

Why bleak, frightening dreams may make us better people

What are dreams for? A handful of theories predominate. Sigmund Freud famously contended that they reveal hidden truths and [wishes](#). More recent research suggests that they may help us process intense [emotions](#), or perhaps sort through and consolidate [memories](#), or make sense of random neuron [activity](#), or rehearse responses to threatening [situations](#).

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A study of Canadian university students found the most common dream topics, apart from sex, to be school, falling, being chased, and arriving too late for [something](#).

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If human dreams sound bleak, bear in mind that even negative ones can have positive effects. In a study of students taking a French medical-school entrance exam, 60 percent of the dreams they had beforehand involved a problem with the exam, such as being late or leaving an answer blank. But those who reported dreams about the exam, even bad ones, did better on it than those who [didn't](#).

So the next time you dream about an education-related sexual experience in which you are both falling and being chased, don't worry: It's probably totally meaningless. Then again, your brain might be practicing so you'll be ready if such an event ever comes to pass.

Read full, original post: [Bad Dreams Are Good](#)