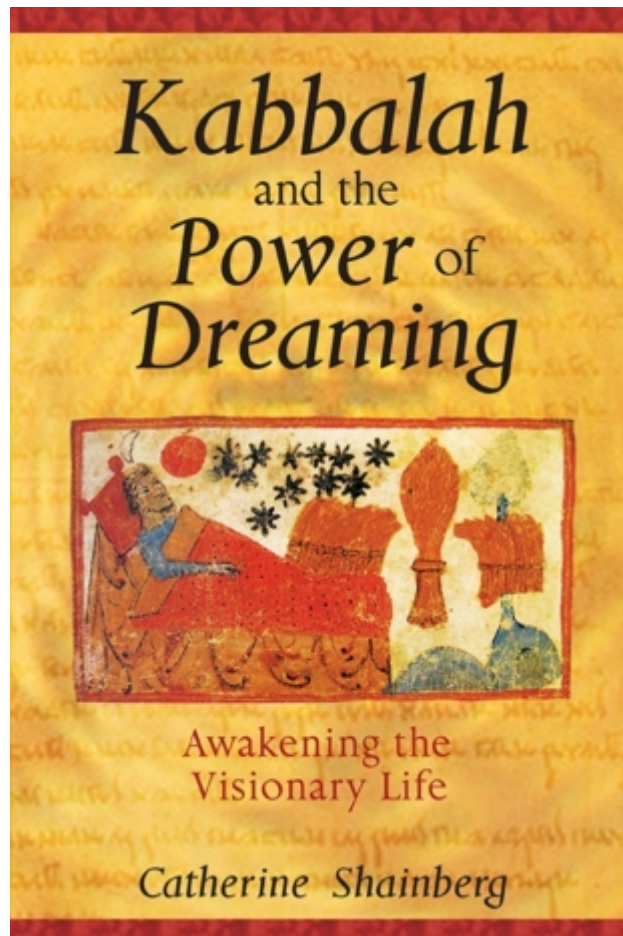
"Your body is the boundary and the link. Being securely grounded in your body, with a strong habit of paying attention to the messages your senses give you, maintains your access to

both worlds while, at the same time, safeguarding you from the danger of losing yourself in either."

Tapping into the inner world is something we all did naturally as children. Shainberg is convinced that we can get back on track by recovering what William Blake called "true imagination." The goal is to keep both worlds in your awareness so that you become filled with light and become One.

The very accessible teachings in this fine book demonstrate a fresh and healing way for us to live out the meanings and messages of our dreams. There are chapters on pattern and perception, setting up your life plan, paying attention to your dreams, reversing, returning to your senses, practicing life's quickening exercises, intent and dreaming, the waking dream, changing the past, perfecting the life plan, and return to oneness. In each chapter, Shainberg offers a progression of imagery exercises to help you accomplish a series of tasks. Short, designed to be done in just a few minutes, these are effective ways both to tap into what is going on inside you and to identify the habitual ways you act in the outside world. Through practice, you can learn to use these images to find your sacred purpose and initiate transformation.

Mary Ann had the great pleasure of studying with Colette Aboulker-Muscat in Jerusalem. Asked what her work was about, Colette said, "I teach life." Her student has learned the lessons well and passes them on to us in *Kabbalah and The Power of Dreaming*. This is a self-help book that lives up to its billing.



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