Dream LANGUAGE
Handbook *for Dreamwork*

Robert J. Hoss, MS
foreword by **David Feinstein, PhD**

"*The first major work on Color in Dreams*"
— *Robert Van de Castle, PhD*

2nd Edition
Completely Revised

A New Approach for Personal and Professional Dreamwork

DREAM LANGUAGE
Second Edition
A Handbook for Dreamwork
V2.1
by Robert J. Hoss, MS

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2nd Edition 2019 Revisions

This second edition, subtitled a *Handbook for Dreamwork*, is a complete revision of the original paperback and Kindle copy of *Dream Language: Self Understanding through Imagery and Color* published in 2005 and reprinted in 2012 and 2014. It is now out of print although new copies might be obtained from remaining stock from the publisher Innersource or this author. Significant revisions include: additional and more recent research and theoretical information; corrections or deletions of information no longer pertinent; corrections to a few dream examples to better reflect the original journal entries; as well as updates to the *Transformative Dreamwork* approach to refine and better integrate the complete protocol. The Forward and Acknowledgements are the same as that of the hard copy. The chapter structure is roughly the same with some name changes to reflect the new and updated content. The subtitle of the book is changed to reflect its revised nature as more of a tutorial handbook and reference for those working with their own dreams or the dreams of others. This book will provide a good general understanding of the science and psychology of dreaming. For even more depth the reader is referred to *Dreams: Understanding Biology, Psychology and Culture* (Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019).

Table of Contents

GUIDE FOR TRANSFORMATIVE DREAMWORK

PART 1: EXPLORATION - ASSOCIATION & METAPHOR WORK

Step #1 - Record the Dream Story – as if you are re-experiencing it (use first person, present tense). Give it a **Title** and **Sketch** the scene from above or any odd imagery (*dream elements*).

Step #2 - Life Story: describe any emotionally impactful (positive or negative) or upsetting situations, conflicts, decisions in your life at the time.

Step #3 - Dream to Life Comparison:
  a) **Dream Orientation**: At the onset does the dream: 1. *metaphorically* picture some emotional situation in your waking life; or 2. symbolize (figuratively or *archetypally*) something that needs to be dealt with to resolve the situation (*Shadow*, past event or trauma, associated factor). Does it introduce an impactful or surprising event or resolution, that alters your view or actions?
  b) **Metaphors in the Dream Story:** Look for phrases, word-play and action themes in the dream story that when verbalized sound like they also might describe a situation or feelings in your life at the time. Does an odd combination of images "spell out" something meaningful?
  c) **Associations and Memories**:
    • **Define** the dream *elements* (images) and/or their purpose or function (what it is and does)
    • **Define Personality characteristic of known persons** – how are they like and unlike you and how would they approach the unresolved waking situation/conflict you find yourself in?
    • **Themes:** Are any of the actions or feelings or the general theme of what you are doing in the dream similar to what you are doing and feeling in waking life.
    • **Memories:** does an action/setting/image recall something from your life or your past? If from your past what one specific past event comes to mind? Relate to your present situation.
  d) **Rewrite the Dream Story**; substitute these associations in place of the related words/phrases in the narrative; re-write and re-read the Dream Story as relate it to your Life Story.

PART 2: INSIGHT - EXPLORING UNDERLYING EMOTIONS

Step #4 - Give the Dream a Voice – scripted *role-play* (the 6 "magic" questions):
  a) **Pick one or more** images/*element*s X that seem important, or curiously draw your attention.
  b) **Give the Dream a Voice:** Re-enter the dream and "become" that dream *element* 'X'. Speak in the first-person present tense as X would in their role in the dream. Record your statements.
    1a) Who or **what are you** (describe yourself and how you feel): "I am _____"
    1b) *Alternatively - if the dream figure is someone you know, then "become" that person and describe a key personality characteristic they have in relation to their role the dream.*
    2) What is your **purpose or function** in that role? "My purpose is to _____"
    3) What do you **like** about being 'X' ? "I like _____"
    4) What do you **dislike** about being 'X' ? "I dislike _____"
    5) What do you **fear most** as 'X', the worst thing that can happen to you? "I fear _____"
    6) What do you **desire most** as that dream *element*? "What I desire most is to _____"
    7) **Dialog** (optional): Spot the dreamer in the dream, what would you tell them?
  c) **Relate to a Life Situation:** Do one or more of the statements sound like a situation or feelings in your waking life? Do the "I am" and "My purpose" statements sound like a role you see yourself in? Do the "I like" vs. "I dislike" statements sound like a conflict going on in your mind? Do the "I fear" vs. "I desire" statements sound like waking fears and desires that leave you stuck in the conflict? Does the dialog statement sound like a form of practical guidance? If the dream figure is a person you know, they likely represent a personality characteristic: perhaps a reflection of your actions in the situation OR more often they may represent a solution the dream is testing - ask what would they do in your situation, how would they handle conflict you find yourself in?

Step #5 - Exploring the Emotion in Color
   a) **Pick the Colors to work on:** colors that stood out in the dream or color of the image in step #4.
   b) **Pick the closest color** in the **Color Questionnaire** below (also tables 9-7 and/or 9-8).
   c) **Read the statements** for that color and select any that trigger a "connection" with a situation or feelings in your waking life (note: the statements NOT the "meaning" of color, they represent common subliminal associations from color psychology research, intended only to trigger your own personal associations). If the image or scene contains a color pair: a) explore the possibility (table 9-7) that the 2 colors might represent 2 conflicting emotions or b) the integration of two conflicting emotions (table 9-8) as a potential path to resolution.
   d) **Relate to Waking Life:** Pick the one or two statement(s) that create the strongest "aha" response or "connection," that best relate to a waking life situation or conflict. How do these statements augment the other dreamwork steps?

Step #6 – Summary, Putting it All Together:
   Reflect on and combine the more "meaningful" statements from Parts 1 and 2 in a way that relates the dream story to your life story. Focus on the specific waking life conflict(s), fears, desires, past traumas and past events and decisions you made in the past that may relate.

PART 3: ACTION - GUIDANCE & RESOLUTION

Step #7 - Dream Guidance re-enter/review the dream to the end, what brought that ending about?
   a) **Resolution Scenario?** Visualizing how the problem was pictured; was something introduced that impacted or changed your *dream-self's* viewpoint or actions (an alternative, guidance, discovery, insight)? Did any *archetypal* imagery picture *unconscious* organizing processes taking place?
   b) **Guidance**: Did you experience a guiding event or insight (advice, discovery, written/verbal message) perhaps one that supported an alternative scenario or viewpoint? Define how it changed your behavior or thinking <u>in the dream</u>, before and after the event.
   c) **Surprise**: Did something surprise you <u>in the dream</u> (action, situation or figure in a role opposite to expectations; unexpected twist; unexpected discovery; odd imagery blend)? How did it differ from expectation or provide a different point of view?
   d) **Acceptance or Reversal**: Did your *dream-self* (or something representing you) at some point accept the guidance or reverse its thinking, viewpoint or action? What brought this about?
   e) **Positive Ending:** Did the dream end positively or reinforce the guidance or alternative scenario or actions of the dream-self? If so what specifically happened that brought it about and how might that be an analogy to a waking life solution? If it ended negatively or with a warning, what was your dream-self doing that appeared counterproductive?
   Compare to Life: **Compare to Life** - Can you see an analogy between how the dream was attempting to resolve the dream situation (change in viewpoint, attitude or direction) and a solution or approach that might help in your waking life?

Step #8 - Finish the Dream (Active Imagination): If it ended negatively or inconclusively, try this: Close your eyes and place yourself at the end of the dream; focus on your feelings for a moment; then spontaneously (don't think just let the images flow) finish the dream with a new imagined ending that works out positively for you (and the others in the dream). **Compare to Life** - Can you see an analogy to a solution in your waking life situation, conflict, attitudes or beliefs?

Step #9 – Acton: Resolution and Next Steps
   a) **Define a Solution:** Review the waking life analogies in steps #7 and #8 and define a specific solution to your waking life situation that the dream metaphorically might be suggesting.
   b) **Check it Out:** is it healthy, appropriate, practical or does it leave you stuck again?
   c) **Next Steps:** If positive, then what specific next step(s) can you take to bring it about?
   d) **Reminder Image:** pick an image from the resolved ending as a reminder of your solution.

Color Questionnaire

The emotional themes/expressions are NOT the "meaning" of color nor should they be used that way. They are intended only to trigger your own associations with like feelings or situations in your life. The statements were derived from color psychology research and literature (waking subliminal associations between color and emotion), the *Color Test* by Dr. Max Lüscher and the works of Carl Jung where noted.

RED	1) I feel intense, vital or animated. 2) I feel transformed. 3) I feel assertive, forceful, full of energy. 4) I feel creative. 5) I want to live life to its fullest. 6) I want to win, succeed, achieve. 7) I feel sexy or have strong sexual urges. 8) I have a driving desire. 9) I am feeling anxious; 10) I need something to make me feel alive again. 11) I need to be more assertive and forceful. 12) I need to get out and enjoy myself. *13) If it appears as blood or inflammation - it could indicate sickness or injury.*
ORN	1) I want to expand my interests and develop new activities. 2) I want a wider sphere of influence. 3) I feel friendly and welcoming. 4) I want more contact with others. 5) I feel enthusiastic, outgoing and adventurous. 6) I am driven by desires and hopes toward the new, undiscovered and satisfying. 7) I feel driven but need to overcome my doubts or fear of failure. 8) I must avoid spreading myself too thin.
YEL	1) I feel a sense of joy and optimism. 2) I feel alert. 3) I am seeking a solution that will open up new and better possibilities and allow my hopes to be fulfilled. 4) I feel the new direction I am taking will bring happiness in my future. 5) I am hopeful. 6) I need to find a way out of this circumstance or relationship. 7) I need a change. 8) My actions may be compensating for something. 9) I am acting compulsively.
GREEN	1) I need to establish myself, my self-esteem, my independence. 2) I want recognition. 3) I need to increase the certainty of my own value and status, through acknowledgment by others of my achievements or possessions. 4) Hard work and drive will gain me recognition and self esteem. 5) My opinion must prevail. 6) I must hold on to this view in order to maintain my self-esteem. 7) I want what I am due. 8) I must maintain control of the events. 9) Things must not change. 10) Detail and logic are important here. 11) I need to increase my sense of security. 12) I need more money to feel secure. 13) I want to withdraw and retreat into my own center. 14) I need healing or feel a sense of being healed.
BLUE	1) I feel tranquil, peaceful and content. 2) I feel a sense of harmony. 3) I feel a meditative awareness or unity. 4) I feel a sense of belonging. 5) I need rest, peace or a chance to recuperate. 6) I need a relationship free from contention in which I can trust and be trusted. 7) I need a peaceful state of harmony offering contentment and a sense of belonging.
VIO	1) I like to win others over with my charm. 2) I feel an identification, an almost "mystic" union. 3) I have a deep intuitive understanding of the situation. 4) I feel a sense of intimacy. 5) The feeling is erotic. 6) I seek a magical state where wishes are fulfilled. 7) I yearn for a "magical" relationship of romance and tenderness. 8) I seek to identify with something or someone. 9) I need intimacy. 10) I engage in fantasy perhaps to compensate for my feelings of insecurity.
BROWN	1) I seek a secure state where I can be physically comfortable and relax or recover. 2) I am uneasy and insecure in the existing situation. 3) I need a more affectionate environment. 4) I need a situation imposing less physical strain. 5) I want to satisfy the physical senses (food, luxury, sex). *6) If it is a Natural or wood brown(Jung): a) I am concerned about matters of family, home, or my "roots". b) I am concerned with a son or daughter. c) I am searching for my true self or natural state of being. 7) Note: If Dirty Brown or green/gray-brown: it may relate to a physical problem or illness.*
GRAY	1) I want to shield myself from those feelings. 2) I feel emotionally distant, only an observer. 3) It is as if I am standing aside, watching myself mechanically go through the motions. 4) I want to remain uncommitted, non-involved, shielded or separated from the situation. 5) I do not want to make a decision that will require my emotional involvement. 6) I have put up with too much and wish to avoid any further emotional stimulation. 7) I am trying to escape an anxious situation. 8) I am compensating for something.
BLACK	1) I am anxious and don't know why. 2) I am fearful of or intimidated by the situation. 3) I have been dealt an unacceptable blow. 4) Nothing is as it should be. 5) I refuse to allow it/them to influence my point of view. 6) I can't accept the situation and don't wish to be convinced otherwise. 7) I feel the need for extreme action, perhaps in revolt against or to compensate for the situation. *Jung: Black/Darkness often represents the unconscious realm. Beautiful Shiny Black a positive view of the unconscious from which a new self emerges.*
WHITE	1) This is a new experience. 2) I'm becoming aware of new feelings. 3) I'm experiencing a new beginning, a transformation. 4) I have a new outlook, a new awareness. 5) I feel pure and innocent. 6) I feel open and accepting. 7) I feel unprepared. 8) I feel alone, isolated. 9) It feels cold or sterile. *Note: White mixed with a color (pastel); adds a sense of calming, or newness/new emergence or re-emergence of that emotion that the color is associated with.*

Acknowledgements

FOREWORD DAVID FEINSTEIN, PhD
Author of *The Mythic Path* and *Energy Psychology Interactive*
(Forward retained from 1ˢᵗ Edition)

I**f your life does not already seem extraordinary and mysterious**, you may want to use this book to guide you into the world of your dreams. Whether or not you recall them, your *psyche* regularly produces internal dramas that in their own way rival great literature—with ingenious plots, exauisite symbolism, rousing intrigue, unlikely heroes, memorable villains, moral dilemmas, wise instruction, and unforeseen pathways into the realm of the spirit.

Bob Hoss is perfectly positioned to have produced this superb guidebook for the many people who are finding that it is possible to work with their dreams in ways that tangibly enhance their lives. As the Executive Officer and past President of the world's most influential organization for promoting the study of dreams and for bringing the art of dream work to the general population, he has been able to create a book that is interactive *and* comprehensive, useful for the general reader *and* for the clinician, immensely practical *and* at the cutting edge scientifically, informed by the most recent neurological findings about dreams *and* by the ancient recognition that messages from the spirit world are revealed in our dreams.

In short, the book is friendly, comprehensive, and authoritative. It will show you how to remember your dreams, and it offers dozens of time-tested techniques for exploring their language and discovering their meanings. It will teach you about special kinds of dreams, such as nightmares, paranormal dreams, lucid dreams, and children's dreams. It also introduces and provides the latest research into the highly innovative, informative, and fascinating area of the meaning of color in dreams.

Dream Language is an unusually flexible book. You can use it to learn the basics of dream work, to review the latest scientific understanding about dreams, or as a guidebook for working with your own dreams, and you can skip around according to your interests. Many dream books that are written by professionals have one of two slants. This book, however, embraces both what has come out of the clinician's office and out of the researcher's laboratory, giving it a two-pronged authority that reflects the latest in the study of dreams today.

With the re-emergence of interest in dreams in Western cultures, this book will be welcomed and will contribute to this grassroots movement where so many people are meeting for the purpose of systematically exploring their dreams with one another. One hundred years ago, it was felt that only psychoanalysts had the key to the meaning of dreams, but now we know that the dreamer is the ultimate authority on the meaning of a dream. This book is designed to give you the most up-to-date tools for assuming that authority in decoding these messages from the night.

I felt highly honored to first see that my own work was listed among the theorists who have made a contribution to the modern understanding of dreams, and then privileged to be asked to write this introduction to the book. You are in for a new adventure every night.

Introduction
To the Colorful World of Dreams

In my dream the Angel shrugged & said, if we fail this time, it will be a failure of imagination & then she placed the world gently in the palm of my hand – Brian Andreas

I **It is exciting to think** that dreams might hold some "meaning" for us that can help us better understand and transform our lives. Although many of us have experienced the therapeutic value of dreams when applying solid dreamwork principles, there is still controversy over whether dreams are meaningful or even have a function. As you will learn herein, we dream every night, in stages all through the night and that much our brain remains active when we dream, including centers that process emotion, memory, imagery, association, analogical problem resolution and learning. All this activity produces the mental and visual experience we call dreams. Sometimes we can readily associate the dreams with our waking life situations. Some researchers understand the memory processing to contribute to the inner modeling of our world view. It would perhaps be a failure of understanding and imagination if we relegate dreams to the babble of a sleeping mind, simply because we are unable to understand the language of the dreaming brain. Could it be that dreams provide a window into the thought processes that influence our daily lives, if we could but understand their "language"?

There are many approaches for dreamwork (i.e., working with dreams). No single technique can unlock all the secrets a dream has to reveal, because the dream material comes from many levels of consciousness and pertains to so many aspects of our waking and inner life. In this book, I will introduce you to a number of proven tools and approaches for group and individual dreamwork. Together I consider them working with the dream as your dreaming brain does – as they are designed to roughly align with processing activities observed in dream sleep. I will also introduce you to a *role-play* approach of "giving the dream a voice" (derived from Gestalt therapy) that has been lovingly termed the "6 magic questions" by my students. It is a quick, simple, and powerful approach for personal or professional dreamwork that takes you quickly, effectively and safely into a deeper understanding of the dream and its relation to your waking and internal emotional life. The total *Transformative Dreamwork* protocol (accessible in the first pages of this book) is unique combination the theory and approaches of psychotherapists Carl Jung and Fritz Perls as well as the work of others such as Stanley Krippner and David Feinstein which introduced the concept of personal myth as it applies to dreams. I have enhanced the approach with a Color Questionnaire based on research into dream color, as well as an exploration of the Guidance that a dream may offer based on recent neurological research which suggests a problem resolution and learning process taking place..

Understanding the dream in relation to your life is only the very first step so this you will be introduced to tools for exploring the underlying emotional issues the dream is dealing with and how to recognize how the dream is attempting to find resolution and closure. You will find that there is more to learn from a dream than you ever realized, once you understand the "language."

Dedicated to:

My wife Lynne, who dreamed that I would write this book, and my
mother Ruth, whose inspiring dreams are contained herein.

CHAPTER 1
THE BASICS

Sleep is by no means an inactive state for the nervous system – Ernest Hartmann

What are dreams? In the simplest terms a dream is the state of consciousness we achieve in the sleep state. Among researchers there is still come controversy over the definition of a dream; whether it is the vivid emotionally charged story-like dreams of the type we generally recall when we wake, or can it be any form of mentation (thoughts, fleeting images, mental impressions) that we can report as taking place when we wake from any stage of sleep. For the most part dreams are generally accepted as any sort of visual or simply thought like activity that might be recalled when woken from sleep. Researcher Bill Domhoff (2005) states that there are four conditions required for dreaming: 1) an intact fully mature neural network for dreaming; 2) a mechanism for activating the dream; 3) exclusion of external stimulus; and 4) [aside from lucid dreaming] loss of self-control or deactivation of the "cognitive system"

To many, the resulting dreams are considered interesting and mysterious but of no consequence, since they contain imagery and a story line that seem illogical and bizarre. What I hope to show in this book is that dreams make a lot of sense once we understand the "language" of the dreaming mind. In fact, we may find that dreams can be more truthful and revealing than waking reality! You will also discover that understanding and properly working with dreams can help maintain a healthy sense of well-being.

Early thought was that dreaming was primarily a REM sleep phenomenon. However, the dream or dreamlike state is now known to also occur during all states of sleep; at onset and during various stages of NREM and of course REM. Dream content differs between the stages and is reported to a lesser degree in NREM, as discussed below.

When Do We Dream?

Figure 1-1 illustrates the or common cycles of human sleep or "sleep architecture" that occurs every night. The diagram and information below is compiled from many sources (as referenced), however a good single source of for further reading is *Dreaming: Understanding the Biology, Psychology and Culture* Vol.1 (Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019). The horizontal scale is sleep time in hours, and the vertical the stages of sleep. In simple terms, it shows that we cycle between various sleep stages multiple times each night: NREM sleep stages (deep stage 3 and 4, and the lighter stage 2 – sometimes called S sleep for synchronized sleep) as well as the REM stage (also known as *paradoxical* or D, for desynchronized). The REM cycles continue throughout the night, in approximate 90-minute periods. Although shown as sharp distinctions the transitions can be more fluid than the diagram implies. We typically go through four to six dream periods in an eight-hour night, with mental activity or visual dreams occurring to different degrees in parts of all stages, which might be surprising since we are often unable to recall even one of the dreams. In adults, REM sleep takes up about 20–25 % of the night; the NREM stage 1 (N1), about 2–5%; the NREM stage 2, (N2), approximately 45–55%; and slow wave sleep or NREM stages 3 and 4, (N3 & 4) approximately 20 percent. When dreams are considered to be recall of mental content from sleep, sleep lab research has demonstrated of from 80% to 95% dream recall after awakening from REM sleep and 40% to 60% recall

after awakenings from NREM sleep (Nielsen, 2000; Schredl et al., 2009, 2013; Schredl, Hoffmann et al., 2014), higher percentages among young adults

Figure 1-1
Sleep Architecture

Sleep & Dream Stages
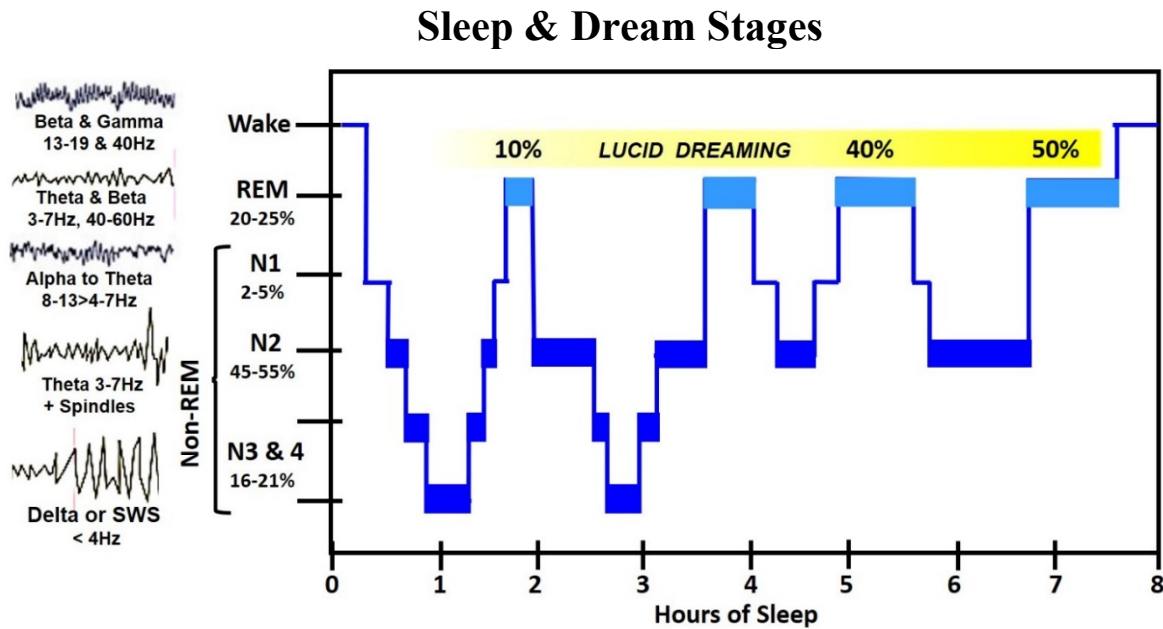
Awake State

The waking state is characterized by relatively unsynchronized beta and gamma brain waves (12-30 Hz and 25-100 Hz respectively). We are awake, alert, and our thinking rational and self-reflective.

Stage 1 (NREM1 or N1)

Stage 1 (N1) sleep is the stage of falling asleep during which we may feel drowsy or if awakened often believe we never slept. Typically, this stage represents only about 5% of the total sleep time. Brain wave activity gradually slows down and transition from relatively desynchronized to more synchronized but slower alpha waves with a frequency of 8-13 Hz, and then to theta waves with a frequency of 4-7 Hz. Our muscles are still active and eyes move, breathing gradually becomes more regular and the heart rate begins to slow.

Hypnagogic sleep: Often at sleep onset we awake with a jerk, sometimes recalling some dream-like images. This is known as a period of *hypnogogic* sleep, or light sleep where both Alpha and Theta brain waves are observed. Various studies show (Nielsen, 2000) that between 31-76% of stage N1 sleep reports contain dream imagery. The content or images are often brief and strange and might contain sound, sometimes snippets of a day's event, sometimes an *element* that might appear as a theme later in the night's dreams. At times there may be sensory feelings or a feeling of levitation or moving in space or floating above the bed. At times creative thoughts arise; artists often use the images in this state for inspiration.

Stage 2 (NREM2 or N2)

Stage 2 (N2) is a stage during which muscle activity decreases still further and conscious awareness of the outside world begins to diminish completely. If any sounds are heard, the sleeper is not able to understand their content at this point. Brain waves during N2 are mainly in the theta wave range (as in stage 1 sleep), but in addition N2 is also characterized by two distinguishing phenomena: sleep spindles (short half second bursts of brain activity about 12-14 Hz) and K-complexes (short 1 to 2 min complex spikes and waveforms). These are thought to suppress response to outside stimuli and aid in memory consolidation and information processing. We pass though N2 stage several times during the night, so we spend more in N2 sleep than in any other single stage, about 45%-50% of total sleep time for adults.

The percentage of mentation or dreaming from N2 awakenings is reported to be about 60% to 70%. N2 dreams in relation to REM dreams tend to contain more fragments of recent waking life episodes and be: less frequent and shorter; less emotional; less perceived content (dream figures, places, actions); less personally involving; less bizarre; more thought-like. On the other hand, some N2 dreams have been found to be somewhat indistinguishable from REM dream reports.

Stage 3 (NREM3 or N3)

Stage 3 (once known as 3 & 4) is also known as deep or slow-wave sleep (SWS) or Synchronized sleep since the brain waves are more regular and lower frequency characterized by delta brain waves with a frequency of around 0.5-4 Hz, along with some sleep spindles, (although much fewer than in stage 2). Normally at sleep onset there is a rapid movement from stage 1 sleep to stage 3 and during this stage the we are even less responsive to the outside environment, unaware of any sounds or other stimuli. Stage 3 sleep periods are longer and present during the first half of the night, particularly during the first two sleep cycles and represents around 15%-20% of total adult sleep time. What is now described as stage 3 was once split into 3 and 4 (stage 4 when delta waves exceeded 50% and when brain temperature, breathing and heart rate and blood pressure was lowest). Pulse, respiration rate and blood pressure are lowered and no eye, facial or body movements are noted. Muscles relax, although body jerks may occur. It becomes more difficult to arouse the person and if awakened, and if awakened they often feel groggy and take some time before attaining normal mental performance. Although sleep parasomnias can occur in REM (particularly with REM disorders) as well as NREM sleep, this is a stage where night terrors, and such activities as sleep-walking, sleep-talking and bedwetting occur tend to occur more often.

Dream reports or mental activity from N3 are less frequent than in REM at around 50% to 65% (Cavallero, 1992) versus 80% to 95% from REM as noted earlier. In relation to REM the dream reports did contained imagery, emotion and self-perception, but were found to be much shorter. Some studies showed average dream-like recall rates from N3 to be higher than what was once characterized as N4 (56% versus 38%) however recall of cognitive type activity from either state was about the same. Neuroimaging and behavioral studies have found that slow wave sleep may, as is REM, involved in processes of memory consolidation and cognitive enhancement (particularly of the *declarative* memory and task learning).

REM (Rapid Eye Movement)

REM sleep, also known as paradoxical sleep, occurs in cycles of about 90-120 minutes throughout the night, and it accounts for up to 20-25% of total sleep time in adult humans (see figure 1-1). About 90 minutes after sleep onset the sleeper will begin REM sleep. An EEG reading called a PGO spike often marks the onset of REM and many of these spikes appear during REM. REM dominates the latter half of the sleep period, and the REM component of each sleep cycle typically increases as the night goes on. Although most people do not tend to wake after each cycle of REM sleep, we are more likely to wake from

REM sleep than from non-REM sleep. Often "micro-awakenings" occur for a few seconds and the sleeper does not normally remember them. REM is characterized by low-amplitude mixed-frequency brain waves, similar to those experienced during the waking state – theta, alpha and even high frequency beta waves typical of high-level active concentration and thinking. The REM sleep stage is characterized by: eye movement, small movement in the muscles of the face, faster and more irregular pulse and respiration, higher blood pressure, very high oxygen and energy consumption by the brain (often higher than when awake and working on a complex problem). The resting muscle potential is almost non-existent (muscles become paralyzed a condition known as atonia) due to the signals controlling movement being inhibited in an area of the brainstem. Experiments by Michel Jovet demonstrated that this may protect us from acting out our dreams.

Dream reports when woken from REM states occur roughly 80% to 95% of the time. They are typically longer, more vivid, more animated, more emotionally charged, have more dream *elements* in them and are less like waking life events than NREM reports. A study by Stickgold and colleagues (1994) found that dream report length shortest at the beginning (0–15 minutes) and at the end (45–60 minutes) of a REM period, and longer in the middle of the REM period (15–45 minutes). NREM sleep dream reports show the opposite pattern, with dream length decreasing into the middle of the period before increasing again when nearing an oncoming REM period.

REM sleep appears to be important. REM deprivation has been shown to impair learning of complex tasks. Such a learning function may be why during early childhood development REM sleep makes up a much larger percentage of total sleep (figure 1-1). If REM sleep is repeatedly interrupted or shortened, then longer REM "rebound sleep" tends to occur at the next opportunity the sleeper may slips quickly into REM sleep, rather than into NREM stages, and stays there longer than usual. There are differences in brain activity observed between stage NREM and REM sleep (see Chapter 3). The medulla of the brain appears to regulate NREM sleep, whereas the pontine brain stem is thought to regulate REM. (Hartmann, 1973) Single neurons in the brain have been seen to reduce their activity during NREM sleep and then increase during REM to a level as high or higher than in waking. During REM, a section of the forebrain is in a state similar to that of alert waking, and high levels of activity are found in the visual associative cortex and parts of the brain responsible for processing emotion. The central brain is also active, suggesting learning and memory processing. Some studies suggest that we replay and learn new tasks and facts during NREM and complete the learning during REM by weaving the new information into existing memory systems and develop new inner models or procedures for dealing with future like situations in the process.

Lucid Dreaming

Lucid dreaming is a dream in which you become aware that you are in a dream, become more self-aware and are better able to influence your own actions in the dream and in a limited manner parts of the dream itself. The degrees of lucidity and dream experiences vary from just being vaguely aware that it is a dream and not acting on it to acting at will, communicating with dream figures or the dream itself, to self-healing and exploring fantastical realms of consciousness (see Lucid Dreaming in Chapter 2).

It occurs when parts of the brain that are normally relatively inactive during sleep become active – as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3. Areas in the pre-frontal cortex and precuneus involved in self-reflection, a sense of conscious awareness and willful control become active. Occipital and parietal areas involved in visual imagery and spatial processing, form and color become more active, giving the dream a more vivid visual and spatial experience. Lucid dreaming is characterized by a mixture of brain wave (EEG) features of REM sleep and waking and many of the physiological characteristics of REM sleep (eye movements, increases in respiration, heart rate and skin potential). It is therefore considered a "hybrid" state of sleep and dreaming (LaBerge et al., 1986).

Lucidity has been found to occur mostly (72%) from within a dream, 90% from REM sleep; lesser percentages during stage N2 sleep, at times induced at sleep onset (N1), but not observed during deep sleep (N3). They occur more frequently in the later REM stages of sleep, roughly 10% in the initial stages and 50% in the later stages. Others are known to occur from the sleep onset stage or after awakening and falling back into sleep while retaining a degree of consciousness (called Wake Induced Lucid Dreams or WILD). (LaBerge et al., 1986)

Hypnopompic Imagery

Hypnagogic imagery are visual, tactile, auditory, olfactory or other sensory events, usually brief but occasionally prolonged, that occur at the transition from sleep to wakefulness. The dreamer may perceives oddities or nightmarish images like other persons or non-physical entities in the room or next to him or her. Technically, our muscles are under partial paralysis during the REM dreaming stage so the hypnopompic imagery may include a sleep paralysis episode where the dreamer perceives they are awake but cannot move – which can become quite frightening. It is usually not serious and may have to do with the centers of the brain becoming out of sync with the normal awakening sequence. This stage usually only lasts a short period and the person wakens normally.

Dreams do not occur as we awaken, as some early speculation suggested. Dreams occur roughly over the time period we recall them having occurred. The measured length of the REM period has been correlated with both the dream report word count and the estimated length of the dream by the dreamer (Hobson, 2003).

Changes in Dream Characteristics Across the Night

The existence of dream generation and recall from all stages of REM and NREM sleep is now understood by most researchers. Dreams from all stages of sleep become more "dreamlike" as the night goes on. NREM dreams are considered more 'dream-like' when collected from shorter as opposed to longer NREM sleep periods, as well as being more 'dream-like' collected in close proximity to a neighboring REM period. N2 reports are more like REM dreaming than are N3. The differences between REM dream content and NREM dream content depends on what NREM stage is being measured as well as when (earlier versus later cycles). Both circadian rhythms and ultradian rhythms exert some influence on dream content, and while late REM dream reports continue to be more emotionally intense and vivid than late NREM dream reports, both REM and NREM dream reports are more bizarre, dreamlike, and longer later in the night.

In general, certain dream features remain significantly different between REM and NREM sleep. REM dreams are more self-reflective, bizarre, visual, and emotional and have more self-involvement and more narrative quality than do NREM dreams, whereas most NREM dreams are more brief, "thought-like" and mundane than REM dreams.

Emotion as well as associated factors such as motivation and social interactions differs for REM and NREM dreams, perhaps reflecting the differences in brain state – the limbic areas being more active in REM stages and somewhat diminished in NREM stages. Smith et al. (2004) found that motivation in REM dreams was significantly greater than motivation in NREM dreams and that total emotion was more intense in REM than in NREM with negative emotions significantly more intense in REM than NREM. McNamara et. al. (2005) found that: a) REM reports were more likely to involve social interactions than NREM reports; b) aggressive interactions were twice as likely to occur in a REM dream as a NREM dream (and 3 times as likely than in a waking reports); b) REM dreams involved significantly more self-initiated aggression than

friendliness while NREM dreams involved significantly more self-initiated friendliness than aggression (the dreamer was never the aggressor in the NREM reports).

There is also some evidence that dreaming across the night exhibits some continuity in thematic content; for example, dreams sampled from different stages and across a single night may all carry an overarching theme related to work or occupational concerns, even if the perceptual or emotional quality and specific details of the dream report change. This suggests there is some continuum of dreaming processes occurring across the night – a seeming waking-dreaming-waking learning continuum. Dream content has also been found to evolve over the night, relating more to prior day events during the first REM cycles and gradually including events from recent months then the dreamers more distant past toward the end of the night. This is discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 5, The Function of Dreams.

Do We All Dream?

Research has shown that all humans, birds and mammals, with minor exceptions or due to abnormalities, exhibit REM sleep (Hartmann, 1973). It is known that humans dream during the REM stage because when awakened during REM sleep, laboratory subjects reported dreams or dream-like experiences roughly 80% to 95% of the time as noted above. Also as noted, mentation or dreaming is also reported from 50% to 70% or more during NREM stage awakenings as well. It is uncertain, however, what animals experience during the REM or any other stage, since the "network for dreaming" in the animal brain is uncertain and they can't tell us what they are dreaming – although when mice were instrumented with micro probes (Louie & Wilson, 2001) neurons fired in their visual cortexes in the same sequence as when the mouse was exploring a maze before sleep – suggesting visual dreaming.

Figure 1-2 Sleep and REM dreaming as we Age
(plot from Roffwang, Muzio, Dement. *Science* 1966)
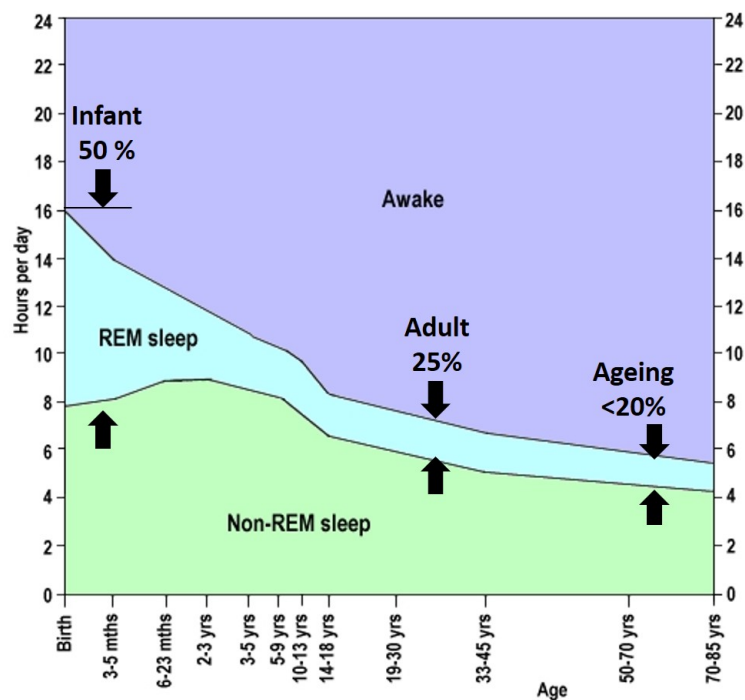
The time spent in dream sleep varies with age as shown in figure 1-2 (Roffwang, et al., 1966). Adults spend about 25% of their sleep time in REM, children about 50%, and in premature infants it has been reported to be as high as 70% to 80% (Van De Castle, 1994). In older persons, REM sleep may reduce to about 15%. Not shown is that children and young adults tend to have more slow-wave non-REM stage 3 sleep than adults, and the elderly may experience little or no stage 3 sleep at all. While shorter dreams and lower dream recall can be partly explained by the fact that memory no longer functions as well as it used to, research into aging and dream recall has shown that there are other factors involved since the largest drop-off in dream recall occurs at a relatively young age, around 26, especially among males (Giambra, 1996).

Why do we Sleep and Dream?

Although much controversy remains in an attempt to answer this question, research to date suggests that sleep and dreaming are linked to mood control, learning and repair of the body and mind (Hartmann, 1973).

What Happens When we Don't Dream?

 If we deprive ourselves of dream or REM sleep, it has been observed that sleep and dream deprivation causes effects such as: waking dreams (visual and auditory hallucinations); interference with memory and learning; a loosening of associations; impaired waking ability to do tasks requiring focused attention; or difficulty maintaining a straight line of thought, creating irritability and suspiciousness. Milton Kraemer (2011) found that even one night of sleep loss effected post-sleep mood, increasing anxiety and decreasing clear thinking. It has therefore been suggested that dream sleep (in particular REM sleep) is associated with learning, long term memory consolidation, and restoring mental well-being.

Are We Learning in Our Dreams?

Alan Hobson (2003) at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center, shows that dreaming rehearses memory patterns, either to harden them into long-term memory or to keep fading connections alive (based on brain wave activity in the hippocampus). For example, one study demonstrated that the exact neuronal firing patterns present when rats explored a maze were repeated precisely when the rats were in the dream sleep. In NREM sleep they appeared to rehearse the maze just experienced, and in REM traces of earlier maze experiences were observed, suggesting an integration of the learning from the present with like past experiences (Louie & Wilson, 2001). In Israel, researchers at the Weizmann Institute found that consistently interrupting dream sleep in a night completely blocked learning, whereas just as frequently interrupting non-dream sleep did not (Gelbard-Sagiv 2008).

Some research supports the hypothesis that dreams help us adapt to stressful waking events by activating habitual defense mechanisms, and by integrating the stress situation with earlier solutions to a similar problem (Stewart & Koulak, 1993). A critical step in this process is matches representations of new experiences with the representations of closely related past experiences – a process observed to take place during dreaming (Palombo, 1978). It is as if the dreams are helping us adjust to new threats and experiences, by comparing them to an inner model of how we see the world and our role in it and making slight adjustments to help us better accommodate life.

Both REM and NREM stages appear to be involved progressively over the night in such activities as problem resolution, learning and mood control - weaving new experiences into existing memory systems and storing or consolidating experiences or memory patterns into long-term memory. You can observe evidence of this in your own dreams. On the occasions when you recall multiple dreams from the same

night, you might find a similar theme running through each dream segment, but that each segment approaches that theme with a slightly different storyline or set of dream figures and outcome. How often have you gone to sleep angry about something and awoke the next morning feeling less concerned? Thus the old saying, "better sleep on it."

Do Dreams Have a Natural Function?

The discussion above suggests that sleep and perhaps dreaming itself might have a natural function. Dreams have long been understood to be a valuable tool in psychotherapy for gaining insights or therapeutic benefit by working with the dream in some manner – but does the dream itself, however, serve an important internal restorative or therapeutic function, and if so does it do this whether the dream is recalled or not?

In 1900 Sigmund Freud stated that the function of dreams was to disguise disturbing and harmful unconscious urges and impulses in order to preserve sleep and perhaps prevent the dreamer from waking up and being shocked by the true content of one's desires. While dreaming may perform an emotional regulation function (see Mood Regulation and emotional processing below) that might play a role in preserving sleep, much richer and broader roles for dreaming have been suggested. One of Freud's colleagues Carl Jung (the Swiss psychoanalyst that founded Analytical Psychology) stated that the function of dreams is to restore our psychological balance which is more in-line with todays thinking. In Chapter 5 you will learn how dream sleep has been linked to various biological and learning functions, such as memory enhancement and consolidation as briefly discussed above – but also how dreams might support psychological functions that influence a person's feelings, perceptions, thinking, learning and behavior. Robert Stickgold (2009) considers sleep as a time when the brain can search for and identify useful associations between recently formed emotional memories and older ones, helping to place them in a more useful context, from which their resolution may become more readily apparent. As you will learn this not only happens within to dream to various extents, but the process appears to involve the complete waking-to-dream-to-waking continuum (Ernest Hartmann, 2011) working with the unfinished business the day before as well as the act of remembering dreams in the morning and trying to understand or gain insight from the associations between the dream and waking life issues. Some of the functions (to.be further described in Chapter 5) that have been observed or theoretically developed are consolidated here into three categories and summarized below:

- *Memory Processing -* processing and integrating new information into existing memory nets.
    - o Reactivating memories – typically emotionally impactful daily episodes and past memory associations;
    - o Memory "triage" – emotion as a marker for which information is to be selectively processed;
    - o Extracting the 'gist' or 'meaning' from those memories
    - o Long-term memory consolidation and/or re-consolidation
    - o Developing an *inner model* of self and reality
- *Emotional Processing –* dealing with unresolved or impactful emotional issues of the day.
    - o Stress Reduction and Mood Control
    - o Fear Extinction
    - o Emotional Problem Resolution
- *Learning –* something new evolves from the dream experience.
    - o Declarative and Procedural - enhancing knowledge and skills
    - o Creative – revealing creative solutions to problems and inspiring artistic creation
    - o Restorative – accommodating or changing perception in order to restore psychological balance
    - o Adaptive – simulating scenarios from which we learn to better adapt to a waking situation
    - o Transcendent – changing your inner model and your viewpoint and attitude

Why Can't We Understand Our Dreams?

So, if dreams provide an important learning, adaption and problem-solving capability, why can't we understand our dreams? This is because the "language" of the dream is primarily that of *metaphor* or *picture-metaphor*– a symbolic representation of the association between emotions, memories, concepts and processes taking place as the dream attempts to express and resolve a problem. In Chapter 3 you will learn that dream imagery is formed in the "associative cortex" of the brain – an area that forms associations between a visual image and memory, emotion, or concept. Thus what you see and experience in a dream is simply a picture of an association, a picture analogy of a memory or feeling or concept - what Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung (Chapter 4) called a *symbol* As Carl Jung (1964) put it, "the *unconscious* aspect of any event is revealed to us in dreams where it appears not as a rational thought but as a symbolic image"..."an emotionally charged pictorial language".

William Domhoff (2003) metaphors provide a cross-modal mapping of well-understood basic experiences (such as warmth) to more difficult concepts (such as friendship). "We had a warm relationship" is a simpler way for us humans to understand the nature of the friendship than a complex explanation of the specifics. They also map physiological processes (e.g., sweetness) to more complex emotional experiences (e.g., pleasure), for example "what a sweet deal that was!" We learn a system of metaphors as a result of repeated experiences in childhood as we comprehend the process of comparison or inclusion—comparing one object as like another or as included in the same conceptual category. Ernest Hartmann (2011) agrees adding that it is an essential way our minds make connections—a language of meaningful similarity, that directly connects seemingly unrelated subjects, describing a first entity as being or being equal to or resembling a second entity in some way.

For example, if you dream of an old green door with a window in it, the image is not simply a door, but the picture of meaningful connections between all your memory and emotional associations with a door, the concept of old, the color green and window. These meaningful associations and connects differ completely for each person. One might identify the door as "something that opens to a new opportunity" and another "something that allows me to control what gets in or stays out." Further "old" might refer to age for one person or a memory of a charming old door for another. Window might be a "way to see in" for one and a "way to see out" for another. The combination of these associations is the totality of the meaning. Hartmann contended that it is the emotional issues the dream is dealing with that chooses or creates the image or blends several imagery fragments to make a new one – the blending (or *condensation* as Freud called it) being the linkages between feelings, memories and concepts that are associated with or make up the totality of the emotional issue. The composite dream image (or *element*) is the expression of the combined associations. Hartmann further states that this use of metaphoric similarity is generally how we learn – in particular how children learn—not by "rules" but by similarities. Our brain functioning seems to work first or most easily by similarity or metaphor, and only later do we learn to apply rules. Dreaming metaphorically recombines and re-organizes the material in our memory – the dream elements itself being vital to the process of integrating our memory systems.

Why Can't I Recall My Dreams?

If we consider, 80% to 95% of dream recall in laboratory studies is after awakening from REM sleep and 40% to 60% is recall from NREM sleep, it appears we spend about one fourth of our night in the vivid dreams of the REM sleep stage and much of the rest of night in some sort of mentation or dream activity. So, the problem is not one of dreaming, but appears to be one of recall. There appear to be many factors involved in dream recall.

Sleep Habits

- ***When we Wake:*** One theory (Koukkou et al., 1983) is that dreams are more readily recalled if the state of the brain is closer to that of the brain after waking up – thus dream recall from REM sleep (80% to 95% range) would naturally be more frequent than from NREM (40% to 60% range) since the brain is more active and characteristically closer to the waking state in REM than most NREM stages.

- ***How we Wake:*** Hobson reports that dream recall rapidly falls off, the longer one takes to wake up after the REM period. In laboratory research it was also found that sudden awakenings are also shown to induce better recall than gradual awakenings – BUT - if a participant has a task to complete immediately upon awakening, this distraction interferes with and reduces dream recall compared to participants who are allowed to lie in bed and collect their memory of a dream. Therefore – it is best to immediately close your eyes again and go back over the dream before you get up and write it down - anything that distracts you upon awakening will interfere with your ability to compose and gather their memory of a dream.

- ***Sleep Length:*** Recall might also relate to one's sleeping habits. Webb and Agnew (1970) found that people, who sleep longer than 8.5 hours, had 50% more REM sleep than people who sleep less than 6.5 hours. Later sleep tends to be less deep and closer to waking, with longer dream periods as figure 1 illustrates. Based on this information, you would expect more recall and longer dream reports as people sleep longer. There are still mixed results on this, however. Whereas Backeland and Hartmann (1971) found it to be the case, Blagrove et. al. (2003) did not. The total opportunity for dream recall may be greater as you sleep longer, but spontaneous dream recall still depends on other factors, including the dreamer's interest in recalling and writing down the dream.

- ***Frequent Awakenings:*** frequent awakenings during the night increases the likelihood of recalling a dream (Schredl et al., 1998; 2003). We all have micro-awakening at night, sometimes turning over, but never really becoming fully conscious or aware of the. At times however we do fully awake, maybe after a particularly emotional dream or simply to go to the bathroom or change the temperature in the room. These all can be opportunities for dream recall if one takes advantage of them. The downside is the process of turning on lights and engaging in writing or recording the dream can make it much harder to fall back to sleep.

- ***Circadian Rhythm*** (biological clock or 24-hour rhythm) alignment with the NREM-REM sleep cycle and the circadian influence on (modulation of) REM sleep, together influence dreaming and dream recall (Chellappa, 2009). As we age, for example, dreams and recall is effected by age related reductions in the circadian modulation of REM sleep with older subjects exhibiting fewer dreams. Knowing that our dream recall is effected by the normal 24hr biological rhythms suggests that if our sleep time becomes misaligned with those natural rhythms, for example if artificially determined by alarm clocks and other external demands, then that would have an effect dream recall. So to improve dream recall try adjusting your sleep/wake habits and timing to see if that helps.

Psychological and Personality Factors

- ***"Thin Boundaries" - Openness to Experience:*** Hartmann (2005) indicates that there are only a few personality factors that closely correlate with dream recall including: tolerance of ambiguity, openness to experience, absorption, creativity, fantasy-proneness and ability to be hypnotized. He states that these factors also relate to "thin boundaries" (Hartmann, 2005–2006). "Thin boundaries" imply openness to experience; blending thoughts and feelings together; less of a sense of personal space; blending/comparing past with present circumstances; feeling more like an individual taking part in

many groups; and a tendency to think in terms of shades of gray, rather than black and white. Thin boundary characteristics are closer to the fantasy or dreaming end of the continuum: making broad and loose connections. "Thick boundaries" imply sharp concentration and focus; keeping thoughts and feelings separate; a clear separation of past, present, and future; a sense of my/your space and sexual boundaries; and a tendency to see the world in terms of black versus white, us versus them, and good versus evil. We all have thicker boundaries when we are engaged in a focused task and thinner boundaries when we are fantasizing or dreaming.

Studies have shown have shown that dream recall is related to "openness to experience" (Blagrove, 2003, Schredl 2010, Bulkeley, 2011); and people with "thin" boundaries remember more dreams; have more complex, emotional, and longer dreams; and spend more time on the daydreaming and dreaming end of the continuum (Hartmann, 2011; Schredl et al., 2008) They tend to have more lucid dreams, mystical dreams, and adolescent nightmares. They also have more interaction between dream figures, amount of negative and positive emotion (higher CI intensity), vividness, and bizarreness. So if you wish to recall more dreams, developing a focus on your inner life, looking within and a willingness to accept what you find out about yourself and exploring new experiences such as discussing and working with your dreams should help.

Brain State & Gender Related Factors

- *Activation of Episodic Memory Systems:* Hobson (2003) indicates that working memory is off-line in the dream state, and that the mechanisms for storing memories are diminished to non-existent. Assuming that you wake up while the dream is ongoing or ending, the best approach for recalling dreams is to place your attention on the ongoing dream as you wake up. Try closing your eyes and reviewing the dream before opening your eyes again and moving out of position. Go over the dream completely, to store as much as possible in permanent memory. Then open your eyes and write it down or record it. Jarring yourself awake with an alarm clock might divert you from your dream too quickly to be conducive to dream recall. Wake yourself with a more gentle system (music, more gentle alarm or such).

- *Gender:* Spanos, Stam, Radtke & Nightingale, (1980) found that in females, dream recall was greater particularly for those who had more ability to become absorbed in imagery and measures of creativity.

- *Imaging Capability and Visual Memory:* In a literature review by Lynne Hoss (1981) a relationship was shown between dream recall frequency and artistic and imagery abilities. She reports that Schechter, Schmeidler and Staal (1965) tested both dream recall and creative tendencies in 100 students of art, science and engineering. There was a significantly higher proportion of dream recall among art students (assessed as more creative, and therefore using more right hemisphere process as will be described in Chapter 3). Recall was lowest among engineering students (attributed to the more linear, temporal thought process of the left hemisphere). No differences between the sexes were found. Her work also cites research by Cory, Ormiston, Simmel and Dainoff (1975) that found recall to be greater in those with greater memory capability for visual images. Hiscock and Cohen (1973) found a highly significant difference between dream recallers and non-recallers in ability to form clear, vivid images.

- *Active Interest:* Researchers Hill (1993) and Schredl (2003) found that interest in dreams or a positive attitude toward dreams influenced dream recall. If a person takes an active interest in recalling a dream on a particular night, or during a period of nights, they are more likely to do so and to keep a journal where they can write them down and stimulate more or higher quality recall. I found it to happen in my dream courses or workshops where a participant, who claims they don't recall dreams, suddenly begins recalling them for a period afterwards.

- *Incubation:* Interest in dreams can help, but an active interest in recall is the key. One technique is known as dream "incubation." It consists of a self-suggestion ritual, performed before going to sleep, whereby you repeat to yourself that you will dream (perhaps of a certain topic) and will wake and recall the dream. Incubation is a way of placing unfinished business at the forefront of the mind when going to sleep. The request should be accompanied with a paper and pencil beside the bed, or a voice recorder, so that the dream can be recorded. I find that incubation works best with no particular subject matter in mind, just a suggestion that you will dream and wake to recall the dream. If you want to try to dream about a specific situation, it is best to pick one that is emotionally significant, associated with some anxiety or unresolved problem.

Dream recall is only the beginning of the process. Proper recording of the dream and using proper methods to understand and work with the dream are paramount. The remaining Chapters of this book will be devoted to these methods. What we will learn is that it is not only important to record the story of the dream, but also the many dream *elements*, the imagery, colors, actions, settings, feelings, sensations and thoughts. It is equally important to record what experiences you had the day before that were of an emotional nature or that seem to relate to the dream.

Is there Value in Working With Your Dreams?

It appears that sleep and dreaming plays an important role in memory and learning, and in restoring our mental well-being, but since most of our dreams are not recalled, it appears that the mental processes taking place will continue whether we recall and understand them or not! So, is it necessary to remember and work on our dreams? Could recall and subsequent dreamwork augment the process?

There is a wealth of evidence and experience in therapeutic settings, suggesting that properly understanding and working with our dreams can speed the therapeutic process. Justina Lasley, author of *Honoring the Dream* (2004) states, "In my experience all dreams are significant and can be used to come to new understanding by bringing unconscious material to consciousness - I have never worked with an individual on a dream that has not carried new information and truth for the dreamer."

But what does the research say? Research into various dreamworking approaches has indeed demonstrated that dreamers have gained a greater degree of insight when a dream is worked than in simply discussing the related situation in (in therapy or otherwise) without the dream (see Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019, Chapter 16). Particularly effective are approaches which integrate dreamwork with some degree of action or therapeutic approach – thus containing three basic steps: (1) **exploring** individual dream imagery or *elements* that help to make associations between the dream and waking life emotional issues; (2) gaining **insight** from relating the whole dream or dream story to one's life situation; and (3) **action** or deciding about making changes in waking life based on the exploration and insight. The ***Transformative Dreamwork*** protocol in this book follows that model of **exploration, insight** and **action**.

One such approach which has had the most research performed on it is CEDM (cognitive-experiential dream model) developed by Clara Hill (2004). The CEDM model is fairly representative of the use of dreamwork in a therapeutic session as it is a combination of behavioral, client-centered, Gestalt, Jungian, and psychoanalytic protocols and became a model for the 3 phased approach mentioned above – exploration, insight and action. Twelve efficacy studies from 1998 to 2010 (including a cross-cultural one), were performed on CEDM using the Gains from Dream Interpretation (GDI) questionnaire. The studies concluded that "a result of engaging in these sessions, clients were found to gain insight into their dreams, had better action ideas related to the dreams, and made improvements in terms of the target problem reflected in the dream." For example, in the 2004 study by Crook and Hill, the ratings of the clients on overall helpfulness were high, the most often cited value being insight oriented: "Therapist helped you to come to your own interpretation of the dream" (74%) and "Therapist interpreted the dream as being related to your current waking life problems" (71%).

A study by researcher Mark Blagrove in 2010 was performed using the Ullman "Model" of projective dreamwork (see chapter 11). Participants rated (on a scale of 0–100): a) "how much new understanding of the dream they had gained" and b) "how much new understanding or insight into themselves or their life they had gained." The scores for understanding the dream were a mean of 67.8 and for insight into themselves and their life a mean of 57.0. Edwards replicated it in 2013 using the GDI questionnaire, resulting in exploration-insight mean score of 8.17 (out of 10). These results indicated that a new understanding of the dreams as well as the dreamers' lives had been gained following the sessions utilizing dreamwork. A study by Malinowski and Pinto (2017) found that exploration-insight scores to be higher for session with dream discussion than sessions with only event discussion.

In a study in 2000, Michael Schredl, et al. elicited therapists to answer: a) "Has working on dreams contributed to therapy success?" with 88.7% responding moderately to very much; and "How efficacious do you consider dream interpretation to be when used in psychotherapy?" with 90% responding slightly to very much (roughly 1/3 of the total score on each of 3 positive ranking levels). For an in-depth discussion and references see chapter 16 of Hoss, Valli, Gongloff (2019).

Although a dreamwoker or therapist may help guide the process, the important part is for it to be the dreamer who arrives at the interpretation and makes the decisions about action, with the support, encouragement, and collaboration of the dreamworker, therapist or group. Empirical investigations have found that participants believe that discussion of personal dreams following such a procedure with a therapist/dreamworker is more effective at producing insight than other types of dreamwork, such as self-dream work, dreamwork with a computer program rather than a therapist, or discussions about loss. Of particular importance is the action stage. Better outcomes (i.e., action ideas and problem-solving) were found for clients who engaged in the action stage than for clients who did not.

Dream therapy has been reported (Palombo, 1978) to also stimulate follow-up dreams that show progress, thus a "corrective dream," which incorporates the originally reported dream together with the new information supplied in the therapy session. *"I was dreaming I was looking everywhere for my purse. Suddenly I saw you there in the dream. You pointed out that the purse was on my shoulder. I stated, oh thank you, I guess I had it all the while."* This dream came after a therapy session where the dreamer finally realized that the self-worth they had been seeking was there all the time. It just took the dream, and the dreamwork with the therapist, to point it out.

Some nightmares may be a means for the dreaming mind to involve the waking mind in dealing with an emotionally overwhelming issue. Nightmares release energy and surface anxieties associated with past trauma or recent threats to one's inner self, which might be too difficult to deal with all at once. The forced awareness of that dark inner matter, brought by nightmares, can become a part of the healing process if properly dealt with. Hartmann and Galvin (in Krippner, 2002) have attempted to teach frequent nightmare

sufferers how to attain lucidity during terrifying dreams. This can be a successful approach. I found it works well with children who are very suggestible. One example is the case in which a child suffered from frequent nightmares of being chased by a big black monster. I told her that the next time she dreamed it, she should turn around and hug the monster. That night she had the same dream and the next morning reported with great joy that she had hugged the monster. I asked her what happened to the monster. She said, "*It turned into my mommy*." The dream never returned.

Gaining rewarding results from remembering and understanding your dreams does not necessarily depend on lucidity. *"I had a frightening dream where I was being chased away by a big buffalo with a little buffalo following it."* When we worked on his dream, the dreamer's association with the big buffalo was: *"he was huge and powerful, when he wants you to go, you go,"* which he recognized as related to his boss. His association with the little buffalo was: *"a little pipsqueak that followed the big one around -- just like that little pipsqueak at work!"* Before the dream, the dreamer was unhappy on the job but was unable to focus on the reason. The dream revealed that the source of his discontent was the actions of his boss and the relationship his boss had with the co-worker whom the dreamer considered to be a "little pipsqueak" that followed the boss around. The clarity of recalling and understanding the dream now permits the dreamer to focus on the real cause of his discontent and deal with it more appropriately.

DREAM RECALL - TRY THIS

- **Put a pad of paper and pencil or a voice recorder by your bedside**: so that if you have a dream you can record the dream after you wake up – BUT – close your eyes and go back over the dream before getting up and recording it. Placing the pad by your bed also triggers the mind that you are serious about recalling your dreams.

- **Reflect:** If you do recall a dream, close your eyes right away and go back over as much of the dream as you can bring forth before opening your eyes to write it down or record it. Try to write down all of the *elements*, the images, actions and feelings you can recall as well as modifiers such as color, or others like temperature, tactile sensations or sounds.

- **Change Your Sleep Habits:** if you wake with an alarm do so with the intent of recalling the ongoing dream – that is – shut the alarm off but close your eyes immediately and follow the Reflection step above. If practical to do so try adding more sleep time or waking more naturally whey your mind and body are ready to (in order to align with your Circadian rhythms).

- **Incubate the Process:** Close your eyes and repeat the phrase; "I will have a dream tonight and I will wake up and recall it." Do this 5 to10 times before falling off to sleep, and reinforce it by envisioning yourself waking from a dream and recalling it.

- **Incubate a Specific Dream:** Envision the dream or dream topic you want, then change the incubation phrase: "I will have a dream tonight about ____ *topic* ____ and I will wake up and recall it." It might be a specific topic, answer or solution you are looking for. But as we will learn, dreams are like parables that speak in the language of association and metaphor; so don't expect the answer to be literal.

- **Don't expect this to always work** right away. It may take some time, so keep at it.

- **Don't try to fool Mother Nature**. When you wake from the dream, go over it then write it down. It is this genuine interest in your dream world that helps bring forth dream recall.

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✦

CHAPTER 2
WHAT DO WE DREAM ABOUT?

</div>

Trust the dreams for in them is hidden the gate to eternity – Kahlil Gibran

Some dreams stories have wonderfully coherent story lines, and others provide just a glimpse of an image or short disjointed events. In many dreams we appear to be trying to find our way or a solution to a problem. We encounter things that are disturbing and frightening, or exciting and insightful. At times when we are ill, injured, or on medication, our dreams appear uncomfortable and bizarre. Some report "visionary" or impactful dreams that have changed their lives, or dreams that foretold an event in the future or at a distant place. At times we may "wake within a dream" – knowing we are dreaming and consciously interact with the dream or dream figures. With these endless differences, what can dreams really mean? Is there a common purpose to dreaming?

In this Chapter, I will discuss the multiplicity of dreams in terms of the nature and possible origins of the content. Dreams can take on many forms, as the dreaming brain seems to be open to stimulus from various levels of the human existence and consciousness. Figure 2-1 illustrates the rough approximation of the percentage of four types of dream experiences if we look across a large sampling of dreams reported by the general population.

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Figure 2-1 The Multiplicity of Dreams

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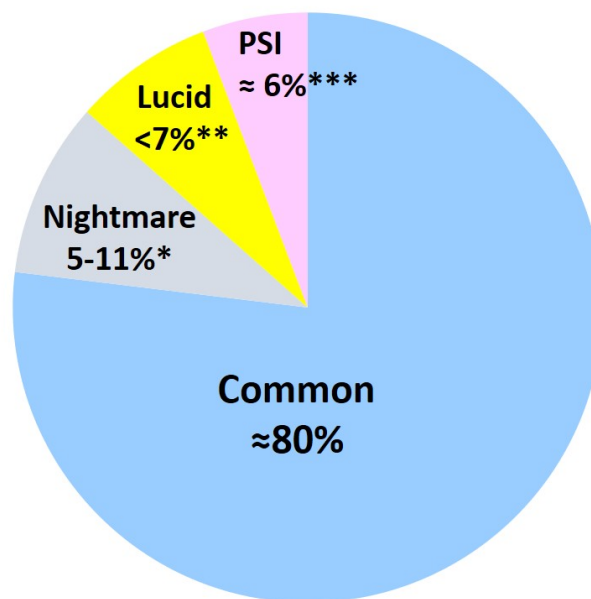
***Levin '07; Van de Castle '94; ** Levitan '92; *** Krippner '02**

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The "Common" Dream

Below is a set of dream characteristics, based primarily on a compiled list by Hobson (2003) which researchers more consistently attribute to the experience of what might be consider "dreaming," with data added regarding the content from various sources as noted and many that can be readily found in *Dreaming: Understanding the Biology, Psychology and Culture* (Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019).

1. Dreams mainly involve visual, communication and motion perceptions (McCarley & Hoffman, 1981; Snyder, 1970; Strauch & Meier, 1996):
   • Visual = 85 to 100%; Color = 80 to 97%
   • Auditory - communicating (as opposed to music/sounds) = 53 to 76%
   • Movement = 8 to 75%
   • Tactile = 1 to 26%; Thermal ≈ 4%
   • Smell, Taste, Pain < 1 to 7%
2. Dream images can change rapidly (particularly numbers and words).
3. Dreams can be bizarre at times but for the most part contain images and events that are relatively commonplace. In laboratory collected dreams bizarre dreams are very rare (2 to 9%) (Dorus et al., 1971; Snyder, 1970) while 65 to 72% portray highly credible events, such as everyday life or leisure time situations (Schredl, 2010a; Snyder, 1970; Strauch & Meier, 1996). REM dreams are found to be more bizarre than NREM by 70% to 20% (Hobson in Krippner, 2002)
4. We believe that we are awake in our dreams.
5. Over 90% include the *dream-self* (you in the dream) the dream being experienced from a embodied first person perspective.
6. Self-reflection involving logical organization, logical event transitions, familiarity of location is infrequent or involves irrational explanations of the events and plots – which appear normal to the dreamer. Some aspects of high-order cognition and self-reflection is present as the dream self may be aware of their own feelings in the dream as well as thoughts and intentions of dream figures in the dream (Kahn et al., 2002).
7. Dreams lack orientation stability. Persons, times and places are fused, plastic, incongruous and discontinuous.
8. Story lines integrate all the dream *elements* into a single confabulatory.
9. Dreams contain increased, intensified emotion, especially fear-anxiety that can integrate bizarre dream features and shape the dream story.
10. There is a tendency toward more negative emotion in dreams. Dominant emotions (35%) in the dreams include apprehension (anger, fear, distress and anxiety, sadness), followed by happiness and confusion (Hall and Van De Castle, 1966).
11. There is an increased incorporation of instinctive emotions (especially fight- flight), which also may act as powerful organizers of dream cognition.
12. Dreams are concerned more with emotionally prominent content or impact of an event than the actual event. Depending on the study, fragments of daily events have been found to occur in 35 to 65% of dreams but a replay of the event in only 1.4%. (Fosse et al., 2003; Nielsen & Stenstrom, 2005)
13. Control by the will of the dreamer is greatly reduced (with possible the exception of lucid dreaming). A dreamer rarely considers the possibility of actually controlling the flow of dream events, and on those infrequent occasions when this does occur (lucidity), the control may be only for a few seconds.
14. Self-control of thoughts, feelings and behavior is fairly common.

Dream Content

Calvin Hall and Robert Van de Castle (1966) established a set of dream content norms based on 1000 dreams (half men, half women) and published the book *The Content Analysis of Dreams.* For the first time, there was a comprehensive standardized system of classifying and scoring the content of dream reports. With this new tool, a true measure of cultural, gender and other differences in the nature of dreams and dreamers could be achieved. Aside from aging, which will be covered in the following section, some of the findings were:

- *Gender:* It was found that women dream equally of men and women, but 67% of the dream figures in men's dreams are other men (Hall, 1984) and the gender difference in favor of male dream figures appeared in almost every culture. For both men and women across cultures, dreams usually contain more aggression than friendliness, more misfortune than good fortune and more negative than positive emotions. Men have a higher degree of aggression in dreams than women (Domhoff, 2003). Physical aggression was found to be more often present in dreams of males than females, but no major differences in non-physical aggression, such as verbal or covert aggression. Dreams with sexual interaction were not that common, although more often reported by males (12%) than by females (4%).

- *Wake to Dreaming Continuity:* Studies of dream journals reveal continuity between the emotional preoccupations of the dreamers and their waking thoughts (Domhoff, 2003). The dreams of older dreamers did not differ much from college students with the exception of a decline in physical aggression and negative emotions, nor does dream content change much according to long-term journaling studies.

- *Social Interaction*: Friendly interactions can be found in 40% of the dreams, and aggressive interactions in about 46% of the dreams. These were likely REM based dreams - note that for NREM dreams McNamara found aggression by the dreamer to be absent. When social interaction takes place, there is almost always verbal communication or conversation between the *dream-self* and the other dream figures, which tends to be focused on concrete topics (Strauch & Meier, 1996) much as in waking life.

- *Misfortunes*: occur in approximately in 35% of all dreams, and are seven times more frequent than the opposite type of events, good fortunes (5%). Approximately two thirds of all dreams contain one or more events that threaten the well-being of the *dream-self* or his or her significant others. The most common types of threatening events include aggression, failures and accidents.

- *Emotion:* In the Hall and Van de Castle studies (1966) the most frequently expressed emotion for both men and women was apprehension (35%), followed by happiness and confusion (about 20% each). Apprehension covers many negative emotions, the most common being anger, fear, distress and anxiety and sadness. In one Hall study, while external judges (relying on explicitly expressed emotions in the narrative) rated dreams more negatively (64% negative), the dreamers themselves rated the emotion in their drams more pleasant (41%) than unpleasant (25%). Dream emotion is often not appropriate to the activity. In a study by Foulkes et al. (1988), 60% of the dream emotions were judged appropriate to the dream activity, but 17% of the dreams had no emotion when some emotion would have been expected and 3.2% of the dreams contained emotion when none would have been expected.

Dreams of the Blind and Disabled

There have been a number of studies (ex: Hurovitz et al., 1999) on the dreams of people who are blind or sight-impaired which concluded those who are "congenitally blind" (blind from birth and have never experienced eyesight) have no actual visual imagery in their dreams. Also, those who were able to see at birth but due to injury or disease lost their vision early in life (typically before the age of 5), their dreams were considered to have no actual visual imagery either. But for people who lost their sight after the ages of five to seven, they retain the capacity for visual imagery in their dreams throughout adulthood. Foulkes (1999) suggested that this may be because the mental imagery necessary for dreaming develops between the ages of four and seven.

Other studies on congenitally blind people, however, report they are able to "see" in their dreams or to form what they report as visual imagery. In a laboratory study of 10 blind students (Kerr et al.,1982), the two subjects had been congenitally blind were able to report spatial relationships in their dreams even though there was no visual imagery or other sensory content. Another study (Meaidi, 2014) on both congenitally blind subjects and subjects who became blind later in life, found that all reported visual "impressions" in their dreams – but fewer visual "impressions" than did a control group of persons who had always been able to see. Some of the discrepancy in results between studies can be due to the terminology or what is reported as a visual "impression" or an actual visual image. Although on the other hand activity in the visual cortex is not restricted to visual processing (Kennedy, 1997) – the reports of spatial imagery may also be related to processing and integration of other senses within the occipital-parietal and temporal regions that create the spatial or "visual" dream scene.

The dreams of blind or sight-impaired people have been found to include higher frequencies of other sensory modes—hearing, touch, taste, and smell—compared to the dreams of those with sight. A study by Staunton and O'Rourke (2012) of congenitally blind persons, their dreams had physical settings and a desire to engage with the physical world, but hearing was the dominant mode of perception followed by body sensation, that the smell, pain and temperature. In the Hurovitz study the congenitally blind that had no visual imagery reported a high percentage of gustatory, olfactory, and tactual sensory experiences. In the Meaidi study, those blinded later in life, reported an increase in tactile impressions, although their visual imagery did not appear to be affected. Other than sensory mode, the dreams of the blind appear similar to those of sighted persons as found in the Kerr and Meaidi studies where emotional and thematic content, composition and organization of the dreams were the same as sighted persons.

It has been observed that in dreamers with other disabilities, as one capability decreases the other modes tend to increase in their dreams. Studies have found that their dreams transcend the person's disabilities, they dream they are not disabled - the deaf can hear, the paralyzed can walk and run. In a study of paraplegics (Saurat et al., 2011), the patients were rarely that way in their dreams – they reported the experience of walking in their dreams as often as the non-disabled control group. Even in those congenitally paraplegic dreamed of ambulatory experiences such as standing, walking, running, dancing, and other such activities. These observations might suggest that there are certain instinctive or genetic neural subroutines for these basic activities, or alternatively the dreamed actions are simulations developed from observing them in waking life (mirror neurons activating during dreaming). For example, Allan Hobson's proto-consciousness hypothesis (2009) suggests that dream sleep providing a virtual model of the world in which content is synthesized and not merely reproduced. He states that dreaming is not entirely derived from waking experience but that it may tap into the genetically encoded hard-wired experiences in our brains, for such universal features of dreams such as seeing, moving, and feeling, which have little to do with the replay of waking experience.

For further discussion refer to Bulkeley & Hoss chapter 6. (Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019).

Dreaming as We Age

Recall

Interestingly, even though children exhibit more REM sleep than adults, the dream recall in children is lower than in adults. David Foulkes (1982) noted that recall was poor (25%) between the ages of 3 to 5 but increased between 7 and 9, and a gradual increase from 9 to 11 that reflected their developmental maturity and progress. Between 11 and 13, it began to resemble that of adults in the laboratory (80% to 95% from REM sleep and 40% to 60% in NREM sleep), which is found to be delayed in boys, but for girls it is already high at ages 9-11. Recall peaks in early adulthood in the range of 91% for women and 87% for men but tend to decrease from adulthood to old age (perhaps due to reduced REM sleep) remaining better for women than men across all ages.

Children's Dreams

Dream content matures with age, up until 13 to 15 years. Early dreams (ages under 5) appear to be primarily bland with static images and thoughts about daily events – the exception being nightmares. Foulkes, who did pioneering research on children's dreams, was of the opinion (based on his lab studies) that dreaming cannot occur before the age of three, as the child has not yet attained the cognitive maturity prerequisite to dreaming – this being somewhat contradicted by home or preschool settings where children as young as two-years-old reported dreams. At 3 years of age he found the dreams to contain less than fifteen words and devoid of a story like structure. In studies by Foulkes and others, between the ages of 5 to 8 dreams appear to become more story-like with movement and interaction but are not well developed. The dreamer only appears as an active participant at around 8 years. The structure of children's dreams doesn't become adult-like until about 9 to 11 years of age and the dreams are noted to have less aggression, misfortune and negative emotions than adult dreams. The length or content doesn't become adult-like until the pre-teens (about 11 to 13), nor does the dream content show a good correlation to their personality until about this time.

Foulkes noted that recall was poor between the ages of 3 and 5 (25% report rate) but increased between ages 7 and 9; although other studies of home reported dreams demonstrate up to 65 percent of morning recall in the 4 to 10-year-olds. Between 9 to 13 recall begins to resemble that of adults.

Visual imagination may develop gradually and be a necessary prerequisite for dreaming. Young children don't dream well until their visuospatial skills are developed. The part of the brain responsible for visuospatial skills and constructing the dream space (the inferior parietal lobe) is not functionally complete until about ages 5 to 7.

Regarding nightmares; in pre-school infants and children, they often report monsters and being chased, bitten and eaten. This may be a reflection of waking life anxieties, sense of vulnerability, or even instinctive urges which arise naturally but are frightening or for which the child gets punished for acting on. Among preschool children the presence of nightmares and fears can be as much as 74% (Colace, 2010). Nightmares are found to be a normal occurrence between the ages of 6 and 10 after which they generally decrease and mostly disappear. I had such a dream when I was 6 years old: *"I had a recurrent dream that I had to sleep in the basement and I knew there was a monster just around the corner that was going to get me at any moment if I made the slightest sound. One night when it recurred, I just couldn't stand the suspense anymore, so I shouted out to simply get it over with. At that moment, the monster exploded out of where it was hiding and in a surge of emotion I woke up."* After that the dream never returned.

Patricia Garfield in her book *Your Child's Dreams* (1984) collected 247 dreams from schoolchildren in the US and a few in India. She found that 64% were considered "bad" dreams and the remaining "good" dreams. Of the bad dreams, almost half had a theme of being chased or attacked, and in the remaining dreams about 40% had a sense of danger or some figure being injured or killed, even though there was no direct threat. Of the "good" dreams, about half of the themes fell into two categories. The most frequent category was just "having a good time," and the next was of the child receiving a gift or having some desired possessions.

Alan Siegel, another researcher in the forefront of children's dreams, speaks of the content and evolution of children's dreams in his book *Dream Wisdom* (2003) and the book *Dreamcatching* (1998) which he co-authored with Kelly Bulkeley. He indicates that dreaming begins in the womb and that up to 80% of sleep in premature infants is devoted to REM sleep. He discusses how dream content changes as children grow and experience transitions, from first dreams, through coming of age dreams, to leaving home dreams. Siegel speaks of the appearance of two imposing figures as representing the child's image of the power of their own parents. One of the first dreams recalled by one of my own daughters was, *"two giant hands reaching for me".*

In *Dreamcatching* (1998) Siegel and Bulkeley list the most frequent types of dreams among children of all ages as: being threatened by animals or insects; being chased by monsters; flying; falling; being paralyzed or trapped; appearing naked in public; and being tested or examined. He indicates that for toddlers and preschoolers, the most common dream figures are animals. Van de Castle (1994) also found this to be true, with almost 40% of young children's dreams at ages 4 to 5 containing animals, a percentage which dropped to less than 14% by the time they were teenagers. Like Garfield, he states that being chased or threatened in dreams, and nightmares with threatening creatures, appear to be the most common negative themes in children's dreams. This indicates that they symbolize a wide variety of early childhood fears and insecurities.

Another of my most frequent recurring childhood dreams was the theme of being paralyzed or trapped, trying to run but being unable to. I had one such dream at age 7 (in Siegel's *Dreamcatching*): *"I dreamed I was outdoors watching the sky darken as if a tremendous storm was coming. I tried to run but could hardly move, as if my legs were made of lead. As the dreams recurred, they became more lucid and would go from my trying to run away from the storm to where I began to stare at the sky as the storm began to take on beautiful patterns and colors. I continued to have this or like tornado dreams, but my fear of the storm had now turned into fascination and I looked forward to the excitement of tornado dreams."* Interestingly, these delightful and colorful dreams, and my realization that I was able to control my dreams, was a major factor in my ongoing interest in dreams and, as Alan Siegel suggested in *Dreamcatching*, a stimulus for my later interest in researching color in dreams.

Perhaps there is a learning process going on in such childhood dreams. My ability to take some control over and de-fuse the situations in my recurrent and somewhat lucid dreams spilled over into my waking life, and gave me a sense of empowerment, even in the sometimes dis-empowering environment of childhood.

Adolescence to Old Age

Art Funkhouser (1999) indicates that dreaming continues as people age, but the themes they dream about change, as do their daily concerns. It seems there are fewer nightmares, less frequent aggressive dreams, shorter average length of dreams and less frequent dream recall. As we age, the content may eventually evolve into concerns about death. Research on this subject can be found in a book by Mary-Louise von Franz (1998) and the tendencies for dreams to reflect changing waking-life concerns throughout the life cycle can be found below. For a more in-depth discussion refer to Lortie-Lussier, Dale and De Konink in *Dreams: Understanding Biology, Psychology and Culture* (Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019).

Allyson Dale at the University of Ottawa performed a study in 2005 (Dale et al., 2017; Dale in Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019) on dreams spanning adolescence to old age from 375 women and 231 men grouped in five age groups; adolescence (12 to 17 years; 18 to 24 years); early adulthood (25 to 40 years); middle adulthood (41 to 64 years); and late adulthood (65 to 85 years). A brief summary of the results:

- **Dream figures (characters):** While the number of dream figures in the dreams remained constant across all age groups the nature of those dream figures changed. Friends (peers) were the main dream figures in the adolescents' dreams, along with popular public personalities. The number of familiar and female dream figures decreases slightly across age groups in adolescent women but increased in in the dreams of old men after having been at their lowest in earlier and middle adulthood.
- **Aggression and Friendly Interactions:** For both genders, activity and overall aggression (either initiated by targeting the dreamer) decreased from adolescence to old age. Verbal aggression was the dominant form in women's dreams and physical aggression in men's dreams. The *dream-self* was more often victim in adolescents, but then from adulthood on the dream-self increasingly became the aggressor and less the victim. Friendly interactions steadily decreased from adolescence to old age in women's dreams while they gradually increased from early adulthood on in men's dreams to peak in old age.
- **Sexual Interactions**: did not change in frequency with age and is low in all age groups.
- **Emotions:** For women positive emotions were highest in adolescence, decreasing sharply in early adulthood, then more gradually, until increasing in old age; while negative emotions are low in adolescence, surge in early adulthood, then decrease until old age when positive emotions prevail. In males frequency of emotions is lowest in adolescence and slowly increasing to highest in old age - negative emotions peaking in adolescence and middle adulthood and lowest is in early adulthood and old age.

Dream Themes Reflect Life's Transitions

As we age we all tend to experience fairly common transitions in life: birth, adolescence, marriage, perhaps divorce, pregnancy, retirement, concerns about dying or grieving one who passed. The content of our dreams metaphorically reflect those transitions, picturing the impact and emotions associated with each one. The commonality of those experiences might appear as common themes in our dreams. For example, here is a snapshot of a few of the themes reported by Alan Siegel (in Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019) during life's transitions:

- Early Childhood – a time of feeling vulnerable, insecure and fearing the unknown: animal dreams, victimized/chased/threatened often by monsters and large figures.
- Later Childhood – as the child becomes more self-aware, builds social relationship and more empowered: dreamer and others appear more often, social interaction, attempting to cope.
- Adult Marriage and Relationships – excitement and fear of commitment or rejection, apprehension and performance anxiety: spouse or partner has an unappealing appearance or behavior; affairs with former lovers/partners (excitement or guilt); mishaps at wedding.
- Pregnancy – fears about outcome or responsibilities or fantasies, expectations, and excitement about the baby, parenting and relationship: animal birth; womb-like imagery; forgetting the baby; deformed or endangered baby; child with special powers; name and gender dreams.
- Midlife - loss of youth and identity or more positively finding new identity and renewed hope: death, destruction, illness, buildings crumbling - or - new growth and rebirth themes.
- Approaching Death – time running out, imminence, life and relationship review: clock themes, after-life visions, crossing thresholds, darkness, loneliness – or – light, liberation, spiritual themes.
- Grief - denial, anger, struggling through ambivalence or acceptance: Visitation and encounter with deceased (upsetting or with words of comfort); desperately searching (common in unresolved relationships); spiritual beings and settings.

Dreams that Focus on Mental Well-Being

Carl Jung stated that the general function of dreams is to restore our psychological balance by producing dream material that re-establishes…the "psychic" equilibrium (Jung, 1964). Chapter 1 described the some of the theories on the function of dreaming – the predominant ones relating to mental functioning and mental well-being, adapting mentally emotionally and socially to our environment and personal growth: **restorative** dreams, **adaptive** dreams and **transformative** dreams. Such processes as emotional and memory processing and mood control exist as part of these theoretical functions.

Much of this book is devoted to these types of dreams – so no need to dwell on them here – but just a few examples that might contrast dreams that are focused on mental well-being from others. Although these dreams reference themselves to our unfinished business of the day, our inner model of reality (discussed further in Chapter 4) and our unresolved emotional conflicts – it is at first difficult to recognize this since the waking life episodes or situations that triggered the dream rarely appears in the dream (only about 1.4% of the time as noted above). They are instead represented as *picture-metaphor* as described in Chapter 1.

Dreams that focus on mental well-being often begin with, or are placed in a setting that, metaphorically represents the waking life issue and the *unfinished business* or unresolved emotional conflict involved. But these are pictured as an analogy rather than a replay as illustrated in the following dream of a woman who had considered herself totally in control of her life, and able to handle anything that came along. Suddenly she found herself dealing with the death of her husband and feeling powerless to do anything about it: *"I dreamed about being locked in a car with no steering wheel and no door handles or window controls. It was rolling backward down a steep hill, and there was no way of stopping it, or getting out of it. I woke up in a panic."*

Dreams surface and picture subliminal information that might be important but went unnoticed or remained unfinished in your day's activity. The following dream is a simple illustration of how they can picture that *unfinished business*. Ann Faraday (1974) recalls how she dreamed of her pet bird that *"hit her with a brown derby hat he was wearing."* When reflecting on the metaphor, she realized she had not fed her pet bird (the "brown derby" image related to a restaurant of the same name).

Beyond simply surfacing the problem, dreams that are focused on mental well-being and growth introduce a problem-solving story line aimed at either restoring balance, adapting to a waking life situation or evolving the personality. The following is an example of a dream (I will call the "*Jokester*" dream) that appears to include a bit of all three: *"I dreamed I was bothered by a young jokester character. I tried to make him to go away, when an influential Shadowy character entered from my left and argued that this jokester had been quite useful and that we should give him a chance. After some discussion I agreed, but just for a while. At that point he walked off to the right down a sunlit path."* The dreamer related this to a situation the day before where he was uncharacteristically making a joke of a bad situation. At first he was embarrassed, worrying that he may have caused hurt feelings or made a joke at their expense. But surprisingly his friends liked it and laughed. This new side of self that emerged and was reinforced in the waking life situation appeared to be the jokester fragment of himself that emerged and was being reinforced and tentatively accepted in the dream.

Creative Dreaming

Sometimes, the *unfinished business* can be unresolved problems or something you are trying to create that is unrelated to mental well-being. Often the dream story itself is so creative that it stimulates an author, artist or inventor to undertake a creative venture.

Deirdre Barrett, in her book *The Committee of Sleep* (2001), opens with the quote, "It is a common experience that a problem difficult at night is resolved in the morning after the committee of sleep has worked on it." [John Steinbeck]. Deirdre offers a rich collection of examples, a few of which follow, that show how some of the world's most creative people have used the revelations of their dream life to inform their work.

There are many stories about the role that dreams have played in some of our greatest inventions. For example, there is a story told about how Elias Howe, the inventor of the sewing machine, had been struggling with how to mechanically move a sewing needle and thread through cloth and make a stitch. In a dream, spear throwers were chasing him, and he saw the shape of the spears as that of a sewing needle. But the hole was at the sharp lower end of the needle instead of at the blunt upper end as with a hand-held needle. In this dream image he found the solution.

In the visual arts, for example, Jasper Johns couldn't find his unique artistic vision until he dreamed it in the form of a large American flag. Salvador Dali, and his colleagues, built surrealism out of dreams. Today, Lucy Davis, chief architect at a major firm, dreams her extraordinary designs into life. In the film world, director Ingmar Bergman confides, "Twice I have transferred dreams to film exactly as I had dreamed them." Other filmmakers who have alluded to the use of their dreams in their work include: Federico Fellini, Orson Welles, Akira Kurosawa, Robert Altman, and John Sayles. Mary Shelley's terrible nightmare became Frankenstein. Stephen King's haunting dream as a little boy led to his first bestseller. Musicians such as Beethoven, Billy Joel and Paul McCartney have used the music from their dreams in their work. In science, Otto Loewi worked with his dreams on the medical experiment that earned him the Nobel Prize.

Nightmares

Nightmares can be distinguished from "normal" dreams by their overwhelming anxiety, apprehension or fear. Nightmares are differentiated from disturbing or bad dreams by intensity and that the emotional surge wakes the dreamer. According to the APA Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, or DSM-5 (APA, 2013), nightmares are defined as extremely dysphoric dreams that typically involve threats to an individual's survival or someone's emotional or physical sense of safety …. which also cause significant distress after awakening (called *nightmare related distress*). The formal diagnostic criteria for nightmare disorder, the term *chronic nightmares* is typically used when nightmares persist for at least six months with a frequency of one or more nightmares per week.

All "bad dreams" are not considered nightmares. To that end Ross Levin and Tore Nielsen (2007) defined a *disturbed dreaming continuum* and in their studies found 76.7% to be what we might call normal or common dreams, 17.6% bad or disturbing dreams and 5.7% actual nightmares. Other studies indicate pretty much the same, approximately 5 to 11 percent of the general population reporting problems with nightmares; a study by Bixler for example surveyed 1,006 households found 11 percent to report being troubled by nightmares (in Van de Castle, 1994).

Some consider nightmares as a failure of the dream to accommodate the emotional situation or "emotional surge". Ernest Hartmann, author of *The Nightmare* (1984) and *Dreams and Nightmares* (1998) considers the nightmare not to be a failed or aberrant dream, but rather "one of the most important kinds of dream, and the one in which we can most easily observe a process which probably occurs in all dreams … in this sense the nightmare is the most useful of dreams." Hartmann considered the nightmare to have a possible function, making new connections which diminish the emotional disturbance or arousal. "The process seems to consist of cross-connecting or interweaving—making connections with whatever related material is available in memory and imagination, guided by the dominant emotions of the dreamer, which gradually

become less intense and change their character as the trauma is resolved or integrated" (Hartmann, 1996). Over time the traumatic material is connected with other parts of the memory systems so that it is no longer so unique or extreme—the idea being that the next time something similar or vaguely similar occurs, the connections will already be present, and the event will not be quite so traumatic.

He saw recurrent dreams, which are often frightening, to be about a recurrent theme and almost never precisely repetitive dreams. The general theme may be the same, but they usually reflect changes in the dreamer's life and emotional state. In his research and clinical work he determined that even in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), repetitive dreams upon examination turn out to be creations, not simple replays of waking events; There is generally at least one important change as the mind attempts to gain mastery over the situation.

Hartmann states that the dream image, especially the Central or Contextualizing Image (CI), pictures the emotion of the dreamer and that the intensity of the central image is a measure of the strength of the emotion. This might be seen in nightmares when there is a single powerful emotion such as in a tidal wave dream following a traumatic event. Although negative content and emotion appear frequently in most dreams, we do not usually report the dream as a nightmare unless it is extremely upsetting.

Nightmares can fall into various classes regarding their cause, including: a) heavy emotional stress; b) severe threat to the self-image; c) the result of trauma and PTSD; d) long-term nightmare sufferers; e) medical problems requiring attention or f) the influence of drugs or medications. In essence they are created by extreme stress of one or or another to the system. Nightmares are different from night terrors, which may be accompanied by screaming before awakening with extended disorientation afterwards (Van de Castle,1994). Night terrors generally occur (if at all) during the first few hours of sleep in NREM or deep sleep and the dream itself is generally not recalled.

Stress and Threat Related Nightmares

Although research has shown that personality factors such as thin boundaries are related to nightmare frequency, Schredl (2003) found that there is a greater relationship with current daily stress factors than with personality factors. Daily stress often translates internally to a threat to one's internal image of self. Job disputes, marriage disputes, arguments with friends and associates, etc. are all stress factors that can cause nightmares. But the more significant factor is that these types of situations threaten our sense of who we are. As we will see in later chapters, this threat to self-image may be the stimulus behind a high percentage of our dreams. As the threat grows to the point where the inner model of self and reality can no longer accommodate it, a nightmare may result.

The most common theme in children's nightmares is that of being chased by monsters or animals later in life, the pursuer becoming more like unidentified frightening dream figures. In Chapter 4 we learn that Carl Jung attributes many of the dark, unidentified figures, the monsters in our dreams, to material coming from the *unconscious* which contains suppressed, unwanted or fearful memories, our traumas, and our undesired behavior patterns. As stressful experiences add emotional energy to this suppressed material, it emerges appearing as the dark, unidentified dream figures or monsters that pursue or frighten us. We are essentially running from ourselves, afraid that if our darker side catches up with us, we will be destroyed. The following dream shows this in a humorous way: *"I had a recurrent dream that I was running away from a big, black, hairy monster. My legs could hardly move. In the dream one night I found myself trapped. So I turned around to face the monster and called out in fear 'what are you going to do to me?' The monster (now appearing less frightening) said, 'I don't know lady, it's your dream'!"*

The dream never recurred – perhaps having been placed in the new context that the dreamer is really in control of her own fears. According to Jung, this cycle of impending death is part of the process of integrating the *unconscious* self into the personality. Since integration implies that our existing self-image (the *ego*) must change, or symbolically die, the fear is exaggerated in the dream (see Jung in Chapter 4).

Figure 2-2 Facing Your Fears

Trauma Related Nightmares

Nightmares (called *posttraumatic nightmares*) are often a direct result of a traumatic situation. The suppression of trauma, and subsequent release through replay in dreams, is common in the dreams of veterans suffering from posttraumatic stress disorders, and those who have had life threatening encounters such as natural disasters, all forms of accidents, child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, terrorism, political persecution, loss, or exposure to other significant stressors (Duval & Zadra, 2010). Moreover, far from being infrequent or isolated occurrences, recurrent nightmares about a traumatic event can persist for years and even decades after the trauma. According to Tony Zadra up to 70% of trauma-exposed individuals who develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) report nightmares containing varying degrees of resemblance to the actual traumatic event they had encountered.

While most of what we read about PTSD nightmares comes from war veterans or victims of various tragedies, sometimes the triggering event could have occurred in childhood, long forgotten, yet played out in a person's dreams for a lifetime. Here is such an example. In one of my seminars a woman reported *"I had a recurrent nightmare all my life – always the same airplane diving down and shooting at me. I can even see the pilots face clearly sneering at me."* I never told anyone, not even my mother since she did not believe much in dreams. But 30 years later I finally told my mother. She was surprised and said, "oh you can remember that, it actually did happen - when you were 18 months old." It had occurred during WWII when I was a child in Europe. Once she told her mother the nightmare never came back. The knowledge of what it was about had placed the event in a non-threatening context.

Figure 2-3 **Trauma Replay**

"I had a recurrent nightmare all my life – always the same airplane diving down and shooting at me."

Deirdre Barrett in her book *Trauma and Dreams* (1996) indicates that a pattern evolves in which the trauma may be dreamed repeatedly at first, much as it happened, but later becomes more "dreamlike" and surreal over time. But even at that trauma-related nightmares do not replicate the traumatic event as it originally occurred (Hartmann, 1998). The nightmares of trauma victims a continuum from dreams that replay the trauma or some element of it, but subsequent phases are often characterized by more metaphoric representations and increasing integration with recent waking life concerns. A couple of studies, one on 300 war veterans and another on patients who were hospitalized after an accident or assault (Wilmer, 1996; Mellman et al., 2001) showed this trend. At one extreme (experienced by roughly half of the subjects) were nightmares that replay features of the trauma, perhaps the setting, others involved, and the traumatic event or act itself. Next, nightmares may present fragments or distilled memories of the trauma or aspects of it, distorted themes, or emotions related to the trauma. In the veteran's dreams 21% reported war sequences but not the event actually experienced. Finally, nightmares can represent the traumatic event in a totally metaphoric fashion with little to no literal resemblance or replay of the actual traumatic event. For example, 26% of the veterans reported dreams in this study that alluded to the war but were mixed with metaphoric and everyday *elements.*

Barrett indicates that this transition occurs as dreams begin to change into "mastery" dreams for people who begin to recover from the trauma. The repetitive, unchanging replays may continue, however, in those who develop severe posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in their waking life. Barret's book describes how coaching to develop "mastery" dreams can aid in the resolution of PTSD.

Deirdre Barrett and Jaffar Behbehani (2004) studied post-traumatic stress disorder and recurring nightmares in Kuwait following the Iraqi invasion and occupation of 1990-91. As described in other trauma populations, many Kuwaitis had classic post-traumatic stress nightmares involving literal repetitions of the atrocities they witnessed, with only minor distortions. One dreamer, who had a brother fighting in the resistance, had the following recurring nightmare: *We are at home and the Iraqis come to the house. They break the windows and storm in, searching everywhere and demand to know where he [the brother] is. My two little children are crying. One soldiers is pointing a gun at each of our heads one by one, saying he will shoot us if we do not tell where he is hiding. We do not know. The soldier pulls the trigger and shoots my son, then my daughter. I wake up screaming.* In real life, they came into the house almost like this, and did hold a gun to everyone's head while

they asked about the brother, but never shot anyone. The dreamer's brother had not come home, however, and she feared he had been shot.

As healing occurs evidence of "mastery" can be observed in their dreams. For example, one young woman had a recurring nightmare throughout the occupation in which she was riding in the elevator of a high-rise building, along with many people. The elevator cord would break, plunging the elevator several floors and then dangling by a thread with the terrified passengers not knowing how they could get off before the cord would break and plunge them to their deaths. The dreamer would wake in terror at this point. After the liberation, changes occurred with each repetition of the dream, with the most recent ending in rescuers coming to help people climb to safety through a door in the top of the elevator. As a side note, in Kuwait, people believe that dreams foretell the future rather than reflect the past, making these dreams yet more terrifying. Kuwaitis experienced considerable relief simply from learning that victims of other traumas repeat the trauma in their dreams.

Nightmare Sufferers

Nightmare sufferers are individuals who have a long history of nightmares. Unlike trauma cases, the nightmares do not repeat the same literal event, although the themes might be similar. Frequent nightmare sufferers report their typical non-nightmare dreams as vivid and detailed, filled with very bright colors and distinctive sounds, along with tactile sensations such as pain, taste and smell, which are seldom present in more common dreams (Van de Castle, 1994). In the Hartmann study (1984), many of the long-term nightmare sufferers had stormy personal relationships, difficult adolescent years, a high suicide attempt rate and many were in therapy. A growing body of research shows that nightmares are strong predictors of poor psychosocial adjustment and strongly associated with a range of disorders, including insomnia, anxiety, and depression as well as suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

Medical and Drug Related Nightmares

Sometimes nightmares can occur to warn of something wrong physically. We have all likely experienced nightmarish or disturbing dreams when very ill. Nightmares have at times warned of the onset of illness or a threatening physical condition before we are consciously aware of it. Nightmares and highly bizarre dreams can be induced by various classes of licit and illicit drugs. These include catecholaminergic agents, some antidepressants, barbiturates, alcohol, beta blockers, and cessation of chronic or heavy use of marijuana.

Nightmare Therapy

It has been well established that nightmares can accompany a broad range of clinical conditions and that they may also occur in otherwise well-functioning individuals. Research has also shown one drug related treatment to be effective for PTSD related nightmares (for example prazosin, however recurrence of nightmares has been known to occur once medication is discontinued). A more effective or long-lasting approach has been to target the nightmares directly with various therapeutic techniques that result in clinical improvements over time. The majority of contemporary nightmare treatments are based on cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), an approach that aims to identify and correct dysfunctional thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Of the available approaches, one of the current best practices for the treatment of nightmares is imagery rehearsal therapy (IRT) (Krakow & Zadra, 2006) developed in the early 90s. (Kellner, Neidhardt and Krakow,1992). IRT is a cognitive imagery approach that teaches patients to change their nightmares and to rehearse new scenarios. This approach has been successfully used in varied populations, including children, veterans, the elderly, trauma victims, people living through significant stressors or life crises, and hospitalized patients suffering from serious mental illness.

Tony Zadra (in Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019) describes the instructions for IRT, summarized as follows. Clients begin by re-scripting a nightmare (one of lesser intensity than the reenactment of a trauma) in whatever way feels right to them, changing the story line of a nightmare into an alternative and often less distressing story and then rehearsing the new dream in their imagination using visual imagery. The focus is not necessarily on the nightmare's ending or transforming it into something triumphant. The key instructions typically include: a) change this nightmare anyway you wish; b) rehearse this new dream a few minutes each day (twice can suffice); and c) continue these instructions every day and consider working with another nightmare to change it into a new dream every three to seven days, such that you only rehearse one or two new dreams each week. It is also vital to remind clients that they are only to rehearse the new dream and not the nightmare.

Another approach used for nightmare therapy is Lucid Dreaming. The therapeutic mechanisms are still a bit unclear and it requires a person to have, or learn to have, a lucid dream – but once lucidity is achieved it can be very effective in eliminating or reducing recurrent nightmares. Tholey (1988), described a "self-healing program" based on lucidity training that contained various elements including: techniques for inducing and ending lucid dreams, methods for incubating and influencing the contents of lucid dreams, and principles for interaction with other dream figures. LaBerge suggested that what a person anticipates will happen next in a lucid dream. This can play an important role in how the dream unfolds – although it can go either way – depending on the degree of self-reflection the dreamer has. By becoming lucid in a nightmare the dreamer can: a) alter the anxiety-producing story line by consciously modifying the content, b) realize that the experience is only a dream and not a real event taking place in the physical world, and c) choose how they respond to and interact with frightening imagery thus diminishing the nightmares control (Zadra in Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019). The dreamer's ability to alter some detail in the nightmare is a key factor in the elimination of recurrent dreams. The example above where the dreamer finally turned around and faced the monster – after changing the dream by turning around and communicating with the monster – it never recurred.

Physical Stimulus

Sometimes dreams can contain with content that is stimulated by disease, fever, severe injury, or by an outside stimulus (noise or cold air for example). Dreams related to physical conditions fall under a general category of somatic (relating to the body). These dreams might be classified in three ways:
- **Somatic** dreams that picture or figuratively incorporate physical body sensations
- **Symptomatic** dreams that occur during and illness which figuratively picture the symptoms
- **Prodromal** dreams figuratively picture an illness or medical condition prior to any symptoms.

Somatic

It is rare that an external sensory stimulus will directly affect the dream, because the input to and output from many of the centers of the brain that process such stimulus, are essentially "blocked" in the dream state (Hobson et al., 2003). However, at times external stimulus can find its way into our dreams. This is particularly the case if it is tactile in nature or intense enough. Van de Castle (1994) reports that of three external stimuli applied during REM sleep, a spray of cold water was incorporated in 42% of the recalled dreams, light flashes in 23% and an auditory tone in only 9%.

When an external stimulus has made its way into the dream, it rarely becomes the defining plot of that night's dream but rather is incorporated in some way into the ongoing story line. For example, a cold room might bring snow into the dream environment, and the dream may respond to a loud noise as a gunshot. Internal bodily conditions such as pregnancy, disease or simply normal bodily function can often alter the

content of the dream: *"At one point in my dream I had to go to the bathroom, but every time I found one, it was broken or flooded or provided no privacy. When I woke up and realized that I really did have to go to the bathroom."* This is perhaps one of the most commonly reported physical stimuli that invades our ongoing dream stories. In the case of the bathroom theme, I find that the dream will often inhibit any such action while asleep by frustrating the dreamers attempt to find or use the bathroom perhaps the dream's way of saying, "hold on, not here!"

Symptomatic

Dreams of illness or injury generally contain imagery depicting the poor state of the physical body (dirty water, broken pipes, broken machinery, etc.). We sometimes have disturbing, disjointed dreams that seem different from other dreams, sometimes with a lot of repetitive attempts at solving a nonsense problem. They may contain such imagery as bugs crawling around, excess dirty water, ice or cold conditions, or images of a body part and, at odd times, cartoon characters. *"I dreamed there were five of us in a room, including two big fat pink cartoon-like characters, who had been at one time friendly toward us, but had turned on us. The two other men were holding down the fat pink guys and cutting their throats."* The dreamer woke with a sore throat, swollen tonsils and the flu -- symbolized by the dream imagery.

Color can relate to the physical condition as it did with the "fat little pink characters" above. Many dreams that accompany flu or stomach and intestinal sickness will be filled with dirty brown fluids inside of tunnels or tubes. Rust color, accompanying broken machinery, might appear as in the woman's dream above. Other sickness-related colors are vile green or muddy yellow. Injury is often accompanied with red in the dream, representing inflammation and blood. This metaphoric depiction was present in this dream following of an eye injury: *"I dreamed of a skull with red fire coming out of a section above the eye."*

On a more positive note, dreams relating to pregnancy may have *elements* of renewal, as well as references to body change and self-image. Patricia Garfield (1991) describes common images in pregnancy dreams to include small animals, baby animals and amphibians such as lizards (representing the fetus), water (perhaps representing the amniotic water in which the baby is suspended), buildings and other architectural imagery (relating to the woman's body, the fetal home).

Prodromal

Prodromal dreams figuratively picture the onset of an illness prior to any symptoms being detected or sensed. Patricia Garfield, in her book *The Healing Power of Dreams* (1991), indicates that dreams often contain references to internal physical conditions before they are known to the conscious mind or felt by the senses. As a result, she indicates that we should pay attention to the related imagery and watch for warning signs, as well as signs of healing. Some of the theoretical thinking about *prodromal* dreams might be found in a passage from Kasatkin (Van de Castle, 1994) who states that because nerves connect to the brain from every part of the body they therefore can relay signals of impending illness – which then are then figuratively pictured by our subconscious minds in the dream. For example, dreams of mental illness may focus on the head: "My father used to have a recurring nightmare where he dreamed he looked into the mirror and had no head. He woke screaming each time. He died from Alzheimer's while still fairly young."

Larry Burk (2015) recently surveyed the characteristics of warning dreams preceding the diagnosis of breast cancer in 18 women. The five most common characteristics of their warning dreams reported in the survey were: a sense of importance 94%; more vivid, real or intense than ordinary dreams 83%; an emotional sense of threat, menace or dread 72%; specific words breast cancer/tumor 44%; and the sense of physical contact with the breast 39%.

Wendy Pannier and Tallulah Lyons who managed an IASD Cancer Project, lead dream groups and workshops in cancer centers for over 16 years to help cancer patients and caregivers discover the value of working with or paying attention to dreams in the process. Some of their experiences are described in *Dreams that Change Our Lives* (Hoss & Gongloff ed., 2017). They have experienced dreams of warning and diagnosis but also observed dreams to provide guidance during the care and recovery that help transform the cancer journey into a life-expanding experience. Sometimes the dreams can be literal. Wendy's own cancer experience reflects this when she had the following dream: "*My gynecologist of many years calls me on the phone and says: 'You need a D&C'.*" A year later, following a sonogram, her gynecologist called for the first time ever and said, "You need a D&C." She was diagnosed with Stage IVB cancer – which she later recovered from.

Warnings, diagnosis and remedies can be tricky with dreams, however, since they most often speak in metaphor. It is always best to have a checkup but if nothing is found, to also to look for possible emotional or psychological associations with what appears to be the dream "message," as in this case: *"I was in a clinic and a nurse was checking me over. She felt some lumps on my groin area and exclaimed, 'she is riddled with cancer'. I was not afraid to die but asked the nurse if she could do something to keep me from going through all the pain."* In this case, the dreamer went for a checkup and, fortunately, the dream had nothing do with a medical condition. She entered my workshop puzzled why her dream told her she had cancer! When we worked on the dream, the dreamer revealed that she was a strong believer in astrology. At the time of the dream she was having a relationship with a man who was astrologically a "Cancer." She wanted to end the relationship but was puzzled ("riddled") about how to do it without going through all the emotional pain.

Nonetheless, it is always good to have a checkup if a particular body part recurs in a dream or appears in a particularly disturbing or impacting dream. *"I saw a horrible looking creature, shaped like a huge black gelatinous blob which was threatening my child, oozing out from under a platform on which there was some old inoperative rusting machinery.*" This dream occurred after a bout with post-menopausal bleeding. The dreamer heeded the dream and went for a checkup, which luckily showed the cause to be hormone-related, and not life threatening. In the following dream, the medical condition was symbolically represented before the symptoms were apparent. However the dreamer was less fortunate in this case: "*My father used to have a recurring nightmare where he dreamed he looked into the mirror and had no head. He woke screaming each time. He died from Alzheimer's while still fairly young.*"

Diagnostic Dreams and Using Dreams to Heal

The great majority of this book will be focused on how to work with your dreams, or your client's dreams, to deal with unresolved emotional situations, or inappropriate beliefs that leave the dreamer stuck in unhealthy behavior patterns. Dreams may also contain information that is key to healing other disorders, particularly when there is a basis in some earlier emotional trauma or irrational decision about self and life.

Remedies

Sometimes *somatic* dreams appear to hint at a remedy to rebalance the system. The following series occurred to a man who had just gone on a vegetarian diet and was still adjusting to it. *"I dreamed of a fishing boat and on the side of it was written the words 'eat more fish'.*" At that, the dreamer added fish to his diet and subsequently felt an increase in energy. A couple of nights later he dreamed*, "I was being enticed by a beautiful woman. As I approached her she stated, 'bring me tea'."* At this point the dreamer was getting used to these messages of protest from his body, and added tea to his diet. Another remedy dream comes from a man who had asthma: *"I dreamed of a hand that was pouring 2 oz. of lemon juice onto 2 ice cubes."* He took this remedy for 2 weeks and claimed it solved his coughing and fainting.

Figure *2-4* Rebalancing

Healing Dreams

At times the dream reflects physical healing taking place, in a story line that appears as if the healing takes place due to actions within the dream. Two such cases can be found in the IASD book *Dreams that Change Our Lives* (Hoss & Gongloff ed., 2017).

In one case Wanda asked for help with her constant debilitating migraines. That night she dreamed: "*I am in the room of my oncologist. He says the team he assembled in response to my problem is ready for me. I am briefly aware of some kind of painless surgery on my head. After the surgery, the surgery team to shows me what they removed… a small, blood-covered beadlike piece of tissue. I take it in my hands…and feel small 'hairy' tentacles all over the surface. I am grateful and I thank the physician and my team.*" She awoke feeling cautious but extremely relieved in the absolute absence of pain – and that 6 years later she has had no migraines since that night (Pannier in Hoss & Gongloff, 2017).

In another case the dream appeared to involve a paranormal or spiritual aspect, akin in some ways to prayer healing. A therapist whose client who after many years of trauma and subsequent treatment was finally on the verge of emotional healing – but was now discovered to have what two doctors had characterized as incurable cancer – three spots of advanced cancer on the client's ovaries – giving her only months to life. The therapist prayed for her client asking God to help her. That night the therapist had the following dream: *Mary, mother of Jesus, is descending from the sky. As I watch Mary, her arms are outstretched, and three glowing globes of golden-white light issue forth from her hands. I watch as each globe surrounds a spot on the ovaries completely and envelops it.* She reluctantly told her client, who went back to the doctor who now found no sign of the cancer – she was completely cured. (Warner in Hoss & Gongloff, 2017)

Psychosomatic Disorders

Irrational beliefs can express themselves not only as symptoms of other disorders (bereavement, depression, trauma), but also as symptoms of what may appear to be physical disorders. Deirdre Barrett (2003) in her paper "The 'Royal Road' becomes a shrewd shortcut," describes how dreams can be a useful diagnostic tool in such cases, since dreams represent a powerful metaphor, which patients may be unable to articulate otherwise. The paper illustrates how dreamwork can be utilized in symptom-focused psychotherapy. One example is that of a 36-year-old man who came for treatment of a two-month bout with insomnia. *He reported a dream in which he saw a boy sleeping in a bed, with soft morning light shining in through translucent curtains. Despite the peaceful images of the scene, the dreamer felt a sense of dread. An old-fashioned alarm clock went off, ringing loudly, but the boy did not stir. A woman appeared at the door of the room and called to the boy, who still did not move. The dream ended abruptly with the patient knowing the boy was dead.*

Lucid Dreams

Lucid Dreaming is defined by the APA (American Psychological Association) as "a dream in which the sleeper is aware that he or she is dreaming and may be able to influence the progress of the dream narrative." As this section will illustrate lucid dreaming extends well beyond that definition.

Lucid dreaming occurs when brain centers that are normally relatively inactive during sleep become active. Parts of the pre-frontal cortex and precuneus involved in self-reflection, conscious awareness and willful control become more active. Occipital and parietal areas involved in imagery, spatial processing, form and color become more active, enhancing the vivid visual and spatial experience.

That the dreamer is conscious in the dream was discovered in 1978 by Keith Hearne and independently confirmed in 1981 by Stephen LaBerge (1986). They asked research subjects who could dream lucidly to move their eyes back and forth in a prescribed manner as soon as they realized they were dreaming lucidly. This sort of signaling the researcher from within the dream is now regularly performed in lucidity research with both eye and muscle movements.

The degree of lucidity and the experience can vary widely in lucid dreams:
- ***Sub-Lucid Reflection:*** a simple awareness that you are dreaming or in a dream.
- ***False awakenings:*** the dreamer feels they have or attempts to wake from a dream only to find themselves in another dream. *I dreamed I was at home and my dad wanted me to do some unpleasant work. Suddenly I realized that I was dreaming so I woke myself up to avoid the work. I was happy now to be peacefully sitting with my dad and mom in the living room. Living room! I suddenly realized that I had not woken up and was in another dream.*
- ***Acting or "Playing":*** a realization that you are dreaming and a self-reflection and wilful taking charge of your own actions. These often include flying, or wilful interactions with other dream figures. For example, Deirdre Barrett (1991) examined 1,910 dreams from 191 subjects and found flying dreams to be more frequent with lucid dreamers.
- ***Influencing the Dream:*** trying to wilfully control the dream or make things happen - which works to a degree but generally the dreamer discovers limitations on their ability to alter events or the actions of other dream figures (they are only the *dream-self* or *ego* - in a much bigger landscape of the self).
- ***Interacting with Dream Figures:*** engaging with dream figures, such as asking them who or what they are or where they come from - exploring the nature of dream imagery. Dream figures may identify themselves as non-integrated parts of your own personality, or various states of consciousness. They rarely believe themselves to be characters in your dream, but rather independent personalities. They

often react in unexpected ways (disbelief, defiance, hurt, etc.) if told that they are simply a character in your dream.

- **Self-Improvement or Healing:** *1. Skills:* research with lucid dreaming has been found skills to improve similarly when practiced in a lucid dream as in waking practice. *2. Nightmare therapy:* learning to face your fears pictured as monsters/imagery that diminish when challenged; *3. Mind over Body:* physical healing, breaking habits etc. has been anecdotally reported in a number of cases.
- **Engaging the 'Wisdom' behind the dream:** some seasoned lucid dreamers have discovered there is a "wisdom" behind the dream that responds when posing a general question or request to the dream itself, such as "what is my role in life" or simply "show me something I need to know." The dream will then often "sparkle" into another scene where an answer or some insightful dream story is experienced (often metaphorically, but sometimes direct). See examples in the sections below. This non-personal, helpful and *collective* wisdom acts much what Jung (see Chapter 4) described as the *collective unconscious* or inner *Self* (central organizing force of the personality).
- **Extraordinary Experiences**: while in the lucid state, some dreamers have experienced or initiated states of awareness or experiences that might be considered paranormal or extrasensory (PSI), Out of Body (OOBE) and even mind-over-matter. Although such experiences have been reported in non-lucid dreams, lucidity appears to provide a condition open to such experiences.
- **Trans-personal or Spiritual Experiences:** seemingly multidimensional experiences often without form and difficult to describe (often called the "void"), sometimes a sense of a divine presence or oneness with a cosmic consciousness. This can often occurred as the dreamer engages the "wisdom behind the dream" a couple examples are given below in Spiritual Dreams.

Although you may have never had a lucid dream, rarely had one or recall only a few lucid like experiences, lucid dreaming is more frequent than you might think. For example, one meta-analysis (Saunders et al., 2016) of 34 surveys discovered that on average 55 percent of the population reporting having had at least one lucid dream and 23 percent reported having them quite frequently (once a month). For an in-depth discussion of the experience, research and methods of inducing lucid dreams, the reader is referred to chapter 9 of *Dreams: Understanding Biology, Psychology and Culture* (Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019) or books such by LaBerge (1986) or Waggoner (2009, 2015).

The Nature of Dream Figures

Psychologies based on the works of Carl Jung and Fritz Perls understand dream *elements*, and thus dream figures (or characters if you wish), to be representations of our feelings, conceptions, and "alienated" or discarded parts of who we are and that the dream interaction is an attempt at integrating these disowned parts into the personality (see Chapter 4). This concept was demonstrated in one of my dreams in the IASD book *Dreams that Change Our Lives* (Hoss & Gongloff ed., 2017) illustrated in figure 2-5.

At the time was conflicted over the value of following my "visions" a pursuit which was driving me to overstress myself; I began to feel that much of what I had done or wanted to do was in reality of little value – what difference has all this work made? I just wanted to give it all up. *That night my dream went lucid and I called out to the "wisdom behind the dream" - "show me something I need to know". At that point I found myself in a large white room met by a guide (oddly one of the Mario Brothers™) who introduced him to the 4 parts (fragments) of myself that were in conflict: a tall man who identified himself as my fun loving side; a frustrated artist who just wanted his work to be done without all the effort; a mechanical man who identified himself as my "wise and learned past and future self" and finally a beautiful woman who said "I am your visions, I am like diamonds."* The dream not only demonstrated that dream figures can represent parts of the personality that are fragmented by conflict but in this case provided a delightful answer to my question regarding whether my visions were of any value.

Figure 2-5 Lucid Dream – Meeting Myself

The concept of dreams attempting to "integrate" the personality (per Jung and Perls – see Chapter 4), is illustrated in a story that Robert Waggoner tells in his book *Lucid Dreaming* (2009). In his lucid dream he meets a woman and asks who she is. She states, *"I am a discarded aspect of yourself."* As he recognizes the truth in this and decides to accept her completely, she becomes wisps of colored light energy which enters his torso. Here in the lucid dream the integration was self-directed and immediate.

Exploring your dream figures can be an exciting, fun and revealing exploration into the nature of consciousness. Dream figures do not consider themselves as characters in your dream or any dream, they generally act as independent entities with their own personalities, consciousness, capabilities and *egos*. An example of this is a lucid dream where I asked the dream to show me something I need to know. "*The dream sparkled into light and I found myself as a professor lecturing to a class of about twenty dream figures (students). After what seemed like quite a bit of interactive lecturing on what it is like to be in a dream, a woman raised her hand. She asked "well how come if I am just a dream figure I can remember a whole life before this time; I have a husband and two kids ....". I stated, "that's interesting" and turned to the rest of the class and asked, "how many of you can remember a life before this moment?" Six students immediately raised their hands – then very gradually all twenty raised their hands.*"

German dream researchers Stumbrys, Erlacher, and Schmidt (2011 and 2014) studied the nature of dream figures. Various experiments were done. In one 13 lucid dreamers asked 24 different dream figures to solve 50 quite simple mathematical problems (for example: 9 x 9 = 81 and 30 - 5 = 25). 18 out of 50 answers were given correct (36%) multiplication and division better than addition and subtraction. In another study, 15 lucid dreamers (27 dream reports) asked dream figures (38 times) to guess the number of fingers they held up behind their backs – which the dream figures (19 out of 29) answered correctly – thus 66% of the time (significantly more than the 9% probability of guessing a random number from 0 to 10). In a third experiment, lucid dreamers (7 in all) were to guess random numbers (17 in all) written down by different

dream figures (12 in all) resulting in the correct number being successfully guessed in 10 out of 14 cases or 71.4%. In another study by Tadas Stumbrys and Michael Daniels (2010), they looked at the ability of dream figures to solve logical puzzles or create metaphors. The researchers found that dream figures could create metaphors more easily than solve logical puzzles. For example when asked to create a metaphor in response to *"a lighthouse in a desert"* one dream figure offered up, *"a condom in the hands of a nun."*

The researchers concluded that the results indicate that there is some form of connection (although not complete) between the *dream ego* and dream figures – which raises an interesting question. If dream figures are meaningless nonsense then the accuracy should be nonsense, or best-case chance – which it wasn't. If they are fully integrated with *ego* consciousness – then the answers should be 100% the same as the dreaming self that is asking the question – but they weren't. They were something in between – perhaps the dream figures are the non-integrated *fragments* our personality that Jung and Perls theorized.

Some dream figures, however, may be more than just personality *fragments*, and seem to be, particularly during experiences of a higher consciousness or visionary nature. In one such lucid dream I met three dream figures and asked each one, *"who are you?"* Each one answered in turn, *"I am a higher level of consciousness."* This is an area that is not fully explored so it can be a wonderful exploration into the nature of consciousness to dialog with dream figures and ask who they are or where they came from.

Extraordinary or Paranormal Dreams

These are dreams that contain elements that expand our perception beyond the bounds of normal reality. The dream may start out as a typical dream, but the story line may suddenly incorporate a striking paranormal element. Krippner, Bogzaran and De Carvalho, in *Extraordinary Dreams* (2002), created fourteen categories of what they called "exceptional dreams", some of which they classified "extraordinary" dreams or the somewhat less value-laden term "anomalous dreams." The book provides a wealth of knowledge and research into paranormal and extraordinary dreams, as well as a discussion on how to work with the nature of each type of dream to enhance your life. They state that "these dreams call attention to themselves because of their unusual or anomalous quality, but they also seem meaningful in some way".

"Exceptional" dreams include: Creative Dreams; Lucid Dreams; Dreams within Dreams; Impactful or Transcendent and Initiation Dreams (covered in other sections of the book) – and "extraordinary" or psi related dreams, which I will cover in this section. An "extraordinary" dream of a paranormal nature might fall into one of the following classifications according to Krippner: a) Mutual dreams – whereby two persons report the same or similar dreams on the same night; b) Telepathic dreams – relating to the thoughts of another; c) Clairvoyant dreams – perceiving distant events; d) Precognitive dreams – providing information about an event that has not yet occurred; e) Past life dream – which appear to detail events in a past life we have no way of knowing about; f) Spiritual dreams – whereby we are visited by spirits, deities or those from the other side. g) Out-of-Body – which involves the sensation of leaving your body.

The Research

At Duke University, Louisa Rhine collected roughly 7,000 self-reported anecdotal telepathic experiences and found that nearly two-thirds of them reputedly had occurred in dreams. Some of the first pioneering scientific work in this area was performed by Ullman, Krippner and Vaughan, who in their classic book, *Dream Telepathy* (1973) which discusses the results of scientifically controlled experiments in paranormal dreaming. More details on this history, provided by Stanley Krippner, can be found in *Dreams that Change our Lives* (Hoss & Gongloff ed. 2017) and *Dreams: Understanding the Biology, Psychology and Culture* (Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019). Montague Ullman began to research this phenomenon in 1966 and later

moved his operation into Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, New York, where Stanley Krippner joined him. A protocol was developed in which a target picture (unknown to the researchers was double-sealed in an envelope by an assistant) was randomly selected by a dice throw once the research subject had retired for the night in a sound-attenuated room. Upon viewing the contents of the selected envelope (the target picture) the "transmitter" then related to the picture contents through associations, enactments, and emotion. An experimenter awakened the participant when the instrumentation (EEG tracings, plus eye movements and muscle tension tracking) indicated that a dream was in process, asking, "What has been going through your mind?" The dream report was recorded and later judged for content correlation. The precognition dream studies were done much the same way except that the target was randomly selected following the participant's night in the laboratory.

At Maimonides they conducted 13 formal studies (11 focusing on telepathy, 2 on precognition) and three groups of pilot studies in which telepathy, precognition, and clairvoyance were investigated; in total, 450 nighttime dream sessions resulting in a 63% confirmation rate. A meta-analysis of the results conducted by Dean Radin concluded that the odds were 75 million-to-1 against achieving the results by chance. In 2003, Simon J. Sherwood and Chris A. Roe compared Maimonides studies with other attempted replication studies concluding that in both sets of studies "raters could correctly identify target materials more often than would be expected by chance" with 95 percent confidence.

Although these studies suggest that paranormal events or PSI occurs in the dream state, the percentage of dreams containing PSI is not large. Stanley Krippner and Laura Faith collected 1,666 dream reports from women (910) and men (756) from six countries between 1990 and 1998 in order to identify anomalous dreams. When an independent rating was performed approximately 8% were considered anomalous (6.3% excluding lucid dreams). There was no significant gender differences and the categories reported most often PSI related were out-of-body dreams (1.4 percent), visitation dreams (1.1 percent), and precognitive dreams (1.1 percent).

Despite the data and statistical analysis, the studies are not necessarily considered conclusive from a strict scientific standpoint because of difficulty in replication and variation in evaluation procedures between studies over the years. Mainstream science places them in the "events" category due to their ephemeral nature, the resistance of PSI to appear on demand, and their lack of satisfactory explanatory mechanisms. As a result, they remain in the "reports" category.

Synchronicity

Synchronicities according to Jung are "meaningful coincidences" that occur with no causal relationship yet seem to be meaningfully related. The principle of synchronicity is important since it is not always possible nor necessary to determine if a paranormal dream is say precognive or telepathic – its pretty much one in the same synchronicity phenomenon.

Jung reports such an event occurring at the point he and Freud split in their relationship. They were having a heated argument, Freud being totally dismissive of Jung's beliefs in the paranormal. And at that moment Jung felt heat in his chest and a loud explosive noise occurred in the bookcase next to them, causing both to be startled and fearing it would fall over on them. At that point Jung said to Freud: "There, that is an example of a so-called catalytic exteriorization phenomenon." [Synchronicity]. Freud dismissed it as nonsense. But Jung stated, "You are mistaken, Herr Professor. And to prove my point I now predict that in a moment there will be another such loud report!" At that moment the same explosive noise went off in the bookcase. Freud was aghast but the two never spoke of it again.

Telepathic

Dreaming of the thoughts or perceptions of other people at a distance has been the subject of a good degree of scientific research, because it is relatively easy to administer, control and judge. Following the experimental process that Ullman, Krippner and Vaughan had pioneered, my colleague John Williams and I repeated the experimentation on a number of occasions with the students from my Dream Psychology course at Richland College in Richardson, Texas. We had a person who did not know the purpose of the experiment select three pictures on 35mm slides at random and place them in black envelopes. At about midnight, we would pick one at random and project it on the ceiling of the planetarium and view the picture with the intention that it would be telepathically sent to the sleeping students. The night before the class, the students were given instructions to go to bed and wake themselves up with an alarm clock about a half an hour after we started the projection. Upon waking, they were to draw the key dream imagery and record their dream. The dreams were then collected the following day and judged.

Figure 2-6 Dream Telepathy Experiment

Target

Dream Image
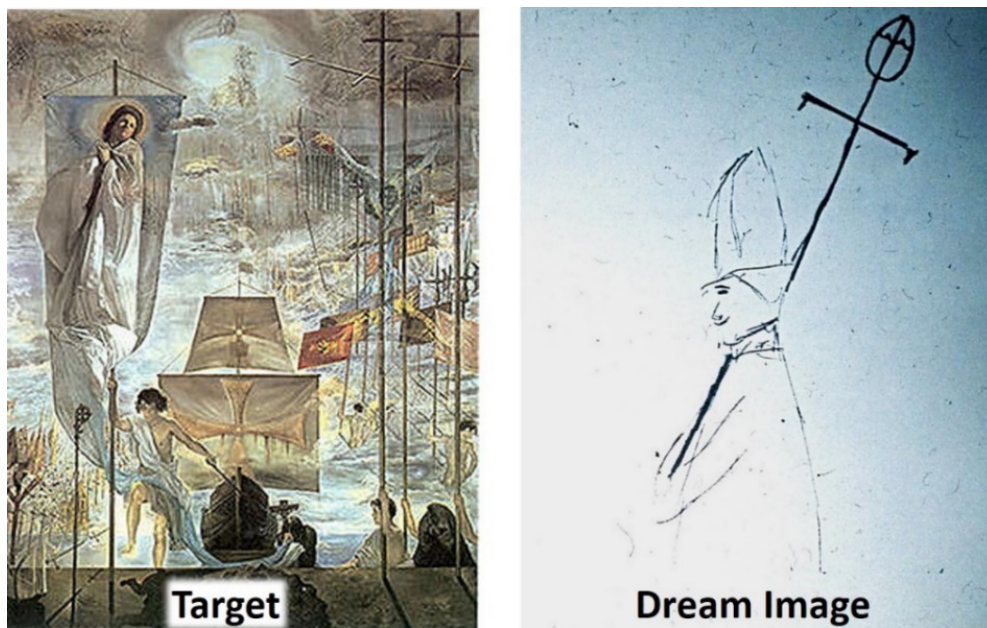
The experiments resulted in a small percentage of dream reports (perhaps 2 to 4 each time out of a collection of a dozen or so dreams) that were strikingly similar to the projected picture. It is difficult to say how much could be attributed to coincidence and how much to telepathic ability, but in some cases there was such a striking similarity, that the evidence for telepathy seemed very convincing. For example, one evening the picture was of Salvador Dali's *Discovery of America.* The picture contained bishops waiting on shore, each with a staff in their hand containing a rounded cross inside an oval at the top. One student turned in their drawing stating that they did not recall the dream but they did recall some images. The drawing was of a bishop with the exact same bishops hat and the exact same staff in their hands with the oval and rounded cross at the top (see figure 2-6).

A number of such telepathic dreams are reported in the IASD book *Dreams that Change Our Lives* (Hoss, Gongloff ed., 2017). One was from Louisa Rhine's work, part of a collection of extraordinary dream reports. In one report, at the end of World War II, a woman in Florida claimed that she awakened one night crying out between sobs that she had seen her soldier son die in the crash of a burning airplane. The next day, a

cheerful letter arrived from her son, and the woman regained her composure. Five nights later, however, the same nightmare occurred. The next day a telegram arrived relaying the news that her son had been killed in an airplane crash on the night of her initial dream.

Another anecdotal experience comes from the dream telepathy contests held by International Association for the Study of Dreams (IASD) at their annual conference (see resource appendix for information on IASD). Each year the association does a fun, non-scientific marginally controlled version of the Maimonides telepathy protocol. A person transmits a target picture that is selected at random from three that have been previously placed in envelopes. The target picture is transmitted late one evening to the conference attendees. The attendees are asked to incubate a dream on the picture, and then record their dream in the morning, and place it in an envelope for judging. Each year a prize is given for the closest dream representation of the target picture. At the Copenhagen conference in 2004, there was a particularly interesting "hit." The target picture was a huge tree. The person transmitting the picture, in order to try to act it out, started jumping up and down yelling, "tree – tree". One dream report came in the next day in which the dreamer said that the only thing they recalled was the image of the person who was the transmitter, jumping up and down yelling "tree – tree". They obviously won the prize!

Often telepathic dreams contain some sort of communications imagery. This dream of a former student represents such a case: *"I dreamed I was searching for my lost child and was desperate to find a phone that would work. Neither of the two phones I tried had a dial tone, but I suddenly saw a phone number. I dialed the number, and on the last digit, a screen appeared above the phone revealing that my child was safe at home."* The dreamer reported that the phone number seemed so clear and significant, that she wrote it down and called it the next day. The person she contacted was quite excited, because she too had a lifelong interest in dreams, and synchronistic with the dream, belonged to an organization that works with children. Both the dreamer and the person she phoned expressed that they were searching for something the other could provide in their lives. They formed a bond of friendship as a result.

Precognitive

Social media is filled with reports of people who saw disasters in their dreams, before the actual occurrence. Many are anecdotal, after the fact and difficult to support, but some were reported before-hand. For example, a few days before the 9-11 World Trade disaster my wife, who rarely recalls her dreams, reported the following dream: *"I was looking across the water and all the buildings were toppled like pick-up sticks. Everything went dark and people were rushing to the radio and TV to find out what had happened."*

This example also comes from *Dreams that Change Our Lives.* Janice Baylis reports the following precognitive dream. *My three sons and I were to meet my friend at our usual car-pool meeting place. But that morning she phoned me and told me to meet around the next corner instead of our usual place. While we were meeting around the corner a small airplane crashed where we would have been. As we drove by the wreck I asked: "How did you know?" She answered, "I dreamed it. I didn't tell you it was a dream. You might have thought I was silly to react to a dream." "Thank God you did!" I exclaimed.*

The difficulty with a precognitive dream is determining at the time of the dream whether it is foretelling the future, or if it is just a metaphor related to something happening within the dreamer. Dreaming of an airplane crashing to the ground, for example, can often be a metaphor relating to the dreamer's aspirations, or new ideas and concepts, "crashing to the ground" or being pulled down to reality. This makes precognition difficult. It is always advisable to apply solid dreamwork practices to such a dream, in order to sort out possible psychological causes. Canceling a vacation after such a dream may be an overreaction. However, if the dream is highly impactful and somewhat lucid, real or visionary in nature, and the event can easily be avoided, it may be prudent to do so.

Successfully avoiding an event may be difficult, however, since the dream rarely depicts the scene as it is in reality. Krippner et. al. (2002) reported on work by Louisa Rhine with 191 apparent precognitive experiences, in which 69% of the people were successful in attempting to prevent the foreseen event. I find much less success in the precognitive dreamers I have been exposed to. Most people I have worked with, who report frequent precognitive dreams that do come to pass, report feelings of fear and frustration that they are unable to prevent the events.

In a few cases that I have observed, the dream will contain a precognitive element that has little to do with the dream itself but acts as a trigger for later recall of the dream. This is one I had: *I was driving along the highway recently and a unique, bright yellow custom car passed me going the other way. I suddenly realized that I had seen that same exact car in a dream the night before. At this point the entire dream, which I had totally forgotten, flooded into consciousness. It turned out to be a very important dream to work with, but work on the car revealed little. The meaning of the dream seemed to have nothing to do with the yellow car – the car seemed to be a synchronous element in both the dream and waking life, there to trigger recall.*

Sometimes, the dream and waking life events will contain a striking synchronicity with important transitions in the dreamer's life. The following "*Retirement Party*" dream above contained such a precognitive and synchronistic element. This was one of my dreams that came at an important transition point in my life – my retirement from my scientific career over fifteen years ago and subsequent transition into full time dream studies. "*I dreamed that my friends at the office gave me a retirement party. They bring me four presents that are intended to be symbolic of my retirement. The first was popcorn, my favorite snack. The next was a set of wooden skis, representative of my favorite sport. The third is an electric guitar, representing my musical interests and talent. The final gift impressed me in the dream as the greatest of all – but upon waking I could not recall what it was.*"

Oddly, when I awoke, I could recall all the details of the dream, three of the gifts but not the fourth golden bowl. That afternoon, at an international market, I happened upon a golden Tibetan "song" bowl (something I had never seen before). I suddenly remembered that the fourth forgotten gift in my dream was a golden bowl! I bought the bowl. It is a notable synchronicity that I was now able to obtain the physical manifestation of this central *element* in this significant transformative dream. When later working on the meaning of the bowl I realized it represented dreamwork – with all of its meditative harmony and beauty, energy and mysticism.

Some feel that precognitive dreams are responsible for many deja vu experiences. On a few occasions, as in the examples above, the experiences could be tracked back to a particular dream. An alternative theory of deja vu is based on evidence that a sensory event is processed by two paths in the brain. Sensory information takes a fast track to the limbic system where emotional memories are associated with the event in order to prepare us for action. The slower track goes to the cognitive centers where the event, plus those emotional memories, raises our attention level so that we become aware of it. It is reasonable that the perception of the new event, together with the older emotional memories, could produce a feeling of having been there before.

Mutual Dreams

Sometimes two persons will report having dreams on the same night, with the same identical *elements*. For example, Stanley Krippner (2002) cites a dream in which the two dreamers, on the same night, dreamed of being in identical locations, describing the same hotel lobby with its unique pillars. Emotional attachment is sometimes involved. Sometimes therapists and subjects may find themselves dreaming similar dreams, with content that is important to the session that week. I have had the experience of dreaming of one of my students, and she dreaming of me, on the same night. In one particular case, the dreams were not similar

(other than the presence of the two of us) but, when the dreams were discussed, my dream held valuable information related to understanding her dream and her situation.

Often mutual dreaming is reported in the Lucid dream state. Kelly Lydick (Hoss, et al., 2017) reports a dreaming event that she went to in which participants were asked to work together in a group dreaming experience. The organized had arranged some objects at the center of a hillside labyrinth, and each dreamer was asked to use the dreamtime to meet the group, journey to the labyrinth, and report back on the objects that were placed there. Kelly went to sleep with the intention of doing so. She dreamed of *flying high above the Earth among the clouds and stars at night approaching and hovering over the labyrinth. As she moved closer to the object in the center, she saw others around her as "shapes, rippling through the night like angels cloaked in human flesh". She saw the object as a small, blue-colored glass bowl filled with water.* The next morning, the organizer told the group that she had placed a blue bowl of water at the labyrinth. Others shared their experiences and all the stories were nearly the same.

Another example of a mutual, or at least a connected dream experience, is one that my wife and I experienced. *I dreamed of a clock face that had a jagged shape around it. In my dream I was trying to understand the meaning and suddenly a voice said, "wake your wife, she will know what it means." At that moment I woke up and so did my wife. I told her of the image of the jagged clock face and she said, "Oh I was dreaming that you were going to have a <u>rough time</u>".*

Clairvoyant

Montague Ullman often had patients reporting dreams that coincided with events in his personal life. He decided to research whether this phenomenon was simply coincidence or what might be considered clairvoyance. He arranged for a "target picture", sealed in an envelope, to be randomly selected once the research participant had retired for the night. One of his first subjects was the medium Eileen Garrett who had agreed to be instrumented for the experiment. One of the pictures was a color photo of the chariot race from the film *Ben-Hur,* currently in release. Garrett reported a dream concerning horses going uphill and associated the image with *Ben-Hur*, which she had seen two weeks previously (Ullman & Krippner, 1973).

Some of the most memorable stories of clairvoyant dreams, the perception of events at a distance, occur between family members at a time of crisis or the death of a loved one. *"I dreamed that my father and I were walking in a beautiful field. At that point he left me and walked into the sunset. I said to him 'so long Captain'."* At that moment the dreamer woke up, and a few minutes later he received a phone call regarding the unexpected death of his father (who the family lovingly called "Captain").

When there are other minds involved the classification can fall into a grey area between clairvoyance and telepathy. Here is the case of possible clairvoyant/telepathic dream which contained better news. My mother dreamed: *"I dreamed I was unpacking a lovely wedding dress. The next day I received a call from my daughter who said she was getting married."*

Such dreams often are presented in word-play that relates to the event: *"I was being followed by some harmless but annoying insects that I called 'urine bees.' The day after the dream, I received a note from a urologist B. B. (name), who said that they were moving to our area and wanted to get re-acquainted."*

Past Life

There has been evidence, mostly anecdote but some substantiated in various ways Moody (1975), that life may go on after death and even continue with another earthly life. Whether this is part of your belief system or not, people do report dreams is convincing to them of a past life – this is the nature of one such dream:

"I was Chinese and in China as one of a large band of refugees. An army, which appeared to be Anglo-Saxon, was invading. Their uniforms were brown, and instead of helmets they wore soft brown caps. I felt I was in bondage and unable to change what would happen. I was carrying my baby girl and gave her to a young Chinese girl who was my sister saying, 'I can't take my golden child. I wish I could because I love her, but I want her to grow up Chinese. Her name is Heavenly Peace.' I then called her Tien Tai, and turned away with a deep feeling of emptiness and loss. Later when I researched the name I learned that Tien is the word for Heaven."

It is nearly impossible to know for sure, however, since dreams will place you in very creative settings with fragments from events you have seen or read about, that are likely to be metaphors, related to your present life story. Some dreams, however, have elements that might be later verified to a degree: *"I dreamed that I was in a Roman style amphitheater. My name was Pasha. The dream switched, and I was looking at a tomb with the name Pasha."* The dreamer reported that four years later she took a trip to Pompeii. While there, she walked into some unmarked ruins. She told her husband "I have been here before. This used to be a covered amphitheater, and I used to sit right here." Upon speaking to the guide, he confirmed that this was the newly uncovered ruin of what was once a covered amphitheater.

In the book *Dreams that Change Our Lives* a dreamer by the name of Victoria's whose father had died when she was little reports having the following dream. *He calls to her in a dream, "I'm coming back" From Spain she asks. "NO, I'm coming back from death." She sees him in place that looks like an orphanage. The next day her brother called to tell her that the adoption center called and they were granted the adoption of a 3-month-old boy.*

Out of Body Experience

One form of paranormal dream, which is strikingly different than any other, is the out-of- body experience also called OBE or OOBE (Monroe,1973; Green, 1968). One dreamer reports: *"I suddenly find myself above my body looking down at myself. Upon this realization I feel myself fall into my body and feel a thud as I wake."* And another: *"I felt myself floating up above the bed. Then I drifted down toward the floor next to the bed and looked upward at an angle and across the top of the storage chest, in order to see the sky through the window. There was a crescent moon and a few stars. When I woke up, I tested this and found that I could only see the sky and new crescent moon from that part of the room by kneeling on the floor and looking over the storage chest."* Here, the dreamers find themselves consciously present outside their body, perhaps in another location, sometimes as a whole person or as just a ball of consciousness. What is interesting is that, in many of these reports, the person sees things in this state that they could not have seen from the position they were sleeping in and could confirm later when observed from the location they were at in the OOBE state.

The OOBE experience is similar to some reports of near-death experiences, which are filled with accounts where persons saw themselves float above their body and were able to accurately report on events at a distance, which were later verified. Work has been done to substantiate that the phenomenon occurs, but little is known about the mechanism or whether it is a true separation of spirit or etheric body from physical body, or simply another form of the telepathic experience. Krippner (2002) reports that it occurs across cultures, and that all six countries included in his 1,666-dream database, reported out-of-body dreams (about 1.4%). La Berge indicates that out-of-body dreams occur at sleep onset (when the sensory input is shutting down) and during certain lucid dreams - he reports a study in which 9% of the lucid dream reports included out-of-body experiences (Krippner, 2002). Ceilia Green, in her book *Out of Body Experiences* (1968), indicates that many of these experiences occur when a person is ill, perhaps in surgery, or is resting in bed. She cites a number of experiences during surgery when the patients found themselves out-of-body watching the surgery take place. OOBEs have also been reported at the onset of near-death experiences (NDE); during

brain traumas; during sensory deprivation; and with the use of dissociative and psychedelic drugs. In relation to dreaming, OOBEs are more common in lucid dreams.

It has been suggested that OOBEs may be neurologically related to a brain region called the angular gyrus (part of the temporo-parietal junction) since OOBE like experiences have been induced by electrical stimulation of that area. In 2002 Swiss neurologist Olaf Blanke's observed the phenomenon in his research on epileptic seizures. When he stimulated the angular gyrus the patient spontaneously had an OOBE like experience. She reported to Blanke that she was looking down on herself from above. He theorized that OOBEs are a simulation that results from a misfiring of that junction (Blanke, 2005).

Another theory is that it is a form of sleep paralysis, or a partial awakening where we feel dissociated from our bodies, resulting in the sensation of being out-of-body. These neurological conditions or theories, however, don't fully explain cases where a person observes things that she could not have seen from the position or condition of her body, which were later confirmed when observed from the location they were at in the OOBE state as in the "crescent moon" experience above.

The following is an OOBE like experience I had from within a dream. Although it started out as a dream that went lucid, it evolved into an experience with many of the common elements of both an OOBE as well as those reported as NDEs. At the time I was meditating frequently, teaching a number of classes on paranormal research, which was leading toward an ungrounded focus on spiritual dimensions versus my role in the physical world. I had the following dream or experience which definitely grounded me: *"I dreamed I was riding in a car with a bunch of others (whom I felt were other parts of me), and they were all in disagreement about something. The dream became lucid and got fed up with all the bickering and flew out of the car. I found myself flying over the ground at a fast rate, while beautiful music played all around me. Suddenly up ahead was a tunnel, with a light at the other end. I knew that if I flew through it, I would pass on to the other side, which was appealing to me due to my beliefs about the nature of the spirit. I had to make a decision, and as I entered the tunnel, I was going to go through it. But then I thought of my wife and family and suddenly cried 'life'. At that point, I was in total darkness and cried out 'I said Life'. I then found myself above my body and floated into my body with a thump."*

Spiritual Experience

Spiritual dreams might be considered to be dreams that: a) contain figures or events that relate to religious events or beliefs, or b) relate to the human spirit or soul, or non-physical realm, as opposed to the material or physical. Such dreams are often of an impactful transcendent type and have a psycho-spiritual transformative effect.

Dream content arises from many levels of consciousness including what many consider the higher self, the spirit and the divine. Justina Lasley (2004) considers dreams to be "spirit talking to conscious mind". Furthermore, she indicates that the most effective form of dreamwork comes from one's own intuition and inner wisdom. This is a belief held by a great number of dreamers and dream workers. The source of the dream wisdom may be a matter of faith, but also likely due to an observation that there seems to be an organizing or guiding force in our dreams.

Sometimes Lucid dream states can provide experiences that are perceived as spiritual, in particular when the dreamer turns to the seeming "wisdom behind the dream" for answers to an emotionally or spiritually important question. That wisdom (whether the collective unconscious that Jung spoke of or something of a higher state of consciousness) often takes on a divine nature of sorts. This is a dream I had at a time when I had been going through a very stressful time, involving an increasing need to caretake another who depended on me compounded by a depressing world view, which I could not figure out how to deal with.

At a particularly stressful moment I dreamed: *"All around me is a land of junk, rust and misery, when suddenly I realize I am dreaming. At that point I cry out to what I consider the 'divine wisdom behind the dream' – 'Show me what I need to get through this situation.' At that point I am rapidly lifted upwards and find myself surrounded by a fantastic universe of light crystals, with a feeling of intense bliss like I have never come even close to feeling in waking life. I looked at my body and it was transparent, also made up of pure light. There was singing all around, but I couldn't make out the tune or lyrics. As I began to reflect on the experience, I again turned to the "wisdom" and said, 'this is really wonderful but what is the answer – what do I need to get through the situation I am in? Suddenly in front of me among the crystals, tiny 3-dimensional red hearts began to appear and float around in a clockwise manner, forming a giant red heart. Then the lyrics of the song then became louder and clearer ...'All you need is Love.'* (the tune by the Beatles). When I woke, the stress had lifted – I had my answer which became a very workable focus.

Another early dream of mine, before lucid dreaming was even understood, came at a time when I was struggling to decide on my career path – I had good job in industry but was at a crossroads of also wanting to take advantage of my dreamwork training and teaching. One night I realized I was dreaming: *All around me was a soft white light and the sense that I was in the presence of some higher or divine intelligence ... both completely a part of it as a whole yet separate at the same time (amazing feeling). I asked this intelligence to help direct my career toward serving others through dreamwork (in the back of my mind thinking "that 'serving' attitude should certainly impress this divine presence that would grant my wishes"). At that point the "divine presence" spoke in a somewhat unimpressed tone and said, "Well if that is what you want that's fine, but it is not WHAT you do in live that matters, it is HOW you do it!" I was then shown my life's path to this point, a wandering path of choices I have made carved through a white cloud like field of all possibilities with infinite possibilities ahead.*

Transcendence

Dreams containing imagery of an impactful or "spiritual" nature, often come at a time of deep inner search and subsequent *transcendence* (transcending our present state). In Psychology of Dreams sections we learn about how Carl Jung (1964, 1971c) described *transcendence* and the imagery patterns (what he called *archetypal* imagery) that often accompanies it which can include emotionally joyful and brightly lit experiences of release and renewal as well as images that represent the process such as the "great tree" the rebirth imagery such as the egg or child or organizing/balancing geometries and numbers

One pattern is that of the triad, the trinity – which he considered symbolic of the transcendent force or the balancing of opposites. It can represent a force that brings about *transcendence*, at a point of deep inner conflict - the interactive tension between two conflicting forces brings about the evolution of a third element - which is an integration of the two. He saw the triad as representing the initiating force toward becoming "whole" which he represented as the square or four or "four-ness" or as the circle, sphere or "one." He often spoke of the three becoming four as the natural progression an inner union of opposites.

The triad becoming one can be seen in the following "*Santa Claus Trinity*" dream of a woman who was conflicted about the role of Christ in her life: *"I dreamed that it was the end of the world and Christ was coming in the sky as the Holy Trinity. But Christ appeared as a trinity of Santa Clauses, who merged as one and began pouring gifts of love from an urn. They were invisible, but I felt the gifts hit me, so I ran. I tripped, falling down the mountain, with the gifts pouring on me the whole time."*

Subsequent dreamwork revealed that the dream indeed related to the dreamer's spiritual life with a storyline that was intended to illuminate and *compensate* for the dreamer's misconception. The dreamer had an expectation that living a good spiritual life should bring the gift of physical rewards. The clue in the dream was the representation of Christ as a Santa Claus. The dream was attempting to correct a misconception: if

I am a good girl, God should bring me physical gifts – she saw God as Santa Clause. The dream pictured the "true" gifts to be invisible and intangible gifts of love.

The transcendent nature of the triad is often adopted in religious imagery as well – as in the "Trinity" or Holy Spirit in the Christian religion. The spiritual nature of this triad imagery appears in the following dream, recorded in my mother's journal, which she had at a time of deep spiritual search: *"I was being shown a huge brightly lit triangular-shaped sign with lettering in red which said, 'Make yourself a perfect channel and wait, and all things will be given to you'."*

Visitation Dreams

In Stanley Krippner's research, visitation dreams were one of the most common of the paranormal dream categories at 1.1% of all dreams. There are many reports of seeing and speaking to loved ones in dreams, after they have passed away. "*I dreamed I heard my mother (who had recently passed away) call "Ruth, Ruth!" I saw her looking at me through a window and she was smiling and younger looking."* The image of looking through a portal or separation is commonly reported in dreams after death, but it is difficult to determine whether such a dream comes from the normal functioning of the *psyche*, attempting to reduce the trauma, or whether the visitation is real. One dreamer recalls having such a trauma-reducing dream, after the death of her 5th grade friend. This dream came after many days of grieving and nightmares that woke her up screaming every night: *"I saw very vividly [name of friend] standing in the field next to an airplane. He said to me 'don't worry about me, I'm just in another plane'."* She was warmed by his presence and sense of humor, the stress was released and the nightmares stopped. Could this have been a true visitation or simply an internal release?

In some cases, the person who has died reveals information that the living person had no former knowledge of. In one report of a father's death, the Will could not be found. One of the family members subsequently dreamed of the father, wearing an old coat he had not worn in years, and pointing to the inside lining. When they investigated the coat lining, they found he had sewn the Will inside. While these cases are usually anecdotal, when such experiences occur it is difficult to discount them.

Visionary

Throughout the ages there have been many reports of spiritual dreams of a visionary nature that provide guidance, comfort or "truth" from what appears to be a divine presence. The dreamer often perceives the vision as a connection or communication with a higher level of intelligence or a higher spiritual plane. These dreams can be so striking that they change a person's life, or the course of history (holy scripture from many cultures is filled with dream accounts that changed the course of human events). Visions of biblical proportion can come to any one of us. My mother recorded the following dream as she was pondering the nature of the universe; a dream which closely resembled the description of Ezekiel's dream in the Bible. *"I saw a wheel of fire – a strange wheel endlessly turning. Fire - yet not fire - not material fire; electrical forces like the fire seen through closed eyes. The wheel was the Wheel of Time, and hovering above it were souls of all things created; animal, vegetable and man. Much like a computer, programmed to accept each one in its time, each one descended onto the earth only when an opening appeared in the wheel. The vibrations at the opening were attuned to the vibrations of that particular soul. The return from earth happened in a similar manner. Only when the proper opening appeared, and the vibrations were right could the soul return from whence it came. There were some who wandered or floated beneath the wheel, unable to return through the fire until the proper opening appeared. And I saw the wheel from above, without wonder, as something I had seen before and recognized."*

Bright colors and spectacular feelings can be a result of a transformative dream, or a "big dream" as some

call it. Nigel Hamilton (2005) who researched dreams of persons attending spiritual retreats, observes an increase in both light and color as the person goes through various stages in the process of what he terms psycho-spiritual transformation, and a dramatic appearance of light and visionary imagery in the dreams at the point of *transcendence*.

The Myth of "Universal" Dreams

"What does it mean to dream of your teeth falling out?" This along with being naked in public, chased, lost, forgetting or being late for something, flying or falling and such, have been popularly called "universal" or "typical" dreams. The term "typical dreams" was actually coined by Freud who thought they were dreamed by and had the same meaning for most everyone. The problem is that the terms "universal" or "typical" can imply that we dream of these themes most of the time or at least more than other themes and imagery. The confounding issue is that most "universal" dream reports either come from after-the-fact surveys (web based for example) or structured research surveys where either the respondents or subjects (usually students) are asked whether they <u>ever</u> dreamed about one of the themes on a long but limited list of dream themes. "Yes I have dreamed that!" is an affirmative answer even though the person may have recalled that theme occurring only once in their whole life. Long term memory can be a major factor that impacts such surveys. Studies of large databases of actual dream reports show a different story.

"Universal" versus Frequent

An example of a well-structured research survey is the Typical Dream Questionnaire (TDQ) developed by Antonio Zadra and Tore Nielsen (1997) in which the subjects are asked if they have ever dreamed of any of 55 listed themes. The top 5 responses in their Canadian student study were: chased/pursuit 81.5%; sexual experiences 76.5%; falling 73.8%; school themes 67.1%; arriving too late 59.5%. The same test was administered by other researchers in Germany, China and Jordan. Across all four countries, the following themes appear in at least once in the Top 5 in every list: falling, school themes, failing an exam, arriving late, and being chased.

These might therefore be considered top "universal" or "typical" dreams – however if we were to look at how frequently they appear in dreams, themes such as falling and arriving too late appear in only about 1% or less in actual dream reports. The often-discussed theme of "teeth falling out" which in these studies 18% to nearly 50% of subjects reported as having dreamed of at least once (depending on the study), these themes or *elements* appeared 0% to only 0.6% of the time in actual dream reports (when large databases of dream reports were researched). Even the most commonly recalled (80% to 90%) theme of being chased or pursued appears in only about 5% of dreams.

Memorable as opposed to "Universal"

So, what is going on? Part of the problem is the nature or structure of surveys. If subjects are asked if they recall having dreamed of one of the items on a list of themes: a) they may have only dreamed it once in their life; b) long term memory acts as a filter and c) the list of themes in the surveys may have not taken into account the most frequently dreamed themes – how often those themes actually appear in dreams. For example if a survey does not include house dreams or water dreams (which represent a higher frequency of occurrence than most "universal" themes) then the survey is skewed toward such infrequent occurrences as teeth falling out.

The likely reason why the "universal" dream themes have come to be popularized, and likely whey they appear on survey lists, is that they are the more emotionally memorable repetitive themes. Water, houses,

watching TV and reading – are fairly mundane daily event and not necessarily notable nor memorable, whereas falling, flying, and yes teeth falling out are anomalies (something that doesn't happen to us often or at all in waking life) and are also highly emotionally charged – thus noticed, recalled and remembered. They are odd or bizarre because they are all *picture-metaphor*s, masking the latent content they represent, but the emotional impact and novelty renders them highly memorable. The actual meaning is totally personal but flying for example may be a commonly pictured metaphor for a feeling of freedom and falling a commonly pictured metaphor for being pulled down to reality by some problem in your life.

Figure 2-7 "Universal" versus Frequent Dreams
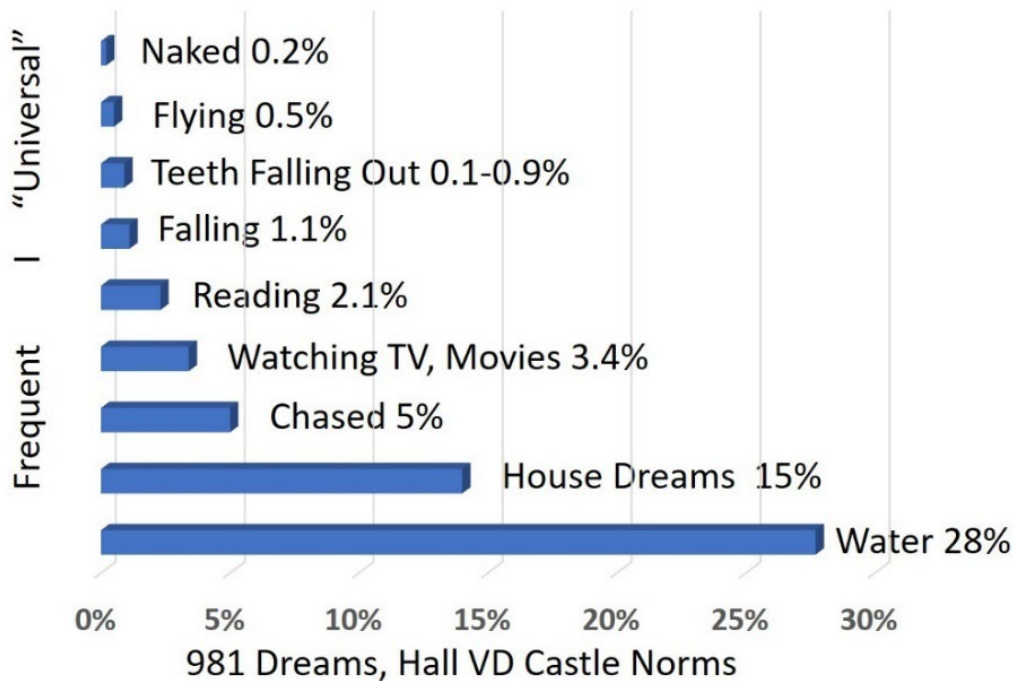
Metaphors of Life's Transitions

What we refer to as "universal" themes may simply be a convenient way our minds picture the emotions associated with frequent waking life emotional experiences. Perhaps the "universality" of such themes is that they do appear in much the same form or metaphoric representations when certain common human conditions or life transitions occur. The sections above on Childhood Dreams for example illustrate memorable themes that are often reported more during various stages of childhood. In the section on *Dreaming As We Age* in Chapter 1, is a summary of some common themes that occur during life's transition, from an article by Alan Siegel (in Hoss et al., 2019). These common metaphors are what some might refer to as "universal" themes as we experience transitions such as: childhood, adolescence, marital relations, pregnancy, midlife, approaching death and grieving the loss of a loved one.

CHAPTER 3
THE LANGUAGE OF OUR DREAMING BRAIN

*After he was quiet a long time, words began to come to him in dreams and told him their
secret names and this was the way he learned the true nature of the world –Brian Andreas*

How can we make sense of our dreams? Is it possible that we simply do not understand the "language?" *"I dreamed I was talking in a derogatory way to my friend, who seemed quite normal in the dream as an old shoe with his face on it"* The bizarre image of a shoe with a face on it seemed perfectly normal in the dream, but upon waking was perceived as an irrational creation, akin to a cartoon character. Is there indeed a meaning behind such strange dream images?

"What does my dream *mean*?" is perhaps the most asked question when dreams are discussed in a social setting. This is perhaps because the dream experience appears in one sense to follow a somewhat coherent story-line, but the plot, imagery and activity rarely reflect events that are happening in our waking life. Why would our minds be creating such a nighttime adventure that seemingly has little rational reason to it? We have been told by psychologists since the time of Freud and Jung that the *elements* in these dreams do relate in some way to our personal lives but that the *elements* are "symbolic" and thus the relationship is not immediately obvious. If so, why would the personal meaning be hidden in such a way and how are we to understand it?

In order to understand the "language" of the dream we need to learn the language of our dreaming mind, how the centers of our brain communicate with each other in the dream state.

The Dreaming Brain

How Might Dreams Form?

When REM sleep was first studied in the 50's and 60's, the great majority of dream reports appeared to come from REM awakenings, so dreaming was at first considered to primarily be a REM sleep phenomenon. Hobson, McCarley, (1977) theorized that a part of the brain stem called the pontine tegmentum arouses us into the pseudo-conscious state of REM sleep. This in turn produces relatively chaotic signals that activate the forebrain which then tries to make the best sense that it can (a "synthesis") out of the noisy input it is receiving – forming the dream. That is the dream is a result of higher brain centers trying to make sense of the activity in the lower centers. This noisy input was thought to be a key reason why dreams are allegedly bizarre and disjointed.

As researchers began to recognize that a high percentage of dreams occur in various NREM stages as well, REM sleep was no longer considered physiological equivalent of dreaming. Antrobus argued that higher brain centers, and some cognitive processes, are involved in the creation of dreams at the onset (in Krippner, 2002). Solms (1999) suggested that dreaming is a continuous processing characterized by a variability within and between sleep stages, that is generated by a different process, not dependent on the REM arousal mechanism of the pons. He considered it a "dream on" mechanism in the forebrain involving the frontal

and limbic parts of the brain (concerned with arousal, emotion, memory and motivation) in interplay with parts at the back of the brain concerned with abstract thinking and visual perception (the occipito-temporo-parietal junction where abstract thoughts and memories are converted into concrete perceptions).

Although dreaming occurs in REM and NREM states, as discussed in Chapter 1 there are some notable differences in the dreaming reported between stages. With our more vivid, story-like, emotionally driven dreams coming from the REM stage this Chapter will focus on the REM state but will summarize some of the differences in NREM as well as what transpires in the Lucid dreaming state.

REM Sleep and Dreaming

Brain imaging studies, such as those led by Pierre Maquet, Allen. R. Braun and Eric A. Nofzinger, have revealed a unique mix of activity and inactivity in brain centers during REM and NREM sleep (Hobson, 2003). Figure 3-1 provides a rough approximation of location, based on these studies, of the active (white) and inactive (gray) centers, both interior and cortical regions, imposed on a lateral sagittal view. Table 3-1 uses excerpts from Hobson's (2003) summarization of PET scan data as well as Dang Vu et al (2007), E. Pace-Schott (2007) and other references as noted, plus general research literature describing functions typically observed for those brain centers in waking state studies. Based on this data, the table extrapolates how the presence or absence of those brain functions might affect the content of the dream.

The state of the brain in REM sleep lead Braun et al. (in Hobson, 2003) to declare, "REM sleep may constitute a state of generalized brain activity with the specific exclusion of executive systems which normally participate in the highest order analysis and integration of neural information." In other words, we are conscious, and the brain is operating, but the senses are disconnected (site E). We are also essentially paralyzed; although the motor cortex (site D) may activate slightly when we are moving in a dream the brainstem inhibits motor signals to body. Much of the logic and self-reflection we depend on to construct the perception of a rational world is off-line (site A). Most all input comes from within.

Other areas that are relatively inactive (shown in gray) include: the primary visual cortex (V1), posterior cingulate gyrus (site B), inferior parietal cortex (site G) (except the right inferior site 11) are also relatively de-activated. Various studies suggest that activity in the precuneus (site C) may depend on the nature of the dream content and recall.

Active areas include: the associative cortex in parieto-occipital and temporo-occipital regions (sites 10 & 11, which extends into the temporal lobe or fusiform gyrus), associated with visual processing, perception or association as well as spatial processing and sensory integration, as might be expected of visual dream activity often reported in REM sleep and even NREM sleep dreaming. In addition, the limbic regions (site 4) including the amygdala and hippocampus and right anterior insular cortex are active, more-so on average than in waking. It was also found that many of the centers understood to be involved in problem detection, emotional regulation, analogic decision making, memory consolidation and learning, are also active during REM sleep: the anterior cingulate (site 5); basal ganglia (site 6); medial prefrontal cortex (site 7); the ventromedial & caudal orbitofrontal cortex (site 8) and basal forebrain.

In NREM sleep, active areas include: ventral prefrontal cortex; motor cortex; cerebellum; posterior cingulate cortex (PCC) (a shift from the anterior cingulate which deactivates); precuneus; frontal and para-hippocampal gyri. Some are understood to be involved in motor and task learning. A good source of further reading on the activity of the frontal and/or cognitive centers is *Sleep and Dreaming* (Hobson, 2003) and *The New Science of Dreaming* (Pace-Schott, Dang-Vu, 2007).

Figure 3-1 Brain state in REM sleep
Active (white) and inactive/less-active (gray) centers during REM sleep.

(B) Posterior Cingulate
(C) Precuneus

(D) Motor Cortex
(E) Somatosensory

(5) Anterior Cingulate

(G) Parietal Cortex

(A) Dorsolateral PFC

(11) Rt Inferior Parietal Cortex

(10) Visual Association cortex (parieto- & temporo-occipital)

(6) Basal Ganglion
Caudate
Putamen
Ventral Striatum

(7) Medial PFC

(9) Septal Nuclei

(F) Primary Visual Cortex (striate)

(8) Orbitofrontal
Ventral-Medial,
Caudal
Lateral

(12) Cerebellum (vermis)

(3) Rt Hypothalamus
(2) Thalamus

(4) Limbic: Amygdala, Hippocampus Insula

(1) Midbrain Dorsal Mesencephalon Pontine Tegmentum

(13) Rt Temporal: Pole, Superior

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A high definition 256 channel EEG based study by Siclari et al. (2017) collected near real-time dream information while measuring cortical activation by awakening 39 subjects throughout the night (1048 awakenings in all) and having them report dream activity or simply mental activity. The study found that when subjects reported experiencing a dream, either in NREM or REM sleep, the posterior cortical parieto-occipital region (which they called the dreaming "hot zone") became more active. In both REM and NREM the "hot-zone" covered bilateral parieto-occipital regions (sites 10, 11 and part of G) encompassing the medial and lateral occipital lobe (visual processing) as one might expect. The zone extended to the precuneus (site C, episodic memory retrieval and self-consciousness) particularly when dream content was recalled, remaining inactive when mental activity but no dream content was recalled.

They also found the dreaming brain to function to some degree as the waking brain does – by dynamically and partially activating various centers which related to the content of the dream. Where there was movement in the dream there was an increase in activity in the right superior temporal sulcus (part of site 13 for motion perception). Frontal or anterior cortical regions activated when there was more thinking activity in the dream and the parietal, occipital and temporal areas when perceiving. Faces in dreams resulted in activity in the temporo-occipital area (right fusiform face area of site 13). Spatial setting dreams were associated with activity in the right posterior parietal cortex (site 11, spatial perception). Dreams containing speech were associated with activity in the left Wernicke's area.

Table 3-1 lists those areas of the brain mentioned above that have been observed to become active and inactive during the REM state, along with the possible influence that brain state has on dream content and processes taking place. Please refer to Chapter 5 The Function and Structure of Dreams for a description of how these active regions might work together to bring about a problem resolution and/or learning function by: a) detecting and picturing problems, anomalies or "norm violations"; b) planning and introducing alternative resolution scenarios; c) scenario testing and mediation; and d) observing and emotionally reinforcing the outcome, thus storing it.

Table 3-1
Influence of Brain States on REM Dream Content

3-1a Centers Active in REM Sleep

Structure	Function	Dream Content
1 – Midbrain & Pons	Forebrain Arousal (PGO spikes); REM and Sleep Activation, Regulates functions such as breathing that happen outside conscious control.	Eye Movement. Sense of Consciousness.
2 – Thalamus	Control of sleep cycle; mediates arousal and attention	Sense of "consciousness"
3 – Rt. Hypo-Thalamus, Basal Forebrain	Autonomic & Instinctual functions, motivation and reward; fight or flight; Cortical arousal	Instinctive content (fear, escape, dream emotion), motivation and reward themes
4 - Limbic: Amygdala	Formation and storage of memories associated with emotional events particularly fear memories and response. Nuclei of the amygdala receive and send information to other brain regions that are important for emotional memory such as the hippocampus. Bizarreness as correlated with the right amygdala (De Gennaro, '11).	Stimulation by selected emotional memories; integration of dream emotion with actions; sense of anxiety; goal direction in dream stories; bizarre imagery
Hippocampus	Access to emotional memories. Consolidation of information from short-term memory to long-term memory, and in spatial memory that enables navigation.	Presentation of emotional memories; reference to inner "model"; learning.
Insula	Social emotions and recognition of emotions in others. Emotionally linked functions related to perception; subjective feelings, sense of self, interpersonal experience, sudden insight; emotional decision-making scenarios that guide behavior (Craig, '09; Medford,'10);	Insight. Emotional recognition in and empathy toward dream figures. Emotional reinforcement of decisions.
5 - Anterior Cingulate (ACC)	Part of a general performance monitoring system. Detects when errors in reasoning occurred or might occur (Carter,'98). Acts when there is violation in expectancy (Oliveira,'07), conflict, anomaly, error in reasoning. Imagines or observes activity, generates performance expectations; selects appropriate response or scenario based on anticipating & valuing rewards (Bush,'02). Monitors the outcome and consequences (Apps,'12; Carter,'98; Hayden,'09), provides cues to other areas of the brain to choose between conflicting perceptions (Allman, '01) and adapts behavior if outcome is not as expected (Luu.'04; Bush,'00, '02). Emotional self-control, focused problem-solving and adaptive response to changing conditions. (Botvinick, 99; Posner,'98). Integrative hub for socially-driven interactions and empathy related responses.	Detection of problems, conflicts and novel or adverse unexpected situations which set the stage for the dream as *picture-metaphor*. Planning, introducing, monitoring and guiding the resolution scenario/dream plot aimed at resolving the conflict with an anticipated rewarding conclusion. Socially-driven focus. Empathy toward other dream figures.

Structure	Function	Dream Content
6 – Basal Ganglia (caudate & ventral striatum)	Alerts us that something is not right, and initiates action/decisions related to novel, unexpected situations (Balleine,'07). Reward-based decision-making and learning and adapting to changing conditions (Allman.'01, Yamada,'07). Learns through exposure to select actions that maximize reward but motivates to seek eventual rather than immediate reward (Packard,'02). Selects which response to make or inhibit (Falkenstein, '01, Lieberman, '00). Central to extinction learning: ventral striatum activates areas of prefrontal and orbitofrontal cortex and amygdala involved in inhibitory control and extinction learning (Romaguera,'12, Quirk,'00).	Paying attention and learning. Detection of problems, conflicts and novel or adverse unexpected situations and initiating (with the ACC) action toward resolution. Influences a dream plot that selects eventual rather than immediate reward. Mood control: dampens emotions toward different mood/viewpoint upon awakening.
7 –Medial Prefrontal Cortex	Learning, memory, and decision-making (Euston '12). Self-referential goal directed plan generation, behavioral simulation, rehearsal monitoring and learning, behavior and reward processing (Partiot,'95; Gusnard,'01; Bechara,'94; Vertes,'02). Provides a 'sense of knowing' and retrospective confidence judgment. (Marley, '09; Phan,'02). Involved in emotional regulation and extinction of conditioned fear (Sotres-Bayon & Quirk,'10); increased connectivity with amygdala in REM (Van der Helm,'11).	Calming emotions/mood. Learning and decision making. Planning of a self-referential, reward based, goal directed dream plot. Behavior simulation, rehearsal and learning. Provides a 'sense of knowing' that may give the guiding forces observed in our dreams a sense of authority and wisdom.
8 – Orbitofrontal: (Ventral Medial & Caudal)	Novelty detection. Inspecting events that deviate from expectation (Petrides, 2007). Creating associations with past experiences and deciding on/regulating planning behavior based on expectation, reward and punishment (Bechara,'94). The caudal and ventromedial orbitofrontal cortex are involved in expectation (Kringelbach,'04,' 05) and regulating planning behavior (Bechara,'94) based on reward and punishment, caudal involved in novelty-related decision making, behavioral stimulation and rehearsal. Social and emotional judgment (Moll,'02)	Involved in problem detection and regulates the planning, behavior (rehearsal simulation) and decision making in the dream plot based on past experience, social judgement and expectation of reward or punishment.
9 – Septal Nuclei	Plays a role in reward and reinforcement	Emotional reinforcement of successful resolution scenario
10 – Visual Association Cortex	These regions form picture associations with the emotions, memories and conceptualizations processed within, and organize them into a dream space (Hobson,'03; Jung-Beeman; '05; Bottini,'94).	Visual imagery in the dream represents personal emotional and memory associations.
Temporal-Occipital	Processes color, texture and shape. Occipital and inferior-medial temporal regions are involved in conscious awareness in visual perception.	Color and shape as symbolic, meaningful associations. Activation in Lucid dreams likely why they appear more vivid and clear.
Tempo-Parietal and TP Junction	Determines relevance of incoming information. Integrates visual, tactile, body position & movement, contributing to self-consciousness & body image. Emotional intelligence. Angular gyrus stimulation = OBE sensation (Blanke, '05).	Self-consciousness an body awareness in Lucid dreaming. OBE experiences while dreaming.
11 – Right Inferior Parietal Cortex	Forming a perception of one's own physical body image as well as one's abstract image of self – self related "meaning." Perception of the spatial and social components of the world. Spatial imagery construction; orientation and movement; image of self; pictographs. (Ratey, 2001; Calvin,1980; Pace-Schott,2003)	Creation of visual imagery and a visual dream space with meaningful spatial orientations. Emphasis on the internal model of self and social relationships.
12 – Cerebellum (vermis)	Coordination of motor activity and programmed movements. Fine tuning of movement adds specific features such as vestibular sensations.	You perceive you are moving and have bodily senses in the dream.
13 – Temporal: Rt Pole & Superior sulcus	Multimodal analysis, social and emotional processing, emotion and socially relevant memory. Face Recognition. Parietal-temporal plays a role in metaphor processing (Ramachandran,'06; Rapp,'04)	Integration of emotional, social, facial memories into the "meaning" of the imagery and dream figures

3-1b Conditionally Active – partial activation depending on content

Structure	Function	Dream Content
C - Precuneus	Self-consciousness, Self- perspective, self-referential processing (anterior region, involved in self-centered mental imagery strategies; posterior region episodic memory retrieval) (Cavanna, '06), sense of control over one's actions and autobiographical /working memory. Activates when dream is recalled in REM & NREM (Siclari,'17)	Self- focused dream plot. Dream recall. Self-reflection and sense of control in lucid dreaming.
D – Motor Cortex	Generation of body movements (brainstem inhibits actual movement).	Perception that you are moving in the dream.
E – Primary Somatosensory Cortex	Internal generation of sensory perceptions (external input dampened)	Fictive sensory content in the dream. Integration of external sensory stimulus into dream content.

3-1c Centers Relatively Inactive in REM Sleep

Structure	Function	Dream Content
A – Dorsal Lateral Prefrontal Cortex	Executive functions: Attention; Directed thought = rationalizing, logic, planning, choice, decision making, anticipation of consequences; Inhibits inappropriate behavior; Working memory.	Loss of will, reflective awareness and control of the dream (ego self is just one dream figure); Irrational actions and imagery seem normal; Material enters the dream freely without rational filtering
B - Posterior Cingulate Cortex	Episodic and Working Memory. Mediates interactions between emotion and autobiographical memory retrieval.	Sudden scene changes seem normal; loss of reflective awareness.
C - Precuneus	Recall and processing episodic memory. Self-perspective, sense of control over one's actions and autobiographical/working memory.	Waking episodes that stimulated the dream not replayed in the dream (only fragments). Loss of will/control. Inability to recall dream.
D – Primary Motor Cortex	Generation of motion commands (no longer connected to body through brain stem in REM)	Reflects movement in the dream but body paralyzed in REM dream sleep.
E – Primary Somatosensory Cortex	Generation of sensory perceptions from bodily senses	Little to no external sensory input enters the dream.
F – Primary Visual V1	Generates visual perceptions from the sensory input of the eyes	No external visual information entering the eyes nor the dream (minor light flashes may be incorporated in the dream story)
Left Inferior Parietal Lobe and Temporal Lobe	Language association and naming; Left hemisphere "speaks" by naming things	Imagery does not represent its waking named identity; Dreams identify concepts via metaphor, function, association and pictographs.

Lucid Dreaming

Information from fMRI and EEG studies shown in figure 3-2 illustrate activations in neocortical regions observed during lucid dreaming as compared with non-lucid REM sleep (Voss, 2014; Czisch, 2011; Stumbrys, 2013, Erlacher & Schredl, 2008; Dresler, 2011, 2012).

Figure 3-2 **Brain state during Lucid Dreaming**
Areas observed to be more active during lucidity are in yellow highlights as compared with REM sleep in gray scale.
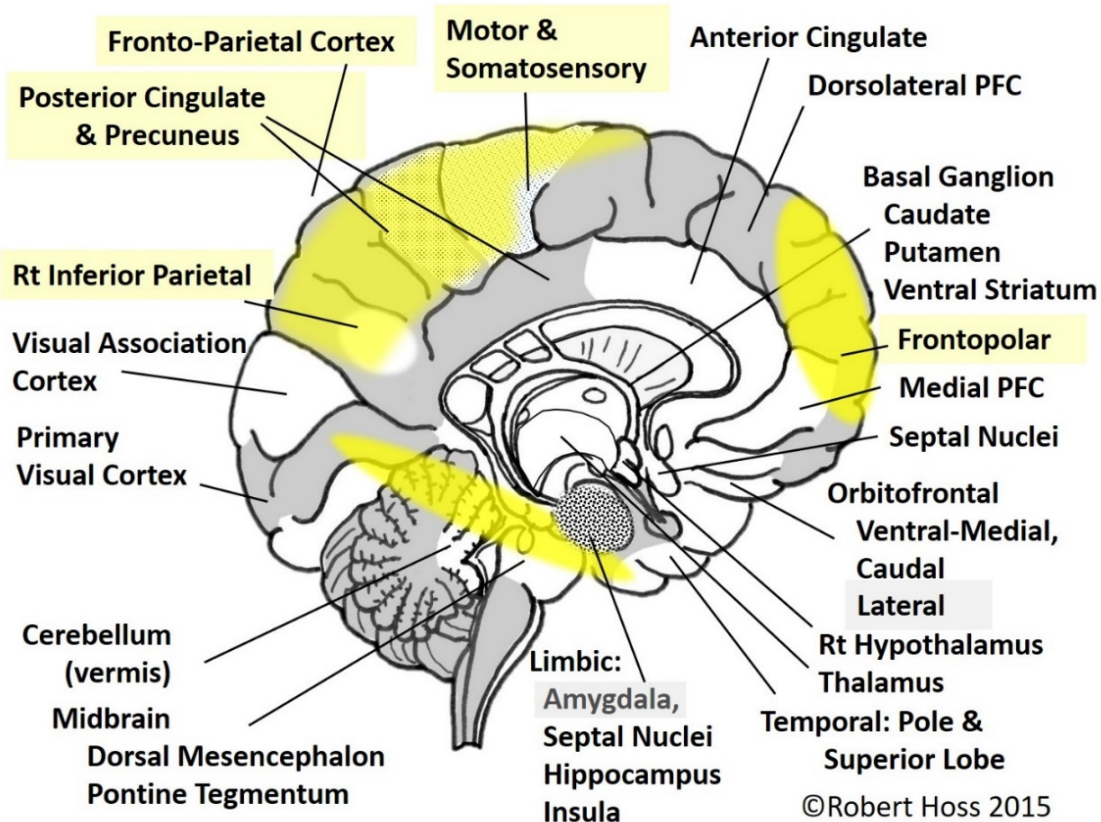
In lucid dreaming certain areas of the brain normally inactive or less active in the REM state become increasingly active when lucidity occurs. These changes in brain state result in lucid dreams being characterized by waking like consciousness, self-reflection, the ability to cognitively determine and control one's own actions, a limited ability to influence the dream itself, dialog and interaction with the figures in the dream as well as the dream itself, vivid and colorful imagery, and other extraordinary experiences.

Frontal areas include the right dorsolateral and frontopolar prefrontal cortex related to processing of internal states including reflection on one's thoughts and feelings, and are associated with higher cognitive processes, such as self-consciousness, decision making, working memory and attention. and social communications, which generally increase during lucid dreaming (Dresler et al., 2012). Increases in 40Hz gamma power have been observed in the prefrontal areas (Mota-Rolim et al., 2008; Voss et al., 2014). In addition, an anatomical analysis by Filevich (2015) found increased gray matter volume in the frontopolar cortex of individuals with higher scores on frequency of lucid dreams.

Holzinger (2006) observed an increase in power in the beta band (13 - 20 Hz) in the parietal regions during lucid dreaming. Increased activation is observed in the tempo-occipital-parietal, inferior-medial temporal regions and frontoparietal regions (Dresler et al., 2012) which include: the precuneus (self-perspective, self-referential processing, sense of control over one's actions and autobiographical/working memory); the inferior parietal lobe (intelligence, self-related meaning, visuospatial processing); the supramarginal gyrus (an area involved in language perception and processing). This creates a greater availability of self-related information, thus more coherence and stability of the first-person perspective or cognitive self.

Increases in occipital and inferior-medial temporal regions, which are involved in conscious awareness in visual perception, is likely why lucid dreams appear so much more vivid and clear than a typical dream. The temporo-parietal area also integrates visual, tactile, and other information contributing to self-reflection, body imagery, episodic memory, meaning, control and knowledge that one is currently dreaming. In addition, the frontoparietal region is understood to be involved in awareness of one's own thoughts (metacognition) which is a primary characteristic of dreaming.

A global reduction in power in the delta band during lucid dreaming, has also been noted (Dodet et al., 2015). The global reduction in EEG power in the delta band during lucid dreaming also occurs in REM when there is thoughtful or cognitive mental activity (Perogamvros et al., 2017).

In Dressler's original experiments, he asked lucid dreaming subjects to signal the researcher with ocular movements (to indicate they were lucid) then perform a series of left-right hand movements during their lucid dreams. He observed activity in the sensory-motor cortex and motor areas responsible for the planning, programming and monitoring of intended movement (Dresler et al., 2011). Although activity was present, it was reduced when compared to performing the task while awake.

A "Dual Brain" Perspective on Dreaming

The prior sections discuss various centers in the brain that are active and inactive in the dream state, and how those combinations might be responsible for the content of the dream story. Here I will discuss a hemispheric view of brain processing that (although overly generalized) might help put the experience and thought processes that occur during dream sleep into perspective.

Although we may think of the brain as a single structure, it is actually divided in two halves or hemispheres. These hemispheres are linked by several bundles of nerve fibers that establish a communications path between the two halves. Perhaps one of the most surprising aspects of this is that the control of our body movements and our senses are divided between these two hemispheres and this occurs cross-wise. That is, the right side of our body is controlled by the left hemisphere and the left side by the right hemisphere. Also, it is the left hemisphere that is connected to the right visual field in each eye, and the right hemisphere that is connected to the left visual field in each eye.

Differences in processing have been observed between right and left hemispheres (Springer & Deutsch, 1980). Some of these differences were discussed in the prior section as associated with the right and left side of the frontal and parietal lobes. The left hemisphere, or "left brain," in a general sense has been found to be more involved in understanding language, processing speech and reading, labeling things with words, and in linear logical thinking. It is charged with creating a model or story that makes sense. The right hemisphere, or "right brain," appears more involved in processing non-verbal information (music, art, pattern recognition), forming associations and understanding what an object represents (as opposed to its name) and in visual understanding. It is also reported to be involved in detecting and interpreting anomalies of experience (Ratey, 2001) a process that is important in understanding the nature of dreams. An fMRI study by Kensinger and Schacter (2006) found the left amygdala responded to words while either the right

and/or bilateral amygdala activation regions responded to images. In addition, participants were more sensitive to emotional images than to emotional words.

Even if we can define differences between right and left hemisphere processing, the differentiation is not universal. The more distinct differences lie with right-handed males. It is found that with left-handed individuals and with females, there is more bilateral or reversed representation of function normally attributed to one hemisphere or the other i.e., they might have speech functions in the right hemisphere rather than the left, or right hemisphere functions represented in both hemispheres. Regardless of individual variations with individual brain structure, it remains useful to understand the nature of the information processing differences, since it provides an interesting perspective regarding the differences between waking and dreaming thought.

Some of the more widely cited characteristics attributed to the two hemispheres (Springer & Deutsch, 1980; Edwards, 1989; Ratey, 2001; Hampden-Turner, 1981) are illustrated in table 3-2. Note the strong similarity between the right brain processing characteristics, and how you might describe the dream state. Observe how unlike the dream state the left-brain processing is. Does the processing in the right hemisphere seem more "dreamlike" in nature, and the left more like waking thought and dialogue? If there is a strong link between the right brain and the dream state, then perhaps viewing the dream from the standpoint of the thought processes attributed to the right brain provides a further key to understanding dreams.

Table 3-2 **Processing Differences Attributed to Brain Hemispheres**

Left Brain	Right Brain
Processes peripheral details	Processes central aspects or essence
Verbal (produce speech)	Non-Verbal (comprehension only)
Temporal & Sequential	Simultaneous & Visuospatial
Language Processing (speech, words)	Emotion & Social Processing (face and body language)
Categorizing (naming, titles)	Metaphor (relation, analogy, context)
Digital (using numbers to count)	Analog (using values)
Logical (linearly linked Ideas)	Gestalt, Holistic (seeing the whole)
Analytic (step by step, part by part)	Synthetic (forming the whole)
Deductive, Convergent, Vertical thinking	Imaginative, Divergent, Lateral thinking
Thinking, Sensing (Jungian concept)	Feeling, Intuition (Jungian concept)
Rational and Realistic (reason & facts)	Intuitive (patterns, insight) and Impulsive
Ego, Persona, Conscious personality	*Shadow, Id, Unconscious*
"Western Thought" (Technical, Rational)	"Eastern Thought" (Intuitive, Mystic, Myth)

Even though we may be more aware of left-brain processes when we're awake, both hemispheres are operating, and influencing our waking actions and thoughts. Edwards (1989) describes right hemisphere information processing in the waking state as: visual imagery processing; perceptual awareness of things with minimal connection to words; no sense of linear time; not requiring a basis for reason or facts; relating to things as they are in all their perceptual complexity; seeing likeness and relationships between things; seeing metaphors and analogies; seeing how parts fit together to form a whole or gestalt; seeing the whole all at once; insight and intuition; perceiving many facets of a problem simultaneously, often leading to divergent or multiple conclusions. This may sound like the landscape of a dream – perhaps we are indeed dreaming (although unconsciously or subliminally) even while we are awake !

Research associated with hemisphere activity during dream sleep (Hoss, L., 1981) resulted in a variety of theories; including Bakan's early theory (1977-78) that dreaming is primarily a function of the right hemisphere. While this is not strictly accurate based on what we now know, drawing on evidence from

studies of EEG, brain injury, epilepsy and sleep research, Bakan contended that, "marked similarities exist between dream experience and the kind of thinking which has been ascribed to the right hemisphere, e.g., perceptual, fantasy, affective, primary process." Linking of dreaming with the right hemisphere also came from observations of patients with damage to the right parietal region of the brain. Patients reported that they no longer had dreams and lost the ability to visualize, despite previous abilities in these areas. (Gazaniga, 1983; Humphrey, 1951; Hoss, L., 1981). In 1972, researchers (Goldstein, et al., 1972) found shifts in the ratio of right and left EEG amplitude during changes from REM to NREM sleep. In a sleep laboratory study of right-handed males, they found the right hemisphere to be more active than the left during the dream state (REM).

More recent evidence with better measurement tools, as noted in table 3-1, shows that it is more than just the right brain involved in dreaming, but rather various centers in the brain activating and de-activating that make the dream state more right brain like and less left brain like, from processing standpoint. This likely occurs because some of the more influential centers that are activated in the dream state, are specific to the right hemisphere, such as the right inferior parietal cortex (Hobson, 2003). This is the visuospatial processing center of the brain perhaps involved in constructing the dream space and integrating various fictive dream images and experiences to create the spatial activity within it. Also centers that are deactivated (such as the left parietal cortex, and dorsolateral prefrontal cortex) are responsible for processing functions that are typically associated with left hemisphere. Nofzinger found an increase in activation of the right hypothalamus and the right frontal cortex during REM sleep and a decrease in the left frontal cortex; Marquet found an increase in the right parietal cortex and decrease in the left during REM (Hobson, 2003).

Even if it is not strictly the inclusion of the right hemisphere, and exclusion of the left, involved in dreaming, the work that has gone into describing the generalized differences in processing or "thinking" involved in the two hemispheres, can be useful in understanding dream thought and language as opposed to waking thought and language.

The Unique "Language" of Dreams

As noted above, activity in the associative cortex that are involved in visual processing, spatial processing and sensory integration, are largely responsible for the visually and sensory rich dream experience. The research by Siclari et al. found that when subjects reported experiencing a dream, either in NREM or REM sleep, it is this associative area (which they called the "dreaming hot zone") that became active. The internal "language" of this part of the brain is therefore the clue to understanding the "language of dreams." Because this is an associative area responsible for perception, or the association of imagery with emotional experiences in memory ("meaning"), the dream imagery would naturally contain meaningful relationships to our lives. Thus, the dream story and the imagery itself, are connections of associations (emotional, memory and conceptual associations) presented in the form of a figurative picture analogy or *picture-metaphor* as researchers Ernest Hartmann and Bill Domhoff describe it. The connection between associated thoughts, feelings and memories become pictured as a connection of images which we call the dream (this composite being a concept known as *condensation*).

Picture Metaphor

Montague Ullman, in 1969, published a paper *Dreams as Metaphor in Motion* demonstrating that dreams appear to be metaphorically picturing an important problem or concern of the dreamer, or as Hartmann contends, the emotional state of the dreamer. According to Domhoff (2003) there is a simple explanation for the extensive use, by the human mind, of metaphor in speech and dreams. It occurs because metaphors map our well-understood basic experiences (such as warmth) to more difficult concepts (such as friendship) - example: "we had a warm relationship." They map physiological processes (sweetness) to more complex

emotional experiences (pleasure) - for example: "what a sweet deal that was!" He states that each person learns a system of conceptual metaphors, as a result of repeated experiences in the course of childhood development.

In the form of a metaphor, a dream image can describe a complex concept with a picture that more simply captures the essence of that concept (much like a speech metaphor does). This can be achieved within a single image as in this "*Father's Face*" dream. The dreamer had blamed their marital issues on her husband and begin to have recurrent dreams of being angry and running away from him: *"I have a recurrent dream of being terribly angry with my husband, who I am always running away from. These dreams continued until one night I turned around and faced my husband and looked at his face… it was my father's face!"* Here the face of the dreamer's father on the body of her husband captures the concept of projecting the unresolved issues with her father onto her husband, in one simple combined image.

The concept of *picture metaphor* also includes the actions pictured in a dream as in this "*Mother Pushing on My Stomach*" dream. The conflict in the dreamer's life was emotional pressure from her family (particularly her mother) to have children, because "that's what American families do" and "the clock is ticking" – versus - her desire to pursue a career. She felt the sense of immediacy and obligation was at an impasse not knowing how or who is to decide. At that point she dreamed, *"I am pregnant and in labor and everyone is expecting me to have a baby. My mother is pushing on my stomach but it's not doing any good. The doctor enters and says, "don't push too hard she is not ready." He then tells me "you have the choice to have a baby or not; you are the one who has to decide."*

The dream imagery and activity, or *picture-metaphors* that relate the dream to her waking life situation feelings, are fairly clear. *"Everyone is expecting me to have a baby"* is a pretty literal picture of the waking life event or emotional pressure but "*I am pregnant…..My mother is pushing on my stomach, but it is not doing any good" and "don't push to hard she is not ready"* was more of a figurative picture of the situation. In waking life, she was not pregnant, and her mother was not literally pushing on her stomach – being pregnant was a metaphor for a "sense of immediacy or inevitability" and her mother pushing on her stomach a metaphor for "pushing her to have a baby." That it was *"not doing any good"* pictures her resistance and resolve.

Hartmann in *The Nature and Functions of Dreaming* (2011) considers metaphors to be based on emotional similarity stating, "Metaphor is the way we think, and I believe it is the way we build our memory systems using emotionally based similarity." Emotional similarity between unresolved issues with father and husband was pictured by placing the husbands face on the father's body. Emotional similarity was also evidenced in the picture of the mother pushing on the dreamers stomach to immediately have a baby and the emotional pressure in waking life to have children now – the "clock is ticking."

This visual communication is not unlike that taking place subliminally within our brains in the waking state. As we speak, in the back of our mind we generally visualize the events taking place that we are speaking of. Many parts of the brain are involved in language processing. When we communicate, certain language centers in the left hemisphere are responsible for verbal speech, and for identifying all that we think and perceive with names, titles and words. These centers determine "what" we speak or write. Other language centers in the right hemisphere are responsible for the "why" and the "how." These centers process context and meaning (Springer, 1980) create a visualization of our train of thought, and supply the emotional content, tone (Gazaniga, 1983) inflection and body language. For example, a simple statement such as "I want to go outside" (left hemisphere wording), may be accompanied in the right hemisphere by a visualization of opening the door, associations with and memories of being outside, and emotions related to the anticipated experience. In the waking state our focus is outward so we may not be aware of this internal visual dialog – but when we sleep the focus is inward and the dialog becomes our dream.

Condensation

As will be discussed in Chapter 4, Freud promoted the idea that dream *elements* (images) were a *condensation* or fusion of several different *elements*, in which the content of any one dream *element* is always far more extensive than what is apparent. He considered it purposeful—reducing of the length of the material, that is, combining two or more complicated thoughts into a single image or scene. This is illustrated in the above example where one concept (a sense of inevitability) was combined with another (the emotional pressure from her mother to immediately choose children over career) and a third (her not being ready) into one composite image of her "*being pregnant"* and her "*mother pushing on her stomach which was not doing any good."*

The "dream language" of *picture-metaphor* and association is thus one in which imagery fragments combine to represent connections between associated thoughts, feelings and memories. Waking language is one of presenting thoughts, feelings and memories with combinations of written or spoken letters and words. Each dream image is a meaningful symbol in the "dream language," just as each letter or sound is a meaningful symbol in our waking language. When we tell a dream, images appear to be translated (perhaps by our verbal language centers) into word associations or figures of speech. If we examine the "*Old Shoe*" dream for example, it related to the actions and attitude toward his friend who he was treating badly, ignoring or discarding him as if he were an "*Old Shoe*" a well understood figure of speech used to describe such treatment. The dream picked up that metaphor and presented the situation as a clear, pictorial but figurative expression of the actions and attitude of the dreamer. The face of his friend was quite logically superimposed on the image of the "*Old Shoe*" to make that statement.

Condensation likely has a neurological basis. The right hemisphere matches objects by similar appearance (Springer & Deutsch, 1980). It also processes relationships and tries to create a whole (a Gestalt) from many parts. Imagery combinations are a natural synthesis function which links related emotions, perceptions and memories to form a more complete holistic representation of the situation it is dealing with. The occipital-temporal-parietal areas connects with memory centers to add personal "meaning" to a dream image. Another function it performs is to integrate disparate but associated material – thus integrate or condense imagery fragments that represent that material. A function of the right inferior parietal cortex, for example, is spatial integration and dream imagery formation. It may play a key role in creating images (and the dream scene) that are in essence a spatial integration or linking of multiple associations (represented by multiple imagery fragments) into a single image.

Functional Association

As discussed above, dreams are processed in a part of the brain that talks in a non-verbal language, one that deals with relationship, properties and pattern. The right hemisphere tends to identify an object by function and the left hemisphere by name (Springer & Deutsch, 1980). One of the early cures for certain seizure conditions was the surgical separation of the corpus callosum, the nerve paths connecting the two hemispheres. What resulted was an individual with two distinct brain halves, processing and perceiving independently (Hoppe, 1977). A test was done where a subject's left visual field (connected to the right hemisphere) was blocked so that only his left hemisphere could see. He was shown a fork, which he correctly identified as "a fork." Then the right visual field (connected to the left hemisphere) was blocked so that only the right hemisphere could see. He could no longer identify the object as a fork, but rather called it "something I eat with." The right brain could not title the object; it could only identify its context or function.

Understanding that the images or dream *elements* might be a representation of how you perceive their function or purpose can be useful when working on a dream. As above, instead of identifying a fork as a

fork in your dream, consider defining what you do with it, what its essence or purpose is. This is a simple approach which can lead to your first level of association – or what it personally "means" to you. This will be developed further in Chapter 8.

Emotional Association

There is much support for the notion that emotions or emotional memories have a primary influence on dream content. Various studies (summarized in Hobson et al., 2003) suggest that an emotional influence on dream content is related to the activation of the limbic system, primarily in REM sleep. Foulkes found dream emotion to be typically consistent with dream narrative and Seligman and Yellen considered it to be the primary shaper of the dream plot rather than a reaction to that plot. Devinsky noted that anterior cingulate activation contributes to emotional features, such as the assessment of motivational salience and integration of dream emotion with action. Nofzinger considered a basic function of REM sleep to be the integration of neocortical functions with frontal motivational and reward mechanisms. In 1998, Maquet proposed that the function, of the apparent orchestration of cortical activity by the amygdala during REM sleep, may be the selective processing of emotionally relevant memories - which might be the reason that threat-related emotions are dominant in REM dreams (in Dang Vu et al., 2007). Ernest Hartman considered the dream image to picture the emotional state of the dreamer, and Fritz Perls considered dream images to picture the *impasses* and emotional conflicts that created them.

Dream imagery (and its hidden meaning) may be a result of what Berne and Savary (2004) term "Limbic Logic" which resides in the amygdala and other limbic centers (active during dreaming). Having a goal of safety and survival in times of danger it thus associates an emotion to the sensory data it encounters. The limbic system, which is often more active in REM dreams than in waking, grasps images and emotions and processes them by association. A role of the limbic system in focusing attention is to associates an emotion or emotional memory to the sensory data it encounters. Whereas in the waking state the limbic system sees a world full of images and links them to emotions/emotional memories, in the dreaming state it is reasonable to deduce that the limbic system recovers emotional memories from waking life and creates a dream imagery associated with that memory or feeling. Figure 3-3 illustrates this concept.

Ernest Hartmann (2011) observed dreams to contain a "Central Image" or "Contextualizing" image (CI) which pictures the emotional state of the dreamer. The CI can be a striking, arresting, or compelling image, which stands out by virtue of being especially powerful, vivid, bizarre, or detailed. An example he gives is the vivid dream of being overwhelmed by a tidal wave, in someone who has recently experienced a traumatic event. Hartmann contends that the intensity of the central image is a measure of the strength of the emotion. The more powerful the emotion, the more intense the central imagery of the dream will be. He indicates that central image intensity can be measured reliably, as supported by research, including a recent systematic study of dreams before and after 9/11/01. Whereas the dreams in this study did not contain images of buildings being destroyed or airplanes crashing, they CI scores (emotional strength) of the dreams collected after the event, were greater than before the event.

Hartmann indicates further that dreaming is hyper-connective, that is, the mind (brain) makes connections more broadly in dreaming than in waking (where we operate on linear, over-learned logical connections). However, the dreaming connections are not random. They are guided by the emotion of the dreamer. The underlying emotion is not only pictured, or contextualized by the dream, but for Hartmann, emotion drives the process of weaving of new information into existing memory systems in dreams, in order to adaptively learn and create new insights.

Figure 3-3
Conceptual Role of Emotion in the Creation of a Dream Image
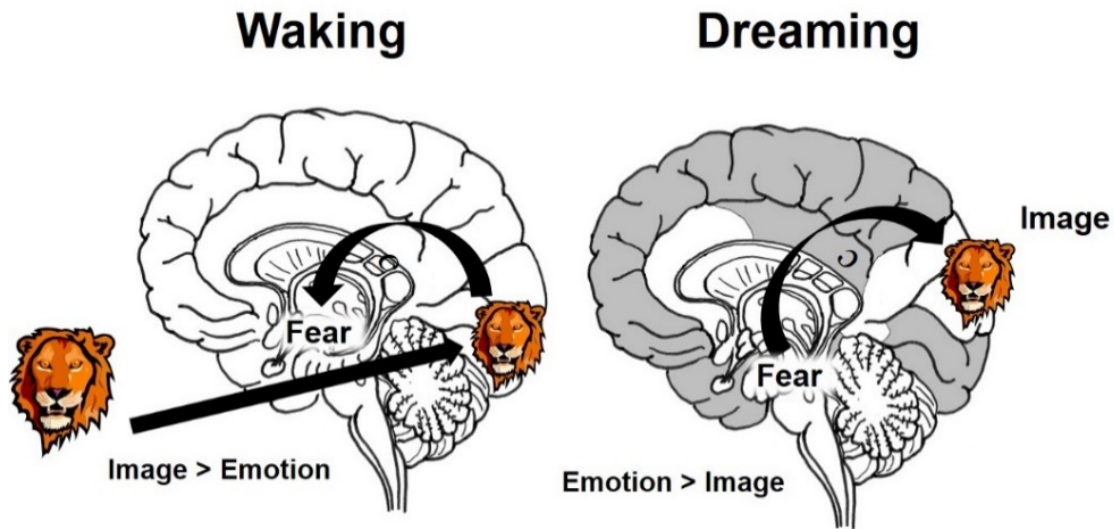
The Unique Nature of Dreams

Aside from the unique "language" of the dreaming brain, the biology of the sleep state also effects other aspects of the dream experience. Comparing table 3-1 with the description of the typical dream in Chapter 2, it becomes more obvious why dreams have the characteristics that they do - the dreaming brain "thinks" differently than the waking brain.

Dreams Come from Within

Because the body is unable to respond to signals from the motor cortex (site D) in REM and muscles relax in NREM, there is little or no physical body motion while dreaming. This is likely an evolutionary benefit, because acting out your dreams could be harmful. But sometimes the de-activation is not perfect, as this case illustrates: *I recall one case from an early Boy Scout outing where one of the Scouts was missing from his tent in the morning. He was found walking through the woods back toward the camp, carrying his sleeping bag. He reported having had a dream that a flood was coming, so he picked up his sleeping bag and ran down the hill to get away from it.* In essence he had acted out his dream. An interesting side note is that he reported that when he woke up down the hill, he had no injury to his feet. All the injury came as he tried to walk back!

Since sensory signals to the sensory cortex (sites C and D) are impeded, little to no external sensory information is stimulating the dream. An exception would be the minor dream-altering effects caused by strong external influences, or internal bodily needs, as discussed in Chapter 2 under the topic physical factors. The intrusion of external stimuli is usually observed to modify the ongoing dream, rather than being the primary source of the dream. *"It was a long dream where myself and some others embarked on a boat trip trying to get to a party or gathering of friends. The water had become shallow and the passageway blocked with landforms, so we had to get out of the boat and walk to our destination. Suddenly the rocky terrain I was climbing over became chunks of ice and glaciers, and I could feel the cold as I touched the ice. I then awoke to a very cold room and realized my arms were outside of my bed covers and were cold."* Here is a case, typical of many cases, where the dream originates totally from within, until the external

stimuli grows strong enough to enter and be incorporated. The basic plot of the dream story was stimulated by a waking life search for self-identity, which in turn produces the theme of seeking, journeying and looking forward to a joyous union with the fragmented parts of the dreamer. As the physical sensation from the dreamer's cold arms became intense, it was incorporated in the dream by altering the physical dreamscape. The primary plot of the dream remained in place, but it gradually became diverted by the additional stimulus that the dream was attempting to accommodate.

You are "Conscious" in Dreams

While we generally believe that when we are asleep or unconscious, this is not the case. Dreams represent a unique sleeping state of consciousness – just not the same state of consciousness as in waking. When awake the prefrontal cortex (site A) is active providing a greater sense of self-reflection, will, rational thought, and working memory. In our dreams we only perceive that we are awake – believing and acting as if all that is going on around us, no matter how bizarre, is real and makes perfectly logical sense. Foulkes argues that dreams are little more than waking consciousness stripped of most sensory input and freed from the obligation of making coherent connections to the external world (in Krippner, 2002). We are consciously viewing and moving around in a dream space, which we believe to be real, since the dream space was created in the visual associative and spatial processing areas much the same way as in waking.

Thinking within the dream is generally preserved no matter how implausible the contents of the dream, however, the ability to think or reflect rationally about the contents of the dream is severely compromised, even if the contents are illogical, so that implausibility is rarely caught. One reason for this is the inability while asleep to access knowledge about how the world works and thus be able to distinguish fact from fantasy. The centers of our brain responsible for rational reasoning and self-reflection (site A) is off-line. Information that is processed in the dreaming brain is therefore not organized by this higher level of processing, nor referenced to our "rational" waking model of reality. The logical "filters" are not applied. In the dream, we perceive the bizarre occurrences and strange combinations of events and images as normal. Talking to our friend, who appears as an "old shoe" for example, seems perfectly normal until we reflect on it after waking.

There appears to be two distinct cognitive components during dreaming: 1) thinking within the context of the dream, where the dream self thinks about dream figures and about what's going on in the dream, is generally similar to thinking when awake; 2) thinking about what is happening in the dream, is different from wake thinking, not able to reflect on the implausibility of the dream because they are unaware that they are dreaming (Kahn in Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019). Thus, while self-reflection exists for the dream self within the context of the dream, self-reflection by the person having the dream about the dream is absent. This changes if the dreamer becomes lucid. When lucid, the dreamer knows he is dreaming and is thus able to reflect on surroundings and recognize implausibility. In fact, the recognition of something implausible in the dream can lead to becoming lucid.

This understanding is useful in establishing an approach to dreamwork. In a sense, the content of the dream or a dream *element* is "purer" since it is not filtered or categorized by our rational organization in the waking state. Adopting dreamwork techniques that explore the content within dream *elements* in their raw, non-rational or pictographic state is a key to understanding dreams.

Dreams Appear Irrational Only to the Waking Mind

When we are dreaming, scene shifts and events and decisions which are improbable in waking life, appear perfectly rational or normal while we are dreaming. They only appear bizarre when we wake and our frontal rational thinking areas (and rational model of reality) come on line.

Dreams are Not all that Bizarre

That dreams are "bizarre," or include elements that are improbable or impossible in waking life, is generally considered as their most notable feature. Actually, when studied in detail, dreams are not a bizarre as pop culture or Hollywood would have us believe. After studying hundreds of REM dreams, Frederic Snyder (1970) concluded that "dreaming consciousness" is "a remarkably faithful replica of waking life"; that is, a typical REM dream report is a "clear, coherent, and detailed account of a realistic situation involving the dreamer and other people caught up in very ordinary activities and preoccupations." Snyder found only about half of dreams do not include unrealistic elements, and extremely bizarre dreams are found to be rare (only about 2%–9%). Researchers (Schredl, 2010a; Snyder, 1970; Strauch & Meier, 1996) found that about 20% to 30% of laboratory and journal reports contained elements that are conceivable (even if unlikely), and 65% to 72% of reports pictured highly credible or every-day events.

Is Dream Logic "Rational"?

There is an inherent analogical decision making and problem resolution taking place in dreams. It is just a different logic or rationality than the waking mind is used to. The fantasies, disconnected non-time sequential stories and non-rational imagery of the dreaming mind, bear close similarity to the characteristics of right hemisphere processing. In dreams these analogical centers (including sites 5, 6, 7 and 8) process decision making based on association, analogy, and holistic patterns – which dominates over the linear sequential logic and literal verbal identification. Holistic and analogical reasoning is logical, it is just a different logic from our waking life perceptions, where we name or describe our experiences with words, and where rational, deductive and time sequential reasoning is applied. Furthermore, as you will learn in Chapter 5, problem-solving dreams appear to have a logical or "purposeful" structure to them, either in a series or a single dream.

In the following example, the dreamer became angry with his co-workers and boss and planned to lash out at them ("lecturing" them) the next day – no a healthy thing to do on the job. That night he dreamed: *"I dreamed I was in front of a crowd, about to give a speech, when I was introduced to a man named 'Willy Pissedoff.' I was trying to control myself to keep from laughing."* The dream caused him to laugh at himself and recognize his anger as the character "Willy Pissedoff" this dampening the anger and avoiding a nasty incident.

Here the dream imagery, story-line and dream figure's name may appear bizarre to the waking mind, but the appearance of these *elements* are quite rational and the logic quite linear if considered in light of their associations rather than their named identity. If each *element* of a dream story is converted to its association or analogy and re-inserted into the dream narrative – it becomes a perfectly logical cause and effect picture and resolution for his waking life emotional conflict. If we could learn to think analogically, and in the same way our right brain perceives and connects information, we could more easily understand the language of our dreams.

An interesting perspective is that since our analogical decision-making frontal networks are active, along with all of the other centers active in REM sleep (albeit at an unconscious or subliminal level), we are in essence dreaming all the time! Furthermore, that unconscious part of our brain acts to prepare a decision before we are even aware that we made the decision. In a study by Soon et al. in 2008, they instrumented the lateral and medial prefrontal cortex (unconscious decision making) and precuneus (triggers conscious awareness) as well as the left and right motor cortex (enables arm movement) to understand the role of these unconscious centers (the *unconscious*) in conscious decision making. They then gave the subjects a test where they had to answer yes or no by pressing buttons with the right or left hand. They found that a decision can be determined and encoded in the prefrontal and parietal cortex up to 10 second before it enters

conscious awareness. This delay indicates that decision making (for our higher-level control areas) begins with an unconscious preparation of the decision long before we are conscious of the decision – that is, when we think we make the decision consciously, it has already been made by our unconscious mind.

Dreams are About Daily Events – but Omit the Event Itself

Emotional memories being processed in the dream state appear to be associated with recent waking life events, or long-term issues triggered by recent events. This is the "continuity principle" which states that dreams contain content that is continuous with daytime events or "day residue" (Schredl, 2003). Day-residue from the prior day generally falls off significantly after a few days, however, a dream-lag effect has been observed, which shows a recurrence of day residue fragments in dreams approximately one week later (Alain, 2003). Most therapeutic dreamwork approaches and results support a principle of emotional event continuity in that they generally show the dream to be related to some recent situation, or unresolved past traumatic event, in the dreamer's waking life.

Although dreams are likely stimulated by a recent waking life event, the dream rarely represents the event that took place or even the visual memories from that event (people and places involved). Depending on the study, only 35-65% include fragments of day residue and only 1.4% actual replays (Fosse, et al., 2003).

The waking event seems "hidden," which is perhaps the source of much confusion about dreams. Parts of the brain (in particular the precuneus) involved in episodic and visual recall becomes relatively inactive during REM. Emotional memories, however, may be accessed perhaps because the limbic region responsible for emotional memory and processing is highly active. The emotional context ("gist"), associations and memories of the waking event appear to be represented in the dream, but the event itself is not, all due to the unique way in which memory is processed during sleep (Fosse, et al., 2003).

Dreams Focus on Self

As much as we might like all of our dreams to be a view into a greater non-personal universal reality, a few may but the typical dream appears to focus on self. If you reflect on your latest dreams, or even those you may have recorded in the past, note that the focus and concern in the dream is almost always yourself – you searching, you trying to do something, you being lost or frustrated or anxious. We are not isolated, however, in dreams we are constantly interacting with dream figures and perceive their thoughts or emotions (Kahn, 2004). In a 2002 study by Kahn, participants reported that dream figures in almost every dream evoked feelings in them (the *dream-self*) and that the *dream-self* evoked feelings in the dream figure.

According to Panksepp (2003), dreams are filled with self-referential configurations and variations of emotional problems to be solved. Revonsuo (2000) states that threat perception and harm avoidance lie at the heart of many dreams. This is likely because the brain center involved in construction of imagery and our dream space (site 11) is also involved in perception of our self-image. This center of the brain plays a primary role in constructing the dream image and its location and movement in the dream space. It is responsible for forming a perception of one's own physical body image (Calvin, 1980) as well as one's abstract image of self (Pace-Schott, 2003). It also plays a role in the complete perception of the spatial and social components of the world (Ratey, 2001). Thus in dreams, the images created in our dream space, and the dream space itself, may be referenced to an inner model or image of self and our social model of reality.

Dreams Deal with Anomalies in Our Social World

Dreams may not only respond to threats to self, as researcher Antti Revonsuo (2000) asserts, but to anomalies in our environment, things that simply do not fit our internal image of self and reality. The Angular Cingulate and Basal Ganglia, which are active in REM state dreaming, play a role in detecting anomalies and novelty experiences; that something is wrong. This is supported by Jan Born and his colleagues at the University of Lubeck, who used a mathematical number test with a hidden trick in it, and found evidence that dream sleep more than doubled the probability of participants detecting the trick (Gorman, 2004).

The anterior cingulate, orbitofrontal cortex and limbic system (hippocampus and amygdala) play role in novelty detection; alerting our cognitive mind when a stimulus is novel (see table 2-1). The hippocampus compares the present with the past, and thus relates events as either novel or ordinary, inhibiting reaction to the ordinary and orienting our attention to the novel, that which doesn't fit our memory store. In dreams we often observe events and characters from our past, mixed or integrated in strange ways with the present. Ratey (2001) states that this process is integral to the functioning of our emotional and social brain (who we see ourselves to be in relationship to others and life's overall picture). The dream story may be stimulated by events that are an anomaly or don't "fit" the internal perception of self and our social world.

Furthermore, certain brain centers which are active during dreaming (including the amygdala, right parietal lobe and centers in the right temporal lobe), are responsible for recognizing emotional body and facial expressions and are involved in processing our social interactions (Ratey, 2001). David Kahn (2004) indicates that within a dream, the dreamer is often aware of other people's (dream figures) thoughts and feelings. In a study of 35 subjects (who submitted 320 dream reports containing more than 1200 dream figures), he found that in a majority of their dream reports (77%), they were aware in the dream that their dream figures had feelings about them. One explanation Kahn offers is that our awareness of the feelings and thoughts of others in our dreams prepares us for social encounters when awake.

Dreams are Projective

Carl Jung proposed that dreams are projective - forward focused or goal oriented. In dreams we are often motivated to search and find a solution, to test possible solutions – thus dreams appear to project the results of our actions and beliefs (or the actions of our *dream self*) and in this way are adaptive. According to Erin Wamsley memories are "reactivated" during sleep and dreams incorporate them to enhance our memory systems, reorganizing, interleaving, and reintegrating fragments of the recent events with past experiences and other content to prepare for the future (Wamsley, 2016).

As discussed in Chapter 2 this problem solving and adaptive capability is achieved by introducing and testing creative alternatives. Allan Hobson suggests that it is more than just the introduction of any alternative scenario, but that the scenario is based on a predictive modeling. Hobson, in his Predictive Coding (2014) and Proto-consciousness theory (2009) suggests that there is an inborn capacity of the brain to model the world by creating a virtual reality simulation and predictive model of it—our basis for perception in both waking and dreaming (Hobson et al., 2014). During waking, the model is updated with our experiences. During dreaming, the world model is free to generate creative imaginary predictions. In waking, how well the model fits waking reality is tested (the difference between prior beliefs or expectation and subsequent beliefs or how those expectations worked out). During sleep, discrepancies can be compared in an iterative learning process and the model optimized. The dreaming brain "tells waking what to expect and waking verifies or refutes those expectations" (Hobson et al., 2014).

Your Will is Absent or Diminished

This inactive logic center of our sleeping brain (site A along with site C) also the seat of our will, plus decisions and actions based on will. We generally don't think to control our actions or the storyline of the dream, even though the dream is all created within our own mind. We tend to exist as just a figure in the dream, which is reacting to, subject to or following the plot of the dream. The possible exception is lucid dreaming (as above), in which part of the frontal cortex and precuneus becomes active and willed action becomes possible but can be diminished or short lived depending on the depth of lucidity.

That the dream is not subject to the will of the *ego* is beneficial to dreamwork. The dream figures, which represent, feelings, beliefs, disconnected *fragments* of our personality, threatening emotional memories etc., are free to express their nature in the dream outside the influence of our will.

Discontinuous Time and Scene Shifts are Normal

The executive part of our brain (sites A and C) that are normally inactive in the dream state are also involved in episodic and working memory. Time is not continuous and dream sequences can suddenly switch on us, and we fail to even notice or reflect on what changed until we awake. This switch is perhaps a result of completing one holistic synthesis of associations, and beginning another, as a new unresolved emotional stimulus enters the dream space.

When working with such a dream, therefore, it is best to treat each dream "segment" (between scene shifts) as a separate but associated dream. When each segment is analyzed separately and then compared, a more complete picture of the dream process emerges.

The loss of working memory also has implications for dream recall, and why it is hard to recall more than a few segments of a dream, usually the events closer to waking. Although there is some evidence that learning is taking place in a dream, the activation of the more permanent memory processes in the brain during waking is necessary for recall. This knowledge helps establish techniques for recall that I discussed in Chapter 1.

EXERCISES

a) We are Conscious in our Dreams - Recall being in a recent dream. In what ways does that state of consciousness seem or feel different than your waking experience, and in what ways does it seem the same?

b) Dreams Appear Irrational Only to the Waking Mind - Recall a bizarre situation in one of your dreams. Did it seem perfectly normal while in the dream?

c) Working Memory is Off-line - Dreams switch scenes. Recall a multi-sequence dream. Is it more understandable when you treat each scene as a separate dreamlet related in theme to the other dreamlets?

d) Emotions Shape our Dreams - In a recent dream, can you see a relationship between the dream story and an emotionally stimulating, or anxiety-provoking, even the day before?

e) Dreams Focus on Self – While in the dream and each sequence of the dream, although you may have felt empathy for other dream figures, where did your focus or concern generally end up? Were you lost, searching, threatened, discovering something or such - and in the process were you generally more concerned about yourself and how you felt, the well-being of another?

f) Dreams are Projective; Recall the events in a story-like dream that seemed to have a concluding outcome. Did the conclusion or end tend to propose or predict a possible solution related to moving forward into the future?

g) Irrational Imagery Combinations are Quite Rational - Recall a dream that combined two or more images into one. What are your personal associations or memories regarding each imagery fragment? Does the new combination of definitions reveal a more complete story?

h) Metaphor is the Natural Language of Dreams – In one of your more recent story-like dreams, look for statements or phrases you used that seem like figures of speech, which also seem to apply to a way you feel, or something going on in your life at the time. Consider that waking life situation. Does the connection help explain the dream better?

i) Dream Themes (or actions) Might Relate to Waking Life Themes (or actions) - Look at how you and other dream figures moved through a recent dream plot. What were you attempting to do in the dream and how are these actions analogous to what you are attempting to do in waking life?

j) Dreams Deal with Waking Events but Omit the Event Itself – if you have worked on your dream enough to understand that it is about something that happened in your life the day before, note that a replay of the event itself is not present. What elements of the event are present in the dream? Is it mainly the emotional aspects?

CHAPTER 4
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF DREAMS

I think my life would be easier, he said, if I could just get my selves to agree on something
– Brian Andreas

We meet ourselves in our dreams. Our dreams are more than simply a reflection of our waking life but rather an encounter with all the parts of ourselves that have been affected by the emotional impact that our waking life situation has had on us. Furthermore, our dreams attempt to resolve not only the problem at hand, but underlying emotional conflicts and/or lifelong dysfunctional patterns that leave us stuck. We learn in dreams and thus ever so slightly change our perception or attitudes about ourselves and life. As Robert Stickgold stated, "When you wake, you understand how the world works better than when you went to bed."

In this Chapter I will discuss some of the psychological principles involved in that encounter and resolution process, from the viewpoint of some of the great psychologists and luminaries who have pioneered contemporary dream theory and dreamwork.

Our Evolving Inner Model

I start by introducing a theoretical concept of how we perceive reality. Our perception of reality and our role in it is formed in our memory systems as a result of what and how we perceive and store the information received through our senses – that is then interwoven with existing information in our memory stores. As we experience life, we form a "world model" or *inner model* of our physical and social reality and who we are in relation to - neural "maps" that synthesize meaningful experiences from disparate pieces of information, stored by various groups of neurons in our brain. The *inner model* forms both a reference for processing perceptions in our waking state, as well creating the stage in our dream space. When our waking experience is not in agreement with or threatens this *inner model,* we become anxious, confused or conflicted. Resolving those conflicts, or finding a way to accommodate the anomaly within our *inner model*, becomes a focus of our dreams.

Such a model is necessary since our brain has a finite capability, and we would not be able to operate from moment to moment if we had to think through and re-evaluate every bit of sensory information coming in as if it were new. Gerald Edelman (in Ratey, 2001) at the Scripps Institute indicates that we always perceive things, but only become conscious when we relate what we perceive to our internal experiences.
This handy reference or *inner model*, which helps us process reality, is not without problems. The brain has a finite learning ability and cannot accurately model the totality of external reality. Thus, the *inner model* will always be somewhat incomplete. External reality will always bring in new experiences that don't fit the internal view, stimulating the brain to reinforce old relatively unused pathways or create new ones. Our psychological and social model can be easily corrupted, because learned reactions create biases. Our *inner model* is heavily colored by our emotional and instinctive reactions (the "emotional tag" that our limbic system places on each sensory experience) – and heavily biased by the "rational" filtering of our pre-frontal cortex, our decision-making engine.

"Me" and "Not Me"

Due to the biases and perceptual flaws discussed above, our *inner model* presents an interesting situation regarding our self-perception versus our actual behavior or how others perceive us. We typically consider those personality states that fit this inner model to be "Me" or who we are comfortable with being; our *ego-self* or *persona*. Other personality states that fall outside this image of self to be "Not Me." the *Shadow* self as Jung termed it or alienated personality fragment as Fritz Perls called them.

The concept of *ego*, *persona*, *Shadow* and personality *fragments* will be discussed further in this Chapter. I will also introduce another term for the *inner model*, offered by Stanley Krippner and David Feinstein, that of *personal myth*. They consider the many elements of our *inner model* to form much like a complex mythology, a story of continuity that we create about ourselves and life to interweave and explain the ever changing natural or social phenomenon in which we find ourselves. The "Me" and "Not Me" in this terminology become part of your *existing myth* and your *counter-myth*.

Establishing a model of self may simplify our brain's ability to navigate through life but it has a dark side that becomes the stuff of dreams. To illustrate this concept, and explore your own inner model a bit, try the following exercise.

Figure 4-1

Not Me   **Me**
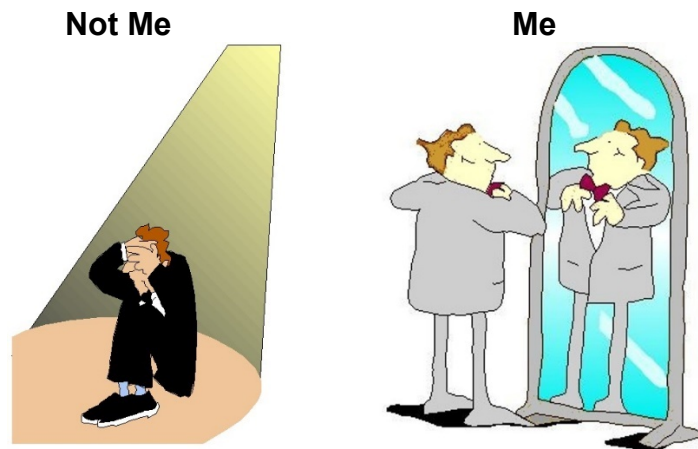
EXERCISE - ME AND NOT ME

1) Place two columns on a sheet of paper and title one "Me" and the other "Not Me."

2) Under the "Me" column write down three main personality traits that you feel define who you are. You might say: "I am a good person; I am strong; I am courteous…" and so on.

3) Now under the "Not Me" column write down three opposite personality traits that you feel are not who you are, or that you try not to be. You might say such things as: "I am not a bad person; I am not weak; I do not try to hurt people…"

4) Now read through and reflect on the "Not Me" side. Was there ever a time that you acted like or exhibited any of the "Not Me" traits? Using the example above you might ask: "Did I ever act badly; have I ever been weak; or did I ever hurt someone?"

5) For those "Not Me" attributes that you indeed once expressed, surely that was you at the time? Are some of those "Not Me" traits therefore truly a part of you, a part of your "Me" side that you would rather not admit to, that you would rather keep hidden and under control?

6) How do you feel when someone, particularly someone you respect, accuses you of acting like your "Not Me" side?   Anger, Hurt, Fight back, Flight?

If you tried the exercise you will undoubtedly realize that the mental self-image or *inner model/personal myth* we create to identify who we are, the "Me," is not totally accurate. It is limited to those aspects that we want to be or that we are comfortable with exhibiting. We place the other aspects that we do not like about ourselves, or are less comfortable with, into the category of "Not Me." While we may try to carefully adapt our *persona* to only display our "Me" side in order to fit the circumstance, others may still see the "Not Me" coming through at times. When others react to your "Not Me" side or point it out, what happens? We may become shocked and defensive toward this perceived threat against self. Instinctively we may fight it (saying to ourselves or to the other person how wrong they are) or we may go into the flight mode feeling hurt and defensive. How many times have you had this happen? Have you ever been accused of acting out of one of your "Not Me" characteristics, which you later confirmed through self-examination?

The other problem with attempting to suppress your "Not Me" attributes is that you have a tendency then to project them on others. So often what we dislike in others is a reflection of what we dislike in ourselves. How often have you had a first impression of someone you never met before that instantly causes you to dislike that person without even knowing them – that is a symptom of projection. When we dislike something in ourselves and project it on another, it becomes near impossible to deal with that person until we deal with the problem within ourselves.

The Role of the Dream

Dreams seem to explore and test various ways of accommodating anomalous experiences that don't fit the *inner model*. Areas of our brain that play a role in detecting the anomalies in our experience, are active in REM dreams (the anterior cingulate and basal ganglia for example). Processing new experiences into long-term memory takes repetition and time (many hours), a process known as long-term potentiation – but dreams certainly provide both the time and the repetition. Ratey (2001) supports the role of REM sleep "as a process for reliving new and old experiences so they become more permanently etched as long-term

memory." At night, the emotional residue of a daily experience will surface for the dreaming brain to process. The result might be a resolution that either accommodates the experience within the *inner model* or alters the *inner model* to better match the experience. Even the best dreams don't transform the model all at once, because of the huge amount of past history and embedded learning that must be undone. It is generally a long slow journey with moderate successes along the way.

One possible advantage that dream-state processing might have over that of the waking state, is the absence of the rational filtering in the dream state. There may be more access in a dream sate to all available information, without our rational filters selectively interfering or interpreting. The dreaming state of the brain is also more interconnected (hyperconnected as Hartmann termed it) thus open to more creative "out of the box" possibilities. In the dream state, the more disturbing emotional elements and suppressed *fragments* of our personality can freely surface and be dealt with. Nonetheless in the end it appears that the eventual solution, must be accepted in some way in order to be woven into the *inner model*. Hartmann stated that it was emotion that drives this, Jung stated that it is the *ego* (*dream-self*) that is the gatekeeper that must accept the guidance. As we saw in the "*Jokester*" dream in Chapter 2, although the *dream-self* was only one player, and in the presence of a powerfully influential guiding player from the *unconscious*, it was the *dream-self* that had to make the final decision to accept the jokester or undesired personality fragment into the conscious personality.

Psychological Theory of Dreams

Ever since the time of Sigmund Freud, many theories on dreams have been proposed, leading to a wealth of dreamworking practices. Some of them can to be relatively ineffective, or even misleading, but many have remained useful for both therapeutic work and as building blocks for further exploration.

Sigmund Freud

Sigmund Freud is probably best known for introducing the validity of dreams into the field of psychology, as well as into the awareness of the general population. He was born in 1856 and began as a neurologist. He established a link between neurotic symptoms and dreams early on, but he considered both as arising out of sexual conflicts, many originating in early childhood. It was this extreme emphasis on the sexual source of symptoms that alienated him from his contemporaries at the time and which, to this day, creates contention as to the value of these areas of his work.

Freud also introduced the concept of the *unconscious* as a foundation of his Psychoanalytic theory. He divided the human *psyche* (or mind) into the *Ego* (our *conscious* personality and what we are conscious of and can access – our memories), the *ID* (instincts, drives and the unconscious repressed content we can't easily access) and the Super*ego*. Perhaps the broader value of Freud's contribution, whether the ideas originated with him or not, was in bringing awareness of certain principles to the field of psychology such as: the validity of dreams in working with symptoms; emphasis on what he called the latent content of dreams (the wishes and fantasies within them); emphasis on the pictographic, symbolic nature of dream imagery; and the significance of metaphor in the telling of the dream. Freud most often ascribed the latent of the dream and dream imagery to sexual, instinctual material that had never been conscious, as well as to material that has been banished to the *unconscious* because it was unacceptable. He promoted the idea of *condensation*, the fusion of several different elements, in which the content of a dream *element* is always far more extensive than what is apparent. He also considered it purposeful—reducing of the length of the material, that is, combining two or more complicated thoughts into a single image or scene. He promoted the concept of "secondary revision" which is a natural tendency of the mind to organize disconnected elements into a unified whole.

He published *The Interpretation of Dreams* in 1900. In later revisions, he discussed the topic of symbolism as disguised pictorial representations of latent thoughts. He saw symbolism not as meaningful metaphor, but as a distortion of dreams intended to disguise the latent content. To Freud much of the latent content in the symbols had a sexual origin. For example, he related elongated objects to the male organ, hollow objects with openings to the female organ, and various motions in the dreams such as climbing stairs to the sexual act.

His method of dreamwork was to decode, translate and "interpret" the dream, using free association, which he considered the fundamental rule of psychoanalysis. According to Freud, the motivation behind dreams was wish fulfillment and the function of dreams was the guardian of sleep - to continue sleep by censoring and disguising the disturbing latent dream thoughts so that the super*ego* will not be offended and wake the dreamer.

Influential Contributors – post Freud

While Freud popularized the notion that dreams are meaningful, the understanding of dreaming and practice of dreamwork evolved dramatically both within Freud's time and ever since. There were many others who pioneered some of the lasting theories and techniques of dreamwork that we enjoy today. Discussions on the lasting contributions of many of those summarized below can be found in *Dreams*: *Understanding the Biology, Psychology and Culture* edited by Hoss, Valli and Gongloff (2019). A summary can also be found in Robert Van de Castle's book *Our Dreaming Mind* (1994) as well as *Extraordinary Dreams and How to Work with Them* co-authored by Stanley Krippner (2002).

Foundational Theories and Approaches

Carl Jung (1875 - 1961) [featured below] was a Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst and founder of Analytical Psychology. He considered dreams to be "the most readily accessible expression of the *unconscious* processes." He was a colleague of Freud but broke with Freud on a number of concepts one being that dreams do not disguise but rather express, in symbolic form, the actual situation in the *unconscious* and that the symbolism is simply the language of the unconscious mind.

Alfred Adler (1870 – 1937) an Austrian MD and psychotherapists, founded of the school of Individual Psychology, was an early associate of Freud also differed in that he considered dreams to originate not so much in the unconscious but in unfinished and unsolved social problems, also that they are oriented toward the future as opposed to the childhood past. He contended that dream images were a type of language that represented the individual's current life situation, and that individual concerns were openly revealed in dreams.

Samuel Lowy a Czech psychiatrist, who authored the *Psychological and Biological Foundations of Dream Interpretation* in 1942, proposed that dreams were biologically necessary and were stimulated both by psychological and physical stimulus – advancing our understanding of how emotion plays a role in dreams. He introduced the idea that physical changes such as digestion, illness and such produce stimuli causing dreams as well as such changes as anxiety, anger or sexual impulses.

Fritz Perls (1893 – 1970) [featured below] was a German-born psychiatrist and psychotherapist. In the 1940s and 1950s, he (and his wife Laura) developed Gestalt therapy Perls, which incorporates *role-play* to identify and resolve emotional *impasses* and bring closure. It became part of a movement toward non-interpretive humanistic or existential-phenomenological approaches.

Thomas French and **Erica Fromm**, co-authoring *Dream Interpretation: a New Approach* in 1964. The book departs from Freud as the two contend the conflicts people have that are represented by their dreams and that dreams like waking life were dominated by the need to find a solution to a problem. His "focal conflict" theory described how a dream might focus on a recent problem which in turn is related to earlier problems from the dreamer's life, all of which network in the dream to produce the dream content.

Erik Erikson (1902 – 1994) was a German-born American psychoanalyst and one of the originators of Ego Psychology and was known for coining of the phrase "identity crisis." He developed an systematic dream analysis approach, which stressed the role of the *ego* and concepts of *ego* identity and socialization.

Calvin Hall was an American psychologist who in 1953 proposed a Cognitive Theory of Dreams*,* which promoted translating dream *elements* into the ideas to which they refer. In 1966 he and **Robert Van de Castle** developed a systematic process for content analysis called the *Quantitative Coding System*[57] and publishing it as the well known name *The Content Analysis of Dreams*. Hall proposed that a content analysis of a person's dream series makes it possible to determine the "conceptual systems" of that dreamer. He placed dream content in the following categories: conceptions of self, of others, of the world, of problems and conflicts, and of impulses, prohibitions and penalties.

Harry Hunt was as Canadian psychologist who published *Multiplicity of Dreams* in 1989. He contended that there are so many different types of dreams which are so multifaceted, with so many levels of meaning, that there would be no single physiological mechanism or approach that can account for all.

Existential-Phenomenological and "Grassroots" Movement

A movement began in the 1950's which distanced dreamwork from the the need for a psychotherapist or analyst to "interpret" dreams to that of treated the dream as a here-and-now experience where the dreamer's own meaning emerges from their own encounter and discovery of the connection between the dream and their waking life. It also moved away from the psychological assumption that dreams emanate from the *unconscious.* What has been often called the "grassroots movement" moved dreamwork further from clinical and professional settings to non-professional dreamwork and dream groups. Some has been quite positive where ethical concerns are honored. Unfortunately some has been not so healthy where pop-myths about dreams, or "symbol dictionaries" of fixed meanings (as opposed to the dreamer's own associations), or less than ethical interpretive approaches have proliferated.

The existential-phenomenological movement also includes many other great luminaries, just a few of note being: **Ludwig Binswanger** (Swiss psychiatrist and pioneer in Existential Psychology); **Medard Boss** (Swiss psychoanalytic psychiatrist who considered "dreams are not something we have …we are our dreaming state," used themes in dreams to bring forth memories, which he echoed it in a manner that put it into a lifetime perspective); **James Hillman** (an American psychologist who founded a movement called archetypal psychology, stressed "keeping the dream alive" with the idea that encountering dream images deepens our sense of personal identity to contain their potentials); **Eugene Gendlin** *& Carl Rogers* (who in the 1950s - 60s, added the non-verbal intuitive "felt sense" – waiting to discover how the body responds to a series of questions with a uniquely different answer than the initial cognitive response – allowing something to break through "directly from the unconscious").

Gestalt Therapy (*Fritz Perls)* was part of a later Humanistic movement which much like the existential movement brought dreamwork into group settings using a non-interpretive approach where everything comes from the dreamer and is focused on the dreamer in their relation to their whole being and environment (Perls, 1974)

Montague Ullman (1916 – 2008) is of particular note to this movement and to modern day group dreamwork. In 1979 he published *Working with Dreams* introducing the Ullman "Method" which he termed "dream appreciation" (Ullman, 1985). It is a non-threatening approach to working with dreams in a group setting which is widely used today – in both clinical as well as non-professional dream groups. At the core is the aim of "respecting the privacy of the dreamer and his authority over the dream" (only the dreamer can understand their personal meaning of the dream). His approach is perhaps best known from the phrase "If this were my dream…" where during the process members of the dream group take the dream on and project their own meaning on it as if it were their own dream – suggestions which trigger the dreamer's own associations with their waking life situation. *Jeremy Taylor* (1943 - 2018), helped to popularize "projective dreamwork" (Taylor, 1983), adhering to much the same structure and safety practices. A more detailed discussion of his work is featured below and his group work "Method" in Chapter 10. Monte also founded the Dream Laboratory at the Maimonides Medical Center in New York where among other activities researched extrasensory dreams with Stanley Krippner, culminating the book *Dream Telepathy* (Ullman, et al.,1973).

Contemporary Theory

Ernest Hartmann (1934 - 2013). There is no way to adequately capture in one place all of the valuable theories, approaches and hard-core research that has contributed to the understanding of dreams and dreamwork as we do today – or to adequately project where it may be heading. Ernest Hartmann, professor of psychiatry at Tufts University School of Medicine, however, in his 2011 book *The Nature and Functions of Dreaming* has perhaps condensed much of what we have learned from research, contemporary psychology and dreamwork practice into an understandable theoretical construct that he calls the Contemporary Theory of Dreaming. Hartmann developed boundary theory (which he and other researchers have related to dream recall), the concept of the Central Image (CI) describing how dream imagery represents the emotional state of the dreamer and considered dreaming as relating to current-life emotional concerns and learning in dreams (weaving new content into existing mental systems) as a wake-to-dream-to-waking continuum between dreams and waking consciousness.

Three Important Luminaries

Two of the leading luminaries, who provided the foundation for much of modern-day dream psychology, as well as highly effective techniques for dreamwork that have lasted until this day are *Carl Jung* and *Fritz Perls*. I will therefore focus on the work of these two in the following sections of this Chapter.

There are two other contemporaries as well that I will note, *David Feinstein* who co-authored the book Personal Mythology with *Stanley Krippner*. They refine Jung's relation with mythology, to that of "personal myth" (the *inner model*) with a simplicity that can be readily observed in the dynamics of the dream experience and thus personal dreamwork. Feinstein presents a functional model of the dream in *Dreamtime & Dreamwork* (Krippner, 1990) based on how it manages the dynamics between the *existing* or *old-myth, counter-myth*, and the evolving resolution or *new myth*, that I reference throughout this book.

Table 4-1 offers a comparative summary of these three theories/theorists. I have found it most effective when doing dreamwork to use a combination of the theories and approaches of each – all three therefore form a basis for the Transformative Dreamwork approach presented in this book.

Table 4-1
Theories Related to Dreams and Dreamwork

Source	Jung	Perls	Feinstein
Purpose of Dreaming	Balance & *Individuation* through: *Compensation* > Integration (*conscious & unconscious*) > *transcendence*	- Self-Actualization - Closure/*Wholeness* - Maturation	Reconciliation of the day's events with your personal *myth* or "inner model"
Stimulus for the Dream	Unfinished business, including thoughts & feelings not experienced during the day; evolving *individuation*	Unresolved conflict or *impasse* creating an immediate need for closure or resolution.	Waking Experience that does not fit the *personal myth;* latent potentials blocked by that *myth*
Source of the Dream *Elements* and Imagery	- *Personal Unconscious*: immediate conflict, *Shadow*, associated memories - *Collective Unconscious*: *archetypal* organizing forces	*Impasses;* Dream *elements* are all part of self, alienated or non-integrated *fragments* of the personality	A "*complex*" of associations (images or *elements*) organized around a core theme
Conscious contents or dream-self	The part of the *psyche* accepted by or identified with the *ego* or *persona*	*Ego* state and Personality *fragments* that are more readily accepted	Your internal view of self and reality, i.e., your *personal myth*
Unconscious Contents in the Dream	- *Personal: Shadow*, suppressed once-conscious material; *complexes* - *Collective:* organizing forces of the *Self* - Material not integrated into the personality	Alienated or disassociated *fragments* of the personality and non-actualized potentials.	Opposing or alternate views of one's self and reality, alternative solutions, i.e., *counter-myths*
The Mental Process Taking Place	The *transcendent function* enables change in the *psyche* by reconciliation of *conscious* and *unconscious* conflicts, through *compensation* leading to *transcendence*, a necessary process for *individuation*	Natural drive to unify the alienated *fragments* of the personality. 3 types of Gestalts: unfinished business; conflicts; non-actualized potential.	Accommodating the experience through: - Sustaining the *old myth* - Strengthening the *counter-myth* - Integrating the *myths*
Barrier to Resolution	Fear of the *unconscious* forces (*Shadow*) or giving up *ego* control and going with which is seen as a symbolic death of the *ego*	An *Impasse* or experience counter to one's self-image, without a support mechanism to resolve it	Clinging to outmoded *old myth*; premature embrace of *counter-myth*; irreconcilable conflicting *myths*
Eventual Transform-ation	Acceptance of the greater *Self* and integration of *conscious & unconscious* material into a higher order synthesis	Maturation; Moving from environmental support to self-support	A higher order synthesis of the *myth/counter-myth* is created
Dreamwork Approach	*Objective*: Amplification (association & memories) & Active Imagination; *Subjective*: *Archetypal* imagery/forces related to the process of *individuation*	Gestalt Therapy: uses *role-play* of the imagery to force interaction between the *fragments* and move them through the *impasse*	Revealing the *myth* and *counter-myth;* evoking *transcendent* forces in the *psyche* for engaging the conflict.

Carl Jung – Analytical Psychology

Carl Jung, who lived between 1875 and 1961, was an eminent Swiss psychologist and one of the founders of analytical psychology. He became friends with Freud for a few years but broke with Freudian psychology about the time he wrote *Symbols of Transformation*, which dealt with the symbolism of the *psyche*, and it's mythological orientation. He regarded Freudian psychology, and its focus on sexuality as the primary psychological force, as narrow and controlling. Jung claimed that the aim of the *psyche* is not to suppress or repress, but to come to know one's other side, to control the whole range of one's capacities. He believed that dream to be projective or future focused, the *elements* frequently representing emerging forces in a person's life, rather than sexual wishes and troublesome past experiences.

Jung had a healthy theory regarding the dream process that, unlike Freud, related dreaming more to the present state of the individual rather than traumas of early childhood. He related dreams to the "unfinished business" of waking life, observing that "thoughts that were not thought, and feelings that were not felt by day, afterwards appeared in dreams" (Jung, 1971a). Jung disagreed with Freud that the dream imagery was a "disguise" but rather considered dreams to be a "spontaneous self-portrayal, in symbolic form, of the actual situation in the *unconscious*" and the dream imagery to represent the "*unconscious* aspect of a conscious event appearing not as a rational thought but as a symbolic image" (Jung, 1964). To Jung, dreams presented the current state of our mental evolution, bringing forth content related to both our unrealized potential and our less desirable weak side. He saw the dream as a method for bringing unconscious material into consciousness, whether it came from the outside (something we never became fully aware of) or whether it came totally from the *unconscious*.

Jung (as did Freud) used the word "*psyche*" to describe our mental or psychological makeup. He roughly divided it into the *conscious* and the *unconscious* as did Freud but defined the *unconscious* very differently (see figure 4-2). The *conscious* is the only part of the mind and personality that we know directly. It grows through the application of what Jung called the four functions: thinking, feeling, sensing, intuition. The *ego* is the name Jung uses for the organizing element of the conscious mind (Hall & Nordby, 1973). The *ego* has a lot of control over our perceptions since it must acknowledge something in order to bring it into awareness. We develop a personality through a process he called *individuation*, which is highly driven by what the *ego* accepts into the conscious personality. Jung identified an alter-*ego* element that he called the *Shadow*, which contains our basic animal nature and instincts as well as our insights, and parts of self that make us uncomfortable. This division of *ego*-self is much like the concept of the "me" and "not me" division of the inner model presented at the beginning of the Chapter.

Jung's Model of the Psyche

As opposed to Freud's division, Jung divided the *unconscious* into the *personal* and the *collective*. The *personal unconscious* contains all of our memories of our life experiences. It also contains *Shadow* material, both material we repress because it is considered undesirable or unattainable or material that was once conscious but is now suppressed or disregarded, perhaps because it was upsetting, unresolved or irrelevant. Within the *personal* unconscious lie "*complexes*" which act like separate little personalities clustering around instinctive motivations or *archetypes* (below) that drive our behavior at times. He referred to the *ego*, the *Shadow* and the *complexes* as the "field of consciousness" the contents that the *ego* attaches itself at times. The contents of the *collective unconscious* have never been conscious and are linked to our instinctive and genetic evolutionary past. These *collective* contents are evidenced in dreams by primordial imagery (*collective* imagery) that Jung called *archetypes* (see below).

Jung considered the *collective unconscious* as a "second psychic system" which acted independently of the *ego* and *conscious* self or personality. He stated, "We have no knowledge of how this *unconscious* functions, but since it is conjectured to be a psychic system it may possibly have everything that consciousness has, including perception, apperception, memory, imagination, will, affectivity, feeling, reflection, judgment, etc., all in subliminal form" "If the *unconscious* can contain everything that is known to be a function of consciousness, then we are faced with the possibility that it too, like consciousness, possesses a subject, a sort of *ego*..." (Jung, 1993). Jung's model of the *psyche* and the *archetypes* are described in more detail in Chapter 7.

Figure 4-2
The Psyche as Defined by Freud and Jung
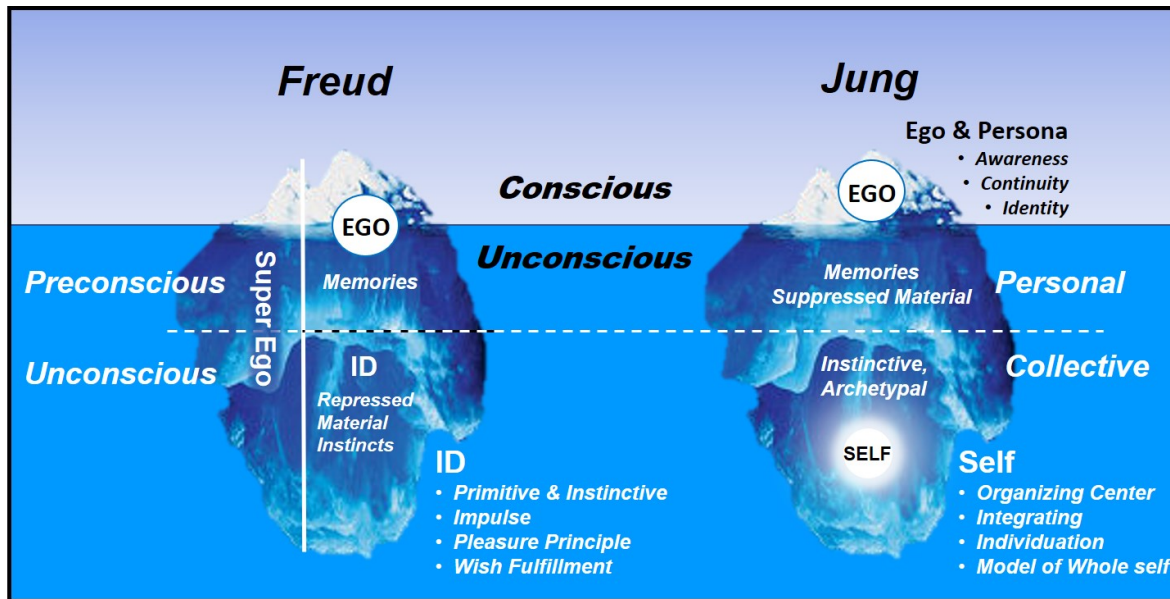
> *An aside: although Jung's structure of the psyche or mind, particularly the collective unconscious, may be difficult to grasp, it is not unlike the way we humans have designed our computers – perhaps emulating our own mental structure. The conscious mind is much like a computer screen and the ego like the keyboard – where we control the focus on what we want to view with the keyboard. The unconscious is like all the content stored in the computer that we are not accessing at the time or programs running behind the scenes. The personal unconscious is like our personal data files and applications which we can call on at will. The collective is like the operating system, the basic processes working unseen in the background that keeps it all working and keeps us connected with the "cloud." Archetypes might be considered the system notifications, security alerts, built-in systems applications and updates – that offer new capabilities and attempt to keep us from crashing.*

Transcendent Function

Jung (1971d) claimed that the driving force within the *collective* unconscious has no deliberate plan outside of an urge towards self-realization. He claimed that dreams act on a natural tendency towards balance or *wholeness* through a *transcended function* which enables transition from one psychic condition to another resulting in a new attitude toward oneself and life. Jung indicated that the aim is *individuation*, to become a *whole* person by reconciling our *conscious* and *unconscious* parts.

Compensation

The *transcendent function* depends on a principle he called *compensation* or the action of the *unconscious* to balance or complement the conflicted viewpoint of the *ego*. The corrective or *compensating* action of dreams appears in many forms: a) a moment of surprise or insight that places our beliefs or actions into perspective perhaps revealing our misconceptions that have left us stuck in conflict; b) revealing and or

guiding us toward an alternative solution to that of the *ego* so as to bring about a reversal in attitude and viewpoint; or c) leading us through, or having us observe, a dream experience that demonstrates a new approach or viewpoint that works. In this process, conscious (ego) and unconscious (Self or Shadow), views are juxtaposed in an "interactive tension" out of which an eventual third element (view or attitude) evolves which is a higher-level integration of the two.

The concept of *compensation* is supported by some research studies. Patrick McNamara (2002) at the Boston University School of Medicine termed this compensating or alternative resolution scenario a *counterfactual* (a mental simulation of what might happen if a different decision were made) and observed the introduction of *counterfactuals* in 97% of dreams studied in a 34-subject study.

Individuation

The eventual aim is self-realization or *individuation* brought about through *compensation* that leads to the eventual integration of the *conscious* and *unconscious* (personality and inner self) such that a pearson's *unconscious* and the *conscious* mind moves together, bringing about a *transcendence* from one state to another in the *psyche*, expressing itself as a new attitude and awareness. The goal is self-actualization or becoming the *whole* individual you were meant to be.

Jung considered *individuation* to be a spiraling process around the primordial or archetypal image of *Self*, a journey whereby "a person becomes whole, calm, fertile, and happy when the *conscious* and the *unconscious* have learned to live at peace and to complement one another" (Jung, 1964). Jungian analyst Marie-Louise von Franz writes, "Our dream life creates a meandering pattern in which individual strands or tendencies become visible, then vanish then return again - but - if one watches this meandering design over a long period of time, one can observe a sort of hidden regulating or directing tendency at work, creating a slow, imperceptible process of psychic growth - the process of *individuation*. Gradually a wider and more mature personality emerges" ("The Process of Individuation," in Jung, 1964).

Archetypal Imagery

Jung saw the appearance of *archetypal* imagery within our dreams as collectively related to their appearance in the common mythology of humans across cultures. He considered the four major *archetypes* to be the *Self,* the *Shadow*, *Anima & Animus* and the *Persona*. He also described twelve primary motivational *archetypes* (for example the Hero, Ruler, Caregiver, Rebel, etc.) which he grouped in 4 orientations (Ego, Order, Social, and Freedom). Furthermore, he described a great number of what he called "symbols of the *Self*" - personifications or the *Self* and patterns representing the forces of the Self (Jung, 1973). In a sense, Jung gave an identity to *unconscious* dream *elements*, which he could relate to the psychological processes being played out in the dreaming mind and the dream. The archetypes will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7. An introductory summary is provided here.

In terms of the four basic archetypes the *Self,* and *Anima & Animus* were aligned with the *collective unconscious*, the *Shadow* with the *personal unconscious* and the *Persona* with the *conscious* personality.

- **Self** (capital S): This Jung considered to be the totality of the *psyche* (containing all the *archetypes*) as well as the central organizing principle of the personality. The *Self* is a guiding force that drives the *individuation* process and can appear as a personification in guiding roles such as the, wise, unknown, unseen or god/goddess-like dream figure. It also appears as "symbols of the *Self*" in a multitude of organizing actions, figures and geometric forms focused on integrating conscious and unconscious material and establishing *wholeness*.
- **Shadow:** The Shadow contains suppressed or unrealized aspect of the personality which have not been integrated into the *conscious* personality and which the *ego* does not identify with – can appear as a

dark or shadowy unknown figure (typically of the same sex) that acts or appears in a role counter to the views and aims of the *dream-self* or *ego*;

- **Anima & Animus:** These figures appear as a personification of the *conscious* and *unconscious* integration process. Jung defined them as the *feminine* and *masculine* component within a man's and woman's *psyche* respectively – appearing as an unknown male figure in a woman's dreams and unknown woman in a man's dream. Regardless of Jung's strict definition, the presence or relative mix of male and female figured in any persons dreams can relate to the balance of *masculine* or *feminine* attributes the dream is dealing with in relation to the dreamer's situation.
- **Persona:** This is the aspect of self that the *ego* presents to the world. It may appear as the *dream-self* and its patterns of behavior or known dream figure which the *ego* emulates.

Jung also identified patterns in dreams, he called "symbols of the *Self,* associated with the processes of the *transcendent function* (above) taking place such as *compensation*, *integration*, *transcendence* and *individuation*. The process generally begins as an **encounter** with the problem or conflict, a picture-metaphor of your waking emotional situation which can contain *archetypal* imagery of conflict such as a pair of identical images (equal forces in conflict). Images or themes may appear of turning within, a giving up of ego control; what Jung called a "**death of the ego**." This can include journey imagery; searching; descending stairs or going into darkness or within the earth. under, down stairs into the depths; fall/winter; sunset. The dream (the *unconscious Self*) then generally introduces a a form of guidance or **compensation,** a scenario that opposes or corrects for the view or actions of the *ego* or *dream-self*. Compensating forces can appear as a personification of the *Self* (wise or guiding figure), a voices or words, a moment of surprise, decision, insight or discovery. Organizing and **integration** forces are often introduced with the aim of focusing and directing the *ego* and dream scenario toward achieving completion or a balanced *whole* individual. They can appear as a unification of opposites or balanced mandala like geometric imagery including: male/female unification, black and white patterns, geometries and numbers relating to balance and *wholeness* such as four or four-ness and the circle and center oriented imagery such as the circle with something in the center; the spiral, the cross or circular or spiral movement. Imagery related to the underlying aim of **individuation,** such as the "great tree", "great stone" or crystal may appear. And as *integration* and *transcendence* is achieved or projected within the dream scenario it will often be accompanied by a rewarding ending with emergence, renewal or **rebirth** imagery (child, egg, spring, nature) including illumination or moving into the light,

Jung's "Purposeful Structure" of Dreams

Jung contended that dreams have a "purposeful structure," that when present in a dream or series of associated dreams, has four stages:

1) **Exposition:** The opening scene (sometimes described as a going within and encountering the unconscious and emotional aspect of a conscious event, appearing as *symbolic* imagery).
2) **Development**: The emergence of the plot (which Jung indicated was a *compensating* plot that attempts to bring the *conscious* and *unconscious* views together in an interactive tension with the aim of an *integrated* solution).
3) **Culmination**: Something significant occurs, and the main dream figure responds (the dream-self may respond to the *compensating* event - a moment of opposition, insight, guidance, discovery - by rejecting, arguing or accepting or following the guidance and reversing its direction or viewpoint).
4) **Lysis:** The result or solution of the dream's action (which might be a resolution, *transcendence*, or a symbolic *rebirth* evolves as the *ego* accepts the *unconscious* guidance; *integration* occurs as the *conscious* and *unconscious* moves together and a new self/attitude/viewpoint emerges).

Jung observed a strong similarity between dream imagery and this "structure" with the work of alchemists – considering alchemy to be a historical counterpart of his "psychology of the *unconscious*" and analogous to the process of *individuation*. The work of alchemy was a process of creating the philosopher's stone an alchemical substance capable of turning base metals such as mercury into gold (something eternal that can never be lost or dissolved, comparable to the divine). The Alchemical processes originally had four stages which Jung (1971b) saw as similar to the fundamental process of *individuation*: Negredo (blackness and decomposition/death); Albedo (whiteness, integration, life conquers death); Citrinitas (drawing of the inner light of one's own being) and Rubedo (*wholeness* and the awareness of one's divine *Self*).

Jung also found a strong relationship between the role played by figures in our dreams and the cross-cultural myths of humankind. Mythology depicts reality as mystical patterns, and life as directed by unknown forces greater than us, which must be appeased by ritualistic behavior. He saw our life's journey and the journeys experienced in the longer series of associated dreams, to be similar and much like the "Hero's journey" (Campbell, 1949) of which there are many variations, but which contain three basic phases – with many similarities to his "purposeful structure":

- *Departure* – beginning in the "Ordinary World" (daily life) there is a "call" to adventure/action and sometimes a "refusal" of the call;
- *Initiation:* begins with "meeting the mentor" who gives the hero something to provide courage; then a "Crossing the Threshold" followed by "Tests, Allies and Enemies"; eventually facing the inner conflict or "Approach to the Inmost Cave" followed by a symbolic "Death and Rebirth" and finally "Reward" (emerging as a stronger person, often with a prize);
- *Return:* begins with the "The Road Back" (returning home with the reward, acclaim, vindication, exoneration; choosing between the personal objective and that of a higher cause); "Resurrection" (the final battle having far-reaching consequences to others); and "Return with the Elixir" (returning home to the "Ordinary World" a changed person).

We can observe this Hero's journey in the myths and classic stories of mankind cross-culturally, as well as in many of the popular hero movies produced by Hollywood. Although all of these mythic stages are certainly not contained within our dreams – the themes of departure, initiation and return can be readily observed in relation to Jung's concept of *transcendence* and *individuation.* The dream journey often begins the *departure*, "crossing the threshold" or going within, when our *conscious* attempts to resolve fear and conflicts in the "ordinary world" no longer works. It is a symbolic giving in or "death of the *ego*" which often symbolized by descending within the earth, going into darkness, fear of the unknown or impending death. In order for you to grow into your full potential, the old view of self (the existing *ego*) must change, or symbolically "die," so that the new self can be born – thus the journey becomes a symbolic "death and rebirth" which is necessary to becoming a whole and fully integrated self. So, in this journey we enter an *initiation* – the *conscious dream-self* or *ego* confronts the fearful or uncomfortable of parts of ourselves we suppress or repress because we see them as evil, uncontrollable or undesirable. This is often experienced as loss or search (often trying to return to someplace, something or someone – your car, home, a companion) confronting one-self (our *Shadow* side, our fears, conflicts and misconceptions). But at some point, the *unconscious* (the guiding forces of the Self, the "mentor"), introduces a *compensating* scenario to balance the misconceptions of the *dream-self* or *conscious ego*. The dream story or stories continue as a juxtaposition of *conscious* and *unconscious* views in an interactive tension, until (as Jung stated) out of the tension a 3rd element is formed, an integration of the two or "rebirth," which manifests as a new attitude. There is a return – a reversal, a discovery, a *transcendence* as the *dream ego* accepts the guidance accompanied by an emotional reinforcement or celebration of the new self – the completion of another cycle toward *individuation.*

Jung observed that total achievement of *individuation* does not complete itself in one dream, nor a series of dreams nor even a lifetime, but is cyclical, achieving stages of completion little by little, sometimes in large breakthroughs (he called "Big Dreams"), but always striving toward the potential whole being, the *Self.*

Carl Jung considered "Big Dreams" to: resemble "visions" more than other nocturnal dreams; have a consistent "purposeful structure" that is cleanly focused and be *archetypal* in nature with "*collective unconscious*" origins.

Illustrative Example

The following "Rusty Car" dream (illustrated in figure 4-3) might illustrate some of Jung's *archetypal* theories as well as the principles of the *transcendent function*, his concept of a *purposeful structure* as some recognizable elements of the "hero's journey." The dreamer in this case was offered a teaching position in an area of expertise he had abandoned many years before. He felt it would be too difficult to resurrect his talents, so he decided to turn the position down the next day. But that night, he dreamt: *I am wandering through a red sandy desert and see an old rusty car. I look inside and find the driver is not moving. I give him up for dead. My unknown companion from behind says "the man is just asleep" and urges me to wake the man. I argue that it is useless, but after much discussion I reluctantly give in and shake the man. When I do, both the driver and the car come to life and the car transforms into a newer car.* The *transcendence* or the change in viewpoint did seem to be achieved within the dream. The next day the dreamer (without understanding the connection between his dream and the offer) woke with a completely different view, reversed his decision and accepted the assignment. It was only upon reflection much later that he recognized the role the dream may have played in that decision.

Figure 4-3 The "Rusty Car" Dream
Introducing a *counterfactual* or alternative resolution scenario

Let's look at some of the elements of the *transcendent function* in this dream from within the what Jung called his "purposeful structure":

- **Exposition** (opening scene): The dream begins with a "departure" a journeying into the desert where the dreamer metaphorically encounters the "*unconscious* aspect of the conscious event." The conscious even was the offer of a teaching assignment and the ego inflation that went with it. The *unconscious* aspect is the *Shadow* material, the conflict, the feelings of inadequacy that his talents were old, "rusty" and unrecoverable; and his inner motivation (the driver inside) as dead.
- **Development** (*compensating* plot emergence): The *compensating* forces of the *unconscious Self* (unseen companion/voice from behind – the "mentor") introduces an alternative view and resolution scenario – *"the man is just asleep"* and urges him to wake the driver.

- *Culmination* (something significant occurs, and the main dream figure responds): The *dream-self* (*conscious ego*) argues with the *unconscious* guidance that it is useless – but after much urging eventually reverses its position and shakes the man.
- *Lysis* (conclusion). In the end a *transcendence* occurs with the restoral and *rebirth* of the driver and the car – the "reward". Here a new resolution image emerges, as a result of the *conscious* (*dream-self* or *ego*) and the *unconscious* (resolution scenario) moving together.

Jung's Dreamwork Approach

Jung gave a group of lectures in 1935 at the Institute of Medical Psychology in London, which were published as *Analytical Psychology: Its Theory & Practice* (Jung, 1968). There he discusses in some detail his approach to dream analysis as well as an active imagination, which he developed to investigate content originating in the *unconscious* psychic process. Jung considered dreams to have two levels of interpretation:
- *Objective* or analytical: in which some of the symbols in our dreams represent external realities.
- *Subjective*: in which the symbols represent aspects of the dreamer's *psyche*—some features of the dreamer's psychological life or their *individuation* process taking place.

Jung treated the dream as a text in which one "does not understand the language". He developed two approaches for thes, plus a third, *Active Imagination*:
- *Amplification:* The *objective* approach where he explored the dreamer's own associations
- *Archetypal:* The *subjective* approach of exploring the parallels with *collective unconscious* imagery to decode the language. Here he explored *archetypal* structures of the *unconscious*. Jung considered *archetypal* symbols to be "fixed," requiring an understanding of studies in mythology, folklore, comparative religion, archeology, language, and anthropology.
- *Active Imagination*: an approach Jung used with any mental impression - a dream scene or *element* from waking life. He didn't consider it fantasy, but rather an active purposeful creation where the images take on a life of their own and events develop according to their own logic. It begins by concentrating on an initial image then as you concentrate on the mental picture, it begins to stir, and become enriched by details that develop into a complete story. The approach is letting things just fall into consciousness, being careful not to interrupt or influence the flow with our *conscious* will.

Jung considered dreams to be about a particular unresolved problem about which the dreamer has a misconceived *conscious* judgment. He approached dream analysis by emphasizing that it is not safe to interpret a dream without considering the detail of its context and "Never apply any theory but always ask the dreamer how they feel about the dream images." Whereas Freud's approach was retrospective, with a focus on past events, perhaps in the dreamer's childhood (trauma, sexual fixations and desires, and such), Jung's dream approach is prospective. Jung treats the dream like a map of the dreamer's future psychological evolution toward a more balanced relationship between his *ego* consciousness and the *unconscious*.

Jung did not like to analyze one dream by itself, concerned about that being too speculative. He considered the *psyche* and the psychological process taking place as continuous, that an individual dream was "just one flash or observation in a psychic continuity that became visible for a moment—a continuity that is connected with the previous dreams." He therefore preferred to compare a series of dreams, so as to observe the process that is going on in the *unconscious* from dream to dream, the history before and history after the dream. Jung presumed we are dreaming all the time, although we are not aware of it by day because of the nature of the waking conscious state.

Jung split with Freud's methods in a number of ways. He abandoned free association, considering it to lead to a multitude of associations and a multitude of *complexes*. He stated, "I want to know what the dream has

to say about the *complexes* [what the *unconscious* is doing with them] not what they are." In further opposition to Freud, Jung stated that dream do not conceal stating: "The dream is the whole thing, and if you think there is something behind it, or that the dream has concealed something, there is no question but that you simply do not understand it." He thus treated the dream as if it were a text that he simply did not understand properly—where the words are unknown or the text is fragmentary, thus he applies a method a philologist (one who studies linguistics and meaning) would apply in reading such a difficult text—a method he called *amplification.* Rather than interpret, Jung would explore the dreamer's associations asking, "How does that thing appear to you," or, in other words, "What is your context?" or "What are your associations with the words you used to describe the dream image". He looked for the personal mental issue which the term in the dream narrative is related. Whatever information the dreamer brought forth, he put in the context of the dream. Jung did not like speculation in dealing with a dream, stating, "I can assure you that the results are more interesting when you apply things that are human than when you apply a most dreadful monotonous interpretation" In dealing with personal *elements* in a dream, he applied a certain principle, stating, "When you are dealing with the *personal unconscious* you are not allowed to think too much and to add anything to the associations of the dreamer. Can you add something to the personality of someone else?"

However, when dealing with an *archetype,* he took a different approach that requires knowledge of the *collective unconscious* and the imagery it produces. He taught that an *archetype* is not from the dreamer's personality but relates in a *collective* manner to the mental structure of the dreamer, so the role of the therapist (who understands cultural and *archetypal* motifs) can provide those associations in the appropriate context for the dreamer. For example, he might observe the manifesting of "inferior functions" (the *Shadow*) as projections on those the dreamer is dealing with in waking life.

To "translate" the dream, he would often insert these personal and *collective* associations back into the text of the dream narrative, and "translate" the text by rereading it to the dreamer for a revealing context and insights. He considered a scene change as a point at which the representation of an unconscious thought has come to a climax, and it becomes impossible to continue that motif – so the dream goes on to the next. Jung would also observe and point out where a particular *archetypal* motif and its various representations appeared through a series of the person's dreams.

Note that the *Transformative Dreamwork* approach in this book, incorporates some of Jung's approaches: the treatment of a scene change as a separate dream sequence; in Part #1 the use of *amplification* and the inserting of associations back into the text of the dream; and in Part #3 work with basic *archetypal* imagery to identify the plan and guidance driving the *individuation* or transformative process that might be taking place. Also, in Chapter 5, I discuss Jung's "purposeful structure" and how dreams link together in a continuum or series.

Fritz Perls - Gestalt Therapy

Fritz Perls (1893 – 1970) was a noted German-born psychiatrist and psychotherapist. His psychoanalytic training took place at the Psychoanalytic Institutes of Berlin, Vienna and Frankfurt. He, with his wife Laura Perls, developed Gestalt Therapy while in the United States from 1946 until 1970.

Gestalt means "whole" or the totality of the inner and outer self in its environment, and much like Jung, Perls considered the aim to be closure or becoming "whole" and re-owning the fragmented or "alienated" parts of the personality. At the core of the Gestalt Therapy process is enhanced awareness of sensation, perception, bodily feelings, emotion, and behavior, in the present moment. Relationship is emphasized, along with contact between the self, its environment, and the other.

Gestalt Theory

Perls also considered the dream as part of the normal function of the mind, calling it "the most spontaneous expression of the existence of the human being" (Perls, 1974). Like Jung's theory of *individuation*, he referred to a similar singular inborn process for the individual, calling it the process of "self-actualization." He claimed that, in essence, we are whole unified individuals, but that we "fragment" ourselves. We dissociate or alienate parts (*fragments*) of our personality that we don't like or can't deal with. Gestalt Therapy provided an approach for re-owning these *fragments*, and for re-unification (1974).

Perls claimed that everything in the dream is "part of the dreamer" and that each of the dream figures and images we see in dreams outside of our *dream-self* is a part of our own personality or "disowned parts of oneself," which "should be re-owned." He saw a relationship between how we relate to those fragments in our dreams and how we relate to others and events in our waking life. These personality *fragments* are not only *projected* as images in our dreams but are *projected* on other people in our waking life. If there is a part of ourselves we do not like, then we often find ourselves disliking someone who reminds us of that part.

Perls also claimed that dreams are an opportunity to get in touch with, interact with, and re-own these alienated *fragments* to bring about the unified, self-actualized being. He claimed that a primary biological process of "gestalt formation" drives this activity whereby any imbalance in the personality creates an immediate need to correct this imbalance. He discussed at least three basic types of Gestalts that dreams deal with: **unfinished business**; **conflicts** within yourself or with others; and **non-actualized potentials**. This is similar to Jung, who also indicated that dreams work on unfinished business and are driven by evolving forces within the *unconscious*, forces that contain representations of the fully actualized Self.

Perls indicated that there is a regulating law, whereby the more urgent situation becomes the controller and takes over. Our dreams on any particular night, therefore, may be related to the most urgent piece of unfinished business left with us before we fell asleep. This perhaps explains why we are able, with proper self-training, to incubate and stimulate a dream on a certain problem. By concentrating on the problem as we fall asleep, we are sometimes able to place the request as the most urgent piece of unfinished business in our sleeping mind.

With Jung, the barrier to becoming individuated or self-realized, involved a fear of accepting the unknown, the *unconscious*. Perls called the barrier to self-actualization an "*impasse*" – a point at which neither external nor internal support is forthcoming, nor has authentic self-support been achieved. It is a state of limbo and anxiety in which the person has nowhere to turn until a new support mechanism is found.

By becoming aware of self and permitting the process of "organic self-regulation" to take place, Perls indicated that the individual abandons the tendency towards self- manipulation and manipulation of one's environment. They no longer become fragmented because they experience a "fit" between the external experience and the internal view of who they are. This self-regulating principle that Perls described is similar to the natural centering force discussed by Jung. According to Perls, as the personality becomes unified, it no longer requires support from the environment but becomes more capable of self-support. The transformation from environmental support to self-support, Perls called "maturation."

Perls' Dreamwork Methods

Contrasting himself with Freud, Perls considers Gestalt dreamwork to be the "royal road to integration." Integration cannot be produced but is rather a process that begins in the dreamwork session and may take place at any point: while enacting the dream, through dialogue between "parts" (dream figures or other

elements) in the dream, or outside the dreamwork over time. The term "integration" in a Gestalt sense does not necessarily mean a resolution, it often means (as it did with Jung) developing an ability to recognize and contain both sides of a conflict at the same time.

The key value of the Gestalt approach is in "enacting" the dream. He asks the dreamer to: "play this part," "take the other role," "set the stage," and such. Enacting or *role-play* is not interpretation; it allows the dreamer to gain an embodied sense of the deeper personal meaning of the dream, to recapture motivational energies that have been inhibited, and re-own "disowned/alienated *fragments*" - aspects of themselves that they have suppressed. The dreamer is helped to "become" the person or object in their dream because each is an unexpressed part of themselves —the expression of these dream figures (their motivations, concerns, and aspirations) can be quite different than the dreamers *ego* view and expression.

Note that the *role-play* step in the *Transformative Dreamwork* protocol was based on Gestalt *role-play*. I adapted parts of the more in-depth approach, aimed at a therapy, into a simple 6 to 7 question scripted *role-play* that is easier to learn and apply when the aim is dreamwork. It uses what I found to be the some of the most effective guiding questions in a Gestalt therapeutic session. It is structured, however, in a way that limits the questioning to a fairly safe level aimed at revealing underlying emotional conflicts but avoiding going more deeply than needed for basic dreamwork.

Example

If we were to apply Perls' approach to the "*Rusty Car*" dream for example, it might go something like this. Perls: "Play the part of the rusty car". The dreamer might respond: "I am an old rusty car. I feel abandoned, no longer wanted, left to rust. I wish someone would take an interest in me and restore me, but I fear it would take way too much effort to bring me back to my original condition." Note that the *role-play* permits the dream *element* to express itself (to be given a voice) and reveal the core emotional conflict pictured by the image – in this case the conflict behind the dreamer's decision to decline the teaching position. The conflict of feeling abandoned and seeing this invitation of a teaching position as someone taking an interest in him, wanting to restore him to his prior self – versus – fearing his talents are too rusty and that it would take way too much effort to restore them. The power behind role play is that it moves that the rational *ego* filters to the side (focuses the *ego* on play acting) permitting the *unconscious* to speak and reveal more quickly and effectively material that could take hours to get to (if at all) using cognitive methods of symbol or metaphor analysis.

Feinstein & Krippner - Personal Mythology

Whereas Jung related dreams to the mythology of humankind, dreams can relate to a more personal mythology, according to David Feinstein, PhD in Stanley Krippner's books *Dreamtime and Dreamwork* (Feinstein, 1990) and *Personal Mythology* (Feinstein & Krippner, 1988). Feinstein considers dreams as a place where we meet and reconcile the day's events within the context of how we perceive and make sense of ourselves, this context taking on the characteristics of a deep "personal mythology." This is, in a sense, the nature of the *inner model* to which I have been referring.

Our *inner model* is naturally structured by organizing a complex set of images, emotions and concepts around a core theme. Feinstein claims that this core theme has all the aspects of a myth. We often associate the word myth with the lack of reality. However, in its true definition, a myth relates to the way the mind interprets reality. According to J. Campbell (1983) the characteristics of a myth include: the urge to comprehend the world in a meaningful way; the search for a marked pathway through life; the need to establish secure and fulfilling relationships, and the longing to understand one's part in the mystery of the cosmos. These characteristics, according to Feinstein, are similar to the way the mind organizes its inner

model or view of self and reality. Thus, he terms this inner model the *personal myth*. This personal mythic structure is similar in some ways to what Carl Jung referred to as the "field of consciousness" that contains the *ego*, the *Shadow* and the *complexes* to which the *ego* attaches itself at times.

Since one's personal myth is the mind's interpretation of reality, rather than absolute reality, it does have an aspect of fantasy. As we mature, the myth is modified to better fit our experience, but the core theme remains an interpretation, with all of its limits and internal biases. By recognizing that events in a dream are taking their story line from the viewpoint of a personal myth, it will permit us to better understand the dream in relation to our view of self. The personal myth concept relates well to Jung's description of dreams as associated with the *collective* mythology of man. The approach presents a way of understanding dreams from a personal aspect, as well as explaining how some imagery and core themes are common across the human cultures. Feinstein indicates that personal myths are the product of four interacting sources:
   1) Biology - capacities for symbolism and narrative found within the brain structure, along with the impact of one's physical characteristics on one's unique mythology;
   2) Culture - the ubiquitous influence of the society on one's evolving personal myths;
   3) Personal history - any emotionally significant experience that impacts one's evolving mythology;
   4) Transcendent experiences - episodes of profound insight and vision that expand, inspire and enlighten.

This is not unlike the teachings of Jung (1971e) who saw the unfolding myth in dreams as a function of: 1) biological evolution including the evolution of the mind or *psyche*; 2) cultural influence; 3) personal experience and 4) the personal state of *individuation* and *transcendence* (union of *conscious* and *unconscious*). Feinstein states that dreams incorporate not only the myth and counter-myth, but (like Jung) deeper *archetypal* mythic structures as well. Taking the Jungian approach one step further, he proposes that external experiences (a waking experience that does not fit the myth) trigger the conflict between the *conscious* and *unconscious*. He also expands the concept of the internal mythical structure to include the *collective myth* (the Jungian *archetypes*).

By looking at our dreams, we can see the structure of our personal myth. Dreams reveal how our internal view of reality may be accommodating, or failing to accommodate, our waking experiences. Feinstein (1990) states that the dream process is mediation between the older myth and the emerging counter-myth. The dream works on a new experience by relating it to a reconstruction of the past; relating it to recent events; or considering possible future alternatives. The outcome can be one of three events:
   1) **Sustaining the existing myth**: the older myth is sustained (your mind justifies things as they are or accommodates a new situation as fitting into the existing model in some way). This involves preserving the inner model or existing myth (or old-myth) perhaps assimilating the new, and possibly threatening waking event, into the existing mythic structure. The event may be compared with similar past events to find a fit or projected into the future in order to dissolve the fears.
   2) **Strengthening the counter-myth:** an alternative view is enhanced or created by the new experiences that don't fit the existing myth. Sometimes when we can't deal with a disturbing event, or some aspect of our self, we suppress it into the *unconscious*. Unfortunately, such events do not disappear, they join a complex of similar memories, perhaps strengthening a counter-myth (*Shadow* as Jung termed it). At some point, a counter-myth may grow strong enough to make itself known in dreams or through the emergence of *dysfunctional* behaviors in waking life.
   3) **Integrating Conflicting Myths into a Higher Order Synthesis**: the two conflicting myths become integrated or evolve into a new mythical structure (your mind finds a new way of perceiving the situation). Sometimes our mythic structure must be altered or transformed to achieve this balance. The conflict may be between an *existing myth* and a *Shadow* like counter myth or between an *existing myth* and positive emerging *counter-myth* or alternative. To achieve balance within the psyche the conflicting myths are integrated and transformed into a new myth – a new viewpoint, attitude or ego state. (This is the third element Jung spoke of in the transcendence which arises out of the interactive tension between opposing views).

The results of all of this interaction are three different types of dreams:
1) Dreams which may not come to resolution, but rehearse interactions between the myth and counter-myth (where dream figures or events might be appear in opposing or integrating activity - interactive tension as Jung called it);
2) Dreams which present a new mythical structure, a higher order synthesis of the most viable elements of the old myth and counter-myth (dreams that provide and emotionally reinforce a moment of surprise, insight, discovery or resolution)
3) Dreams, which relate how one might bring that new synthesis into daily life (dreams that provide guidance or resolution scenarios analogous to a solution that could be applied in waking life).

This is similar to the way Jung (1971e) described the process taking place in dreams: 1) the *unconscious* first attempts to *compensate* for the views of the *conscious* mind (mediation between myth and counter-myth), and 2) the process eventually results in a *transcendence* where a union is formed between the *conscious* and the *unconscious*. There is also commonality with the Perls approach whereby: 1) we first encounter the alienated parts of our personality; and 2) we interact with these parts in an attempt to create an eventual balance or Gestalt; 3) resulting in a self-actualized being.

Examples

1) Sustaining the *existing myth*:
This "*Office Party*" dream attempts to accommodate a new situation by modifying or fragmenting it - suppressing certain elements and accepting others – in order to sustain the *existing myth* of and inflated *ego*: *"I was in charge of an office party that was going on in three of four houses (the fourth being incomplete). My job was to bring each of the groups through the woods into a lighted area on the right to join in a circle dance. After bringing the first group to the circle, I got so caught up in my self-importance* (*existing myth*), *that I lingered and by the time I got back to the other three houses, most of the people had left and gone home. They exited into the darkness on the left.* Note that some *fragments* (dream figures at the party) were incorporated into the existing myth or the *conscious* personality (the lighted circle dance), but as the *ego* became inflated, other *fragments* of self remained separated, and eventually fell back into the *unconscious* (party-goers who had returned into the darkness to the left).

2) Strengthening the *counter-myth*
At some point, a *counter-myth* may grow strong enough to make itself known, as illustrated in this "*Evil Entity*" dream. The dreamer had a fairly strict religious upbringing and believed that a "good person" does not have "sinful" thoughts. So, believing herself to be a good person that should not have evil thoughts *(existing myth),* each time she had such an instinctive urge, *(counter myth)* she felt it was something evil within her and would go through a prayer ritual to exorcise the demon within (suppress it from her mind). Unfortunately, suppression is not healthy, it simply strengthens the *counter myth*. Her dream illustrates an unhealthy strengthening of the *counter myth* and an attempt by the *unconscious* to warn that her actions are only making it worse: "*I dreamed that a person I consider evil was alive again and realized that an "entity" was at work. I am trying to exorcise the entity by going through a ritual. But the more I try the darker the sky becomes. Finally, a loud voice booms from above, "Stop — you are only making it worse."*

At times a dream may follow and test a *counter-myth* in order to determine where it leads – perhaps strengthening it or simply observing and learning from the outcome. In such cases the *counter-myth* can be wonderfully positive as well, relating to unrealized potential that doesn't fit one's existing *myth* or deflated self-image, for example: *"I dreamed I was wandering through my house and I was discovering all sorts of new doors and rooms, many of them filled with a lot of treasures I did not realize I had."*

3) Integrating Conflicting Myths into a Higher Order Synthesis

Sometimes our mythic structure must be altered or transformed to achieve balance. The imbalance might be between an *existing myth* and a *Shadow* like *counter myth* or *complex* in the "*Evil Entity*" dream. Often it is between an *existing myth* and positive *counter-myth* or alternative as in the "*Rusty Car*" dream. To achieve balance within the *psyche* the conflicting *myths* are integrated and transformed into a *new myth* – a new viewpoint, attitude or *ego* state. In the "*Rusty Car*" example the *existing myth* (my talents are too "rusty" to restore, and my inner "drive" is dead) was juxtaposed with a *compensating counter-myth* – "*the man is just asleep – wake him.*" Once the *dream-ego* accepts and tests the guidance, the dream pictures the *new myth* – that the car and driver (dreamer's talents and motivation) can be resurrected and move on as a new car.

EXERCISE – PERSONAL MYTH

We often find ourselves in difficult situations or stuck in dysfunctional behavioral patterns, because we are acting from the viewpoint of an inappropriate personal myth; a myth that originated with a decision made in the past at a moment of crisis.

1) If you have a disturbing dream that you can relate to a recent upsetting waking life situation, reflect on the waking life situation. Go to the most emotional point and bring to mind specifically how you felt. Name and describe those feelings.

2) Now try to go back in time to one specific emotional event earlier in your life when you felt the same way.

3) Visualize what occurred, who was involved, and specifically how you felt about what happened.

4) What decision did you make about yourself, about life or about the others involved at the time?

5) This may have been the creation point of a *personal myth* which is still contributing to your behavior in the present situation. Has that decision been a driving force in certain similar situations throughout you life? Did it influence the situation the dream appeared to be dealing with? Is it an appropriate decision in the present situation, or is it now dysfunctional, leaving you stuck, inhibiting your progress?

CHAPTER 5
THE FUNCTION OF DREAMS

There was a whole world here once, she said, but some of the smaller parts left on personal business & it's not that easy to find replacements – Brian Andreas

What is happening in a dream? In the last chapter we explored the various psychological theories that have evolved regarding the role of dreams in our lives. Jung and Perls in particular observed that dreams might have an ultimate plan in mind, a natural tendency towards establishing stability, re-owning alienated fragments of self and closure - the ultimate aim being *individuation* or self-actualization. The goal may sound plausible but whether and how dreams actually bring this about is not necessarily obvious. In this chapter I will explore evidence suggesting whether such a "purposeful function" (as Jung called it) exists within dreams and if so how might it work.

Do Dreams Have a Function?

Dreams have long been understood to be a valuable tool in psychotherapy for gaining insights or therapeutic benefit by working with the dream in relation to the dreamer's life in some manner. Does the dream itself, however, serve a function? If so, does the dream serve this function whether the dream is recalled or not?

Emotional Processing

Researchers understand dreams to reflect waking life emotional concerns and in turn dream emotion tends to affect waking life emotion or mood. Nofzinger considered a basic function of REM sleep to be the integration of higher order cortical functions (perception, action, sensory) with motivation and reward systems; while Maquet proposed that the function of may be the selective processing of emotionally relevant memories. (in Dang Vu, 2007). Milton Kramer (2011) performed a series of seven studies that demonstrated that the principal pre-sleep emotional concern of the dreamer influences the theme of the night's dreams.

Stress Reduction and Mood Control

Freud suggested that bad dreams let the brain learn to gain control over emotions resulting from distressing experiences. Donald Stewart and David Koulack state that a function of dreaming is the adaption to stress over time. This emotional regulation may result of: 1) emotional memories being re-activated in the amygdala to hippocampal network during REM and 2) the reaction of the amygdala being down-regulated due to a reduction in stress producing neurotransmitters in the forebrain (Els Van der Helm, 2011). This may be why we often experience going to sleep emotionally upset at something yet wake in the morning less concerned.

Milton Kramer (2011) theorizes that sleep and dreaming might either achieve or fail to accommodate what he calls the emotional surge across the REM period. For the most part he found the mean level and variability of mood to decrease across the night. Kramer (as did others) found that the emotionally intense experiences of the day are what appear in dreams and that the activities during sleep appear to be "corrective" like a

thermostat operating to move the mood level toward a central and lower point. The dream seems particularly involved with one aspect of mood, feeling "unhappy." He found that the effectiveness of a night's dreaming in reducing the intensity and variability of mood occurs in about 60 percent of nights. The effectiveness may be the result of the pattern of dreaming across the night. If there is an attempt to resolve the emotional problem (which he called a progressive-sequential dream pattern) there may be a positive change in the emotional state of the dreamer. If the emotional problem is simply restated and not solved (a repetitive-traumatic dream pattern) the mood change is less successful. Kramer suggests that is through the mechanism of "emotional problem-solving" or failure to "problem solve" that mood change takes place or fails to occur. In essence he found, "How you feel in the morning is related to how you feel in your dreams and what happens in them."

The concept of emotional regulation is pictured in the following dream example. The dreamer had an argument with his boss and co-workers that day that left him feeling horribly wronged. Getting angrier and angrier he planned to "tell them off" the next day. That night he dreamed: "*I dreamed I was in front of a crowd, about to give a speech, when I was introduced to a man named 'Willy Pissedoff.' I was trying to control myself to keep from laughing. I woke laughing and lost all desire to carry out my angry verbal attack.*" Luckily the dreams' ability to down-regulate the and accommodate emotion (even picturing it in a manner obvious to the waking *ego*) prevented what could have been a career limiting decision.

Fear Extinction

Nightmares typically imply nocturnal awakening whereas bad dreams are usually defined as negatively toned dreams that do not awaken the dreamer. Nielsen and Levin (2007) suggest that normal dreaming serves a fear extinction function and that nightmares reflect a failure in emotional regulation as influenced by the degree of emotional distress during the day, and the dreamer's reaction to it. Areas in the brain involved in fear response (amygdala, infralimbic and prelimbic medial pre-frontal cortex) are active in REM sleep. The infralimbic regions in particular are understood to be a site of plasticity and emotional learning that allows us to inhibit and extinguish fear responses. Van der Helm (2011) reported an increase in functional connectivity between the ventral medial prefrontal cortex with the amygdala in REM sleep, suggesting that dreams may be involved in emotion regulation and "extinction" of conditioned fear (Sotres-Bayon & Quirk, 2010). The basal ganglia, which is active in REM, is also considered by some as central to extinction learning (Quirk, 2000) and selecting which response to make or inhibit (Lieberman, 2000). Within the basal ganglia, the ventral striatum has been shown to activate areas of the prefrontal cortex, the orbitofrontal cortex and the central nucleus of the amygdala which are important the inhibitory control and extinction learning (Romaguera, 2012, Quirk 2000).

Emotional Problem Resolution

Robert Stickgold (2009) considers sleep as a time when the brain can search for and identify useful associations between recently formed emotional memories and older ones, helping to place them in a more useful context, from which their resolution may become more readily apparent. Milton Kraemer (in Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019) considers dreams to develop in two ways depending on the success or failure to contain the emotional surge: 1) "emotional problem solving" or *progressive–sequential* in which an emotional problem is stated figuratively, worked on, and resolved; and 2) "failure to problem solve" or *repetitive–traumatic* type in which the emotional problem is simply restated in different *elements* or metaphors and no progress toward resolution occurs – extending the assimilation process into waking life. Dreamers show both patterns in approximately the same frequency, 60 to 40%, which underscores that there is not universal success in dreams altering the residual emotional problems of the day. This could account for some of the variability in how a person feels on awakening in the morning.

The function of the *repetitive-traumatic* type dream is not totally clear, perhaps an attempt to contextualize the trauma (something I will describe as the *encounter* phase of a dream) or simply a reactive emotional response to something during the day that triggered the memory of the unresolved experience. Hartmann (2011) contended that severe trauma interferes with this emotional-guided metaphoric process - our dreams become "stuck" and repetitive, devoid of metaphor - we fail to integrate our memories, and we do not develop new playful metaphors or connections and loops of complexity in the cortex.

Kramer suggests that "the current emotional and cognitive concerns of an individual are processed by a problem-solving mechanism across the wake-sleep-wake continuum, and the resultant state is a determinant of performance the next morning – that dreams which enter awareness can become the object of attention for the dreamer and lead to change in the dreamer, to an enhancement of self-knowledge" (Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019). Ernest Hartmann (2011) also supports the role of a dream-to-waking continuum in the process - the act of remembering dreams in the morning and trying to understand the associated emotional conflicts.

Memory Processing

Ernest Hartmann (2011) suggests that the most basic function of dreaming consists of connecting new material with old material in memory systems, "guided by emotion." He does not consider this a "consolidation" of memories from the day, but rather a creative weaving in of new information, reorganizing existing memory systems based on what is emotionally important to us. As Erin Wamsley states, "sleep transforms memory traces over time, allowing us to extract generalizations, integrate information, and arrive at creative insights."

Emotionally Guided Interleaving

Ernest Hartmann (2011) stated that emotions act to influence what we store in memory, adding a salience to a memory, thus prioritizing what is subsequently consolidated into long term memory. Consolidating the theories and the findings of such researchers as Ernest Hartmann, Robert Stickgold & Matthew Walker (2013); Jessica Payne (2009), Josie Malinowski and Caroline Horton (2015), and Erin Wamsley (2016), the processing appears to go something like this: a) a memory "triage" process during sleep helps determine which waking events to remember and which to forget, selecting new information, in a discriminatory manner, to assimilate into the brain's evolving knowledge; b) dreams "illuminate" and incorporate these "reactivated" memories to enhance our memory systems – and not just any memory, sleep preferentially promotes lasting memory changes for emotional memories; c) these memories are not simply integrated in their original form, 'meaning' or the general theme or 'gist' is extracted from those memories (which is what actually "changes" your memory); d) emotion acts as a marker for which information is to be selectively processed and integrated into pre-existing memory networks; e) dreams then simultaneously reorganize, interleave, and reintegrate fragments of the recent event with past experiences and related material to prepare for the future; and f) the dream *elements* and activity, the picture-metaphors and bizarre imagery combinations, represent the connections and associations between this material.

Memory Re-Consolidation

Memory re-consolidation (from a psychological perspective) implies reactivating a memory, interleaving it with new information or a new perspective (changing it) and storing (consolidating) the result into long term memory. The interleaving and memory change process described above may be similar to that found in waking-state memory reconsolidation studies whenever permanent change is observed. A study by Karim Nader, Glenn Schafe, and Joseph LeDoux in 2000 concluded that even strongly consolidated memories (old learning) can be made unstable and readily open to change when we recall them. The synapses involved

deconsolidate; that is, the small spaces across which neurons communicate with each other chemically unlock. And they stay unlocked for about four to five hours. If a critical new learning experience takes place during that "reconsolidation window," the old learning can be permanently altered or replaced by the new learning.

In a review of animal and human studies from 2004 to 2009, Bruce Ecker (2012) observed three common elements in the process that brought about permanent change. He called this the ***Transformation Sequence***: (1) reactivate (recall and deconsolidate) an emotional memory and reaction to it (the original learning); (2) create a "mismatch schema," an experience contradictory to that original learning (similar to a *counterfactual* or Jung's *compensation*); (3) juxtapose the opposing views in a learning experience during the reconsolidation window (the interactive tension in Jung's terminology) such that 4) when the memory (or emotional response to the memory) reconsolidates it is altered by the new learning.

This process was apparent throughout the "*Rusty Car*" dream. The emotional memory triggered by the event was deconsolidated and pictured as, *"the old rusty car with the dead driver inside."* A mismatch schema was introduced as his unknown companion from behind says, *"he is just asleep."* The juxtaposition of opposing views in a learning experience occurs as the companion urges him to "*wake the man"* and they argue until after much discussion the dreamer gives in and shakes the man leading to the driver and the car coming back to life. The emotional reinforcement and net outcome of the dream suggests that a re-consolidation may have taken place that has incorporated new learning – since the dreamer accepted the position the next day without understanding how the dream related to the situation.

Developing an Inner Model of Self and Reality

Although presented in the pictorial language of the dream, the dream presents our inner perception of reality, who we see ourselves to be in our social relationship with others and our environment (our world view). As Carl Jung (CW vol. 8) stated it, dreams are "a spontaneous self-portrayal, in symbolic form, of the actual situation in the *unconscious*." William Domhoff also considered dream content to be a mental profile of the dreamer stating that "75 to 100 dreams from a person give us a very good psychological portrait of that individual." Hobson's (2009), in his proto-consciousness hypothesis, states that dreams provide a virtual reality model of the world in which content is synthesized and not merely a waking reproduction, dreaming being a predictor and developer, as well as a reflector, of waking consciousness. The quote by Robert Stickgold (2016) that I noted earlier says it all: "When you wake, you understand how the world works better than you did when you went to bed."

Learning

The memory processing discussion above describes a change in existing memory systems, a change in the inner model (or *mythic* structure) thus a learning process. A growing volume of research suggests that dream sleep might promote learning whether we recall or understand the dream or not.

Research Evidence

Two basic learning processes have been discovered to take place in sleep, for two types of memory: ***declarative*** (rehearsing events and learning facts, the what) and ***procedural*** (learning how to do something, strategic learning). ***Procedural*** learning can extend to advanced forms of creative problem resolution and adaptive learning that will be discussed further below. Most of the research work with sleep learning has been done with learning facts and skills – being less subjective and easier to measure.

Researcher Carlyle Smith (2010) indicates that some of the sporadic, spiky brainwaves in stage 2, known as sleep spindles, are due to innate learning ability, and *declarative* learning appears to involve stage 3 non-rapid eye movement (NREM) sleep – whereas learning procedural tasks, whether motor or cognitive, involves either REM sleep or stage 2 NREM. Tasks that are completely new or novel and require a new cognitive strategy appear to involve REM sleep – where remembered dream content is often related to the material being learned.

Research by Stickgold and Walker indicated that subjects that practiced a task in the evening and were retested after a good night's sleep, were 15% to 20% faster and 30% to 40% more accurate than those simply tested twelve hours after learning the task without the intervention of sleep (Gorman, 2004).

In a 2001 study, Matthew Wilson at MIT (Louie & Wilson, 2001) used microprobes to monitor individual neurons in the brains of rats. Among these were "place cells" in the hippocampus, which fire, or pulse electrically, as a rat navigates its environment. Wilson observed the unique firing patterns of individual neural place cells as the rats traversed each part of a maze to find a food reward. When the rats slept, these same patterns appeared again, as if the brain was replaying the maze pattern and relearning it. Likewise, the firing patterns in the visual cortex of the rats were replayed, suggestive of visual dream activity during the process. The results suggest that the rats were rehearsing and consolidating some degree of learning about the maze in their sleep.

The same has been found in humans. In 2008 Hagar Gelbard-Sagiv and her colleagues at the Weizmann Institute worked with a patient who had had similar probes inserted as part of a brain surgery procedure. As the patient viewed a sequence of images presented in story form, Gelbard-Sagiv noted the sequence in which neurons fired. As the patient slept later on, the same neurons fired in the same sequence.

In 2004, Philippe Peigneux and his team at the University of Liège used functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to look at the brain activity of humans as they worked through a virtual maze. The fMRI showed that the hippocampal areas activated during the maze experience were likewise activated later, during slow-wave (stage 3) sleep. And the amount of the hippocampal activity positively correlated with the improvement of performance the next day.

The Role of the Dream Itself

Is the dream simply a reflection of a mental process taking place in the brain, or might the dream itself play a role in the learning process? Montague Ullman (1959) also stated that dreams have a "remarkable capacity to integrate past experiential data with current life situations in a manner that discloses more significant information pertaining to current conflicts than is available to the individual at any given moment in the waking state." In 1977 Harry Fiss discovered that when students dreamed of a short story, they remembered it better the following morning. In 2000, M. J. Fosse found that dreams interleave fragments of recent waking episodes with past experiences and other content. In 2010 Erin Wamsley and her colleagues at Furman University asked study volunteers to do a virtual-reality maze task and then sleep, after which the team tested these individuals again. Those who dreamed about the maze task improved their memory ten times more than those who did not dream about it! Wamsley observed content from the maze in all stages of sleep – onset, NREM, and REM – with no statistical differences between REM and NREM.

Ernest Hartmann considered dreams to be a hyper-connected process (creating new connections more broadly than in waking life) which allowing us to arrive at new insights. One of the features often observed in dreams is **surprise** at the moment of connection and new insight. Pavlovian learning researchers Rescorla and Wagner (1972) determined that learning occurs when what happens in the trial does not match expectation – that if you are surprised by an event that you don't expect, you will learn.

A Learning Continuum

Dreaming across the night exhibits some theme continuity, for example, dreams sampled from different stages and across a single night may all carry an overarching theme related to waking concerns, even if the perceptual or emotional quality and specific details of the dream report change. Furthermore, this continuum appears to be continuous with waking life learning. Michael Schredl (2005) cites two studies that show dreams of the second part of the night comprise more elements of the distant past, while dreams of the first part of the night mostly incorporate recent daytime experiences. Rosalind Cartwright, in a 1977 study, collected dreams from participants and patients throughout the night. She noted, "First dreams appear to be related rather directly to present anxieties, the following dreams to emotionally associated experiences and the final ones to contemplated solutions." Roussy et al. (1998) also found REM dreams across the night to weave fragments of recent events with past events. As noted in Chapter 1, a very detailed study by Verdone (1965) *Temporal Reference of Manifest Dream Content,* comparing dream reports from various stages of each subject's dreams with episodes in their lives, found dreams to evolve over the night, relating more with prior day events during the first REM cycles and gradually including events from recent months then the dreamers more distant past toward the end of the night. Matt Wilson (Louie & Wilson, 2001) in his microprobe studies with mice observed that the learning process in various stages of sleep may be progressive – observing the maze to replayed in NREM but in REM the image fragments from the recent maze appeared to be are combined with fragments from prior maze configurations from past tests. (Matt Wilson discussion during presentation at the 30th IASD International Conference, Virginia Beach, Virginia, 22 June 2013)

Can we Observe Learning within a Dream?

Apparent learning within a dream is suggested in what I call the "*Ice Cave*" dream. This was a dream that I had which came at a major turning point in my life. While teaching and keeping my dream studies life active, my "day job" was in the scientific community where I eventually became a corporate vice president in a couple of large global companies. At one point the first company went through a complete restructuring. As frustrating as it was, I felt I could not walk out the door because I feared starting over and losing a retirement package – so I only considered positions open to me in the company. Although none fit my career goals, I was so stuck in this frame of mind that when a search firm offered me great opportunity outside, I turned it down. I then had the following dream that changed my perspective and behavior – without my understanding it or the relationship to my situation at the time.

"I dreamed all night that I am on a long journey as a passenger in an enclosed boat with no control, at the mercy of the water, just aimlessly moving through a black underground tunnel or cave. I am constantly trying to work around the people gathered in a few square windows that are standing in my way, searching for a position in the windows that will show me a way out. Suddenly an unseen but authoritative 'travel guide' behind me says: 'you Can walk out the door'. I see no door and argue with the voice that I do not understand. Suddenly an open door appears at the front of the boat. I still don't understand, but reluctantly I walk out the door. As I do, the boat emerges from the dark ice cave onto a crystal stream in a beautiful, sunlit, colorful land with trees, mountains and music in the air. The boat lands on a large black rock - it rings like a bell, the sound penetrating my soul." I woke with a completely renewed and relaxed attitude. Although nothing had changed in my waking life, I no longer felt the need to stay and put up with what my work situation had become. Amazingly (synchronistic?) that morning the search firm called back and this time, after completing some obligations, I accepted the position without hesitation and literally "walked out the door." I did not understand or work on the dream until months later – the change in mood and perspective seem to have occurred within the dream and carried trough to my waking life. Interestingly the ending was also an accurate projection, the result so beneficial that I was able to retire early and shift my career focus full time to dream studies.

Figure 5-2 The "Ice Cave" Dream
The Ice Cave dream at the moment of emergence and emotional reinforcement.

How Do We Learn in Dreams?

The example above as well as the memory processing and re-consolidation discussions, suggest the mechanisms available in dream sleep for a learning process to taking place. The psychological theories in Chapter 4 also proposed processes suggestive of various forms of learning. Jung's *transcendent function* and *compensation* process suggested a means for learning (not unlike memory re-consolidation) which promotes restoration, problem resolution as well as personality growth. Feinstein & Krippner described how dreams learn to transform our inner model or *mythic* structure through sustaining the *old myth*, strengthening a *counter-myth* or developing a higher order synthesis of the two - a *new-myth.* In Chapter 3 we learned that many of the active centers in the dreaming brain (particularly in the REM state) are involved in problem detection, analogical processing, decision-making and learning (based on waking state studies). There is a common thread among all of these theories but if the dreaming brain is actually capable of supporting a creative learning process it must as a minimum be able to: a) detect a problem or conflict; b) plan possible solution scenarios; c) test these solutions, perhaps guide and monitor the outcome; and d) reinforce and store (re-consolidate) the result in long term memory. So, based on this criterion, let's take a look at some of the theories and observations related to learning and how the dreaming brain might support them.

a) Problem Detection:

Dreams are observed to detect unresolved problems, anomalies or norm violations (as McNamara calls them) of an emotionally impactful nature. The memory processing research discussed above suggests that dreams selectively reactivate and "illuminate" emotionally important memories and extract the general theme, 'gist' or 'meaning' - emotion acting as a marker for which information is to be selectively processed and integrated into pre-existing memory networks. In re-consolidation research this is known as "deconsolidating a memory" and leaving the neural connections labile or subject to change. Carl Jung stated it as presenting "the unconscious aspect of a conscious event, in an emotionally charged picture language." Feinstein & Krippner also observed that in dreams we encounter our existing viewpoint or belief, which

they called the *existing myth*. As Ernest Hartmann states it, dreaming "illuminates the patterns in the dreamer's memory related to the emotional concern and contextualizes it, i.e. depicts the event and its connections in a form that can be fully understood and assessed.

In the *"Ice Cave"* dream above we observed emotional problem detection, and "illumination" in the form of *picture-metaphor* – the depressed feeling of being totally at the mercy of others, out of control, only looking for a "position" within the company pictured as being, "*a passenger in an enclosed boat with no control, at the mercy of the water, aimlessly moving through a black tunnel trying to look for a position in the windows that will show me a way out."*

We also observed it in a number of other previous dream examples. In the "*Rusty Car*" dream, the dreamer's lack of motivation due to a view that his talents were too old to be resurrected appeared as a "rusty" car with a "dead driver" inside. In the *"Jokester"* dream, the dreamer's concern over how he had acted (joked around with friends) the day before was pictured as: *"I dreamed I was bothered by a young jokester character. I tried to make him to go away."* The *"Father's Face"* dream began by picturing the dreamer's marital conflict: *"I have a recurrent dream of being terribly angry with my husband, who I am always running away from."* In the *"Mother Pushing on My Stomach"* dream, the dreamer's resistance to the pressure from family and her mother to have children now (versus following a career) was pictured as: *"I am pregnant and in labor and everyone is expecting me to have a baby. My mother is pushing on my stomach but it's not doing any good."*

Various centers in the brain are active in REM sleep that might provide this capability. Activity in the limbic regions provide access to emotional memories. The anterior cingulate is known as part of a general performance monitoring system that detects conditions under which errors in reasoning have occurred or might occur (Carter 1998) and goes into action when there is a violation in expectancy (Oliveira 2007). The basal ganglia also alert us that something is not right such as an anomaly or novel, adverse unexpected situation and initiates action (Falkenstein, et al., 2001, Packard and Knowlton, 2002).

Once detected, the associative cortex (occipital–temporal-parietal areas) then integrate and present the information from various centers as *picture metaphor* – a picture of the "meaning" or "gist" that is extracted from these emotional memories. As Hartmann stated, dream images picture the emotional state of the dreamer. As Jung put it "dreams picture the unconscious aspect of the conscious event where it appears not as a rational thought but as a symbolic image - an emotionally charged pictorial language."

b) Plan Generation (Scenario Introduction)

Many researchers consider dreams to be adaptive in that they simulate, rehearse and test various scenarios to better prepare us for waking life – for example Levin (2009) asserts that dreaming generates strategies for actively checking on and thus responding to potential dangers, including those emanating from internal psychological conflicts. McNamara (2002) considered dreams to be a more cognitively creative process than simply matching memories. He observed a cognitive operation in dreams that identifies "norm violations" (unresolved perception or conflict) then integrates the conflicted information into memory by generating *counterfactuals* to the violation (a "what-if" scenarios or mental simulation of what might happen if a different decision were made). McNamara (2002) observed *counterfactuals* in 97% of dreams studied in a 34-subject study. Feinstein & Krippner called it a *counter-myth*. Carl Jung used the term *compensation* to describe these scenarios which opposes, balances or complements the existing, and often misconceived, view of the *ego*. He saw this as a necessary element of a *transcendent function* in dreams which enables transition from one mental state to another. The concepts of *counterfactual, compensation* or *counter-myth* all amount to what Ecker (in his re-consolidation theory) called a "mismatch schema" or experience contradictory to the original belief or learning.

In the "*Ice Cave*" dream the *counterfactual* or *compensating* scenario "you CAN walk out the door" was introduced in response to the norm violation. "I have no control but can't walk out the door, it is too fearful and risky." In the "*Rusty Car*" dream, the urging of the unknown companion: *"the driver is just asleep – wake the man," compensated* for the norm violation, "my talents are rusty and my motivation dead," In the *"Jokester"* dream, the shadowy but authoritative figure from the left argued that the dreamer should accept the jokester. The *counterfactual* in the *"Father's Face"* dream was the surprising and impactful image of the father's face on her husband's body – illustrating how she had projected unresolved "father issues" onto her husband. In the *"Mother Pushing on My Stomach"* dream the opposing schema to placing the decision in her mother's hands was the authoritative voice of the doctor that stated: *"you have the choice to have a baby or not; you are the one who has to decide."* In all cases the dream (the *unconscious* mind) appears to creatively develop and present a resolution scenario not previously considered or accepted by the waking ego.

Any of a number of REM active centers might support such a plan generation capability, based on choosing between conflicting perceptions and reward-based goals. In waking state studies, the anterior cingulate is known to play a problem-resolution role which includes: receiving a stimulus or imagining or observing an activity; selecting an appropriate response or resolution scenario; generating performance expectations; providing cues to other areas of the brain to choose between conflicting perceptions (Allman, et al., 2001); monitoring and observing the outcome and consequences (Apps 2012; Hayden 2009, Oliveira 2007); then mediating action and adapting behavior if the outcome is not as expected (Luu 2004). It does this in conjunction with the basal ganglia which is thought to be the brain locus for reward-based planning and learning (Yamada 2007) particularly decisions related to novel, unexpected situations (Balleine 2007). The medial prefrontal cortex is also involved in: plan generation (Partiot 1995); goal directed behavior and reward processing (Vertes 2002); and self-referential behavioral stimulation and rehearsal (Partiot, et al.,1995; Gusnard, 2001). The caudal and ventromedial orbitofrontal cortex is found to be involved in novelty-related decision making, establishing expectation (Kringelbach and Rolls, 2005) and regulating planning behavior (Bechara, 1994) based on reward and punishment.

c) Scenario Testing, Monitoring, Influencing

Richard Coutts (2008) proposed that dreams improve our ability to meet waking needs by testing dream scenarios in a cognitive decision-making process, adopting or rejecting them depending on their outcome; those that appear adaptive are retained, while those that appear maladaptive are discarded. Levin (2009) further asserts that it is not until certain actions are taken and new information discovered (confirmed or disconfirmed) that the final phase of learning occurs in the form of adaptive adjustments in the self. Alfred Adler suggested that dreams use an "inner logic" driven by dream emotion that either reinforces or inhibits a contemplated action. Ecker referred to this as juxtaposing the new schema in opposition to the old belief, in a learning experience during the reconsolidation window. Feinstein & Krippner considered this a process of juxtaposing *myth* and *counter myth* aimed at either: sustaining the *existing myth*; strengthening (and maybe testing) the *counter-myth* or integrating conflicting myths into a higher order synthesis or *new myth* that brings about a new way of perceiving the situation. This is not unlike Jung who stated that the *transcendent function* holds the opposing (*conscious* vs. *unconscious*) material or views in interactive tension until the emergence of third integrated element or solution emerges resulting in a new attitude.

In the *"Father's Face"* and *"Mother Pushing on my Stomach"* dreams the scenario testing does not proceed within the dream – rather the impactful message or insight appears to be left to the waking self to reflect on and incorporate (the dream-to-waking learning continuum). We can observe the testing process however within the "*Ice Cave*" dream as the *dream-self* argues, the dream mediates by producing a visible door, and the dream-self eventually walks out the door. In the "*Rusty Car*" dream, the scenario is tested as the shadowy

companion urges the dream-self to *"wake the man"* and, after some resistance, the *dream-self* eventually "tests" the scenario by doing just that. In the *"Jokester"* dream, after some resistance and argument the dreamer agrees to accept the jokester figure on a trial basis. In these three cases there appears to be the interactive tension (argument) taking place but an eventual emergence of an *conscious/unconscious* integrated solution (as Jung spoke of) or higher order synthesis of the *old-myth* and *counter-myth* that Feinstein & Krippner noted.

Scenario simulation, testing and monitoring might be supported by REM active centers in the brain that are known to monitor progress of a plan against expectation and guiding/changing behavior to influence the outcome. The anterior cingulate generates expectations, monitoring the consequences of an action by observing the outcome and selects an appropriate response by placing a reward value on anticipated outcomes. (Apps, et al., 2012; Carter, 1998; Hayden 2009; Bush, et al., 2002). The medial prefrontal cortex is thought to be involved in introspective self-referential behavioral stimulation and rehearsal (Gusnard, 2001). The Insula provides insight as well as emotionally influenced decision making scenarios that guide or bias behavior (Craig, 2009). The basal ganglia learn to select actions that maximize reward, but motivates us to seek eventual rather than immediate reward (Packard and Knowlton, 2002) and selecting which response to make or inhibit. (Lieberman, 2000). The medial pre-frontal cortex is thought to provide a 'sense of knowing' and retrospective confidence judgment (Marley, 2009) and as such may give the guiding forces observed in our dreams a sense of authority and wisdom.

d) Outcome Reinforcement

Finally, when the dream scenario has led to an expected outcome, the dream appears to emotionally reinforce either the scenario in progress or the outcome (particularly when the *dream ego* has accepted the guiding cues and followed the successful scenario). At that point, Carl Jung observed that when the intended *transcendence* from one state to another occurs, it is often accompanied by renewal or *rebirth* imagery accompanied by joy and often music and a heightened intensity of color and light. Researcher Nigel Hamilton also observed this in dreams at moments of what he called psycho-spiritual transformation, as noted previously.

This phenomenon might be a motivation for the dream-*ego* to accept and follow a particular dream scenario or perhaps an important part of storing a successful scenario into memory. It may be part of the emotionally directed learning process discussed above where emotion acts as a marker for which information is to be selectively processed and integrated into pre-existing memory networks. As Hartmann (2011) stated, emotions act to influence what we store in memory, adding a salience to a memory, thus prioritizing what is then consolidated into long term memory, "organizing memory based on what is emotionally important." The intense emotional reinforcement at the successful conclusion could be the moment when that result is rewarded and stored, when the memory (old learning) is altered and re-consolidated with the new learning.

Emotional reinforcement is obvious in the *"Ice Cave"* dream as the dream-self follows the guidance and walks out the door – *the boat emerges from the dark ice cave onto a crystal stream in a beautiful, sunlit, colorful land with trees, mountains and music in the air."* It is also observed in the *"Rusty Car"* dream as the *dream-self* follows the proposed scenario and guidance of the shadowy companion and *"shakes the man"* the scene immediately and surprisingly changes to one of reward as *"the man comes alive and the car transforms into a new car."* In the *"Jokester"* dream, once the dream-*ego* agrees to follow the scenario and accepts the jokester (even on a trial basis) the jokester walks off the right down a sunlit path.

Researchers Perogamvros and Schwartz (2012) in their paper "The roles of the reward system in sleep and dreaming," present what they call their 'Reward Activation Model' (RAM) of sleep and dreams. They report that emotional reward circuits are activated during sleep, which prioritize the processing of

information that has high emotional or motivational relevance, and which generates motivational content in the dream. They integrate neurophysiological, neuroimaging, and clinical findings that point to significant activation of the mesolimbic dopaminergic (ML-DA) reward system during both NREM (N2) and REM sleep. In REM, theta activity and dopamine activity within the ventral tegmental area is elevated. This is significant because this is precisely what occurs in the waking brain when it is processing stimuli that is surprising or of special significance – a moment of learning.

A number of other REM active centers may be involved as well. The anterior cingulate is observed to select a scenario by placing a reward value on the anticipated outcome. The dorsal anterior cingulate also plays a role in reward-based decision-making and expectation and regulating planning behavior based on reward and punishment (Bush, 2002). The medial PFC and ventral medial orbitofrontal cortex are also involved in goal directed behaviors, reward processing. expectation, reward and punishment. (Kringlebach and Rolls, 2005; Phan, et al., 2002; Bechara, 1994).

Do Dreams Have a "Purposeful" Structure?

If learning dreams contain some or all of the processes listed above, do dreams or a series of dreams actually structure themselves in this way? Our dreams at first glance seem to be relatively disorganized or approach a situation in a hyperconnected or wholistic manner, however, as the *"Ice Cave"* dream as well as the various other examples herein illustrates, many can or do organize themselves in a more linear story-like fashion – either in a series of dreams or dream sequences, or in a single concluding dream. As noted in Chapter 4, Carl Jung proposed that dreams had a "purposeful structure" he described in four parts: *exposition, development, culmination* and *lysis.* So. if Jung's observations are correct then then how might the stages in the learning process discussed above fit within such a structure? Substituting the learning terminology above a relationship can be seen between the learning sequence and Jung's observed structure:

1) *Encounter:* "Exposition - the opening scene" (Jung). Here the dream introduces the dreamer's emotional situation (the "*unconscious* aspect of the *conscious* event") as a *picture metaphor*. The *dream-self* at this point also encounters the other contributing aspects, alienated fragments of self, such as *Shadow* material, fragments of associated memories and past experiences. This may be presented along with *archetypal* imagery that relates to the state of the *psyche* or *individuation* process such as themes of departure, journey, going within, going under or into darkness, sunset and death motifs.

2) *Scenario Introduction:* "Development - the emergence of the plot" (Jung). The dream may plan and introduce a resolution scenario, guidance, an alternative scenario or perspective, *counterfactual* or *counter-myth* - one which balances or *compensates* ego misconceptions. The *compensation* might be introduced as a moment of surprise, guidance, discovery, a surprising imagery combination or an unexpected twist. It may be accompanied by *archetypal* figures aimed at guiding the dreamer toward the scenario creatively developed within the *unconscious*. Sometimes the dream ends here, with impactful *compensating* insight that carries the learning over into waking reflection.

3) *Testing & Mediation*: "Culmination - Something significant occurs, and the main dream figure responds" (Jung). Once the dream introduces resolution scenario, it generally tests the scenario, observes the outcome, may mediate the progress by changing the conditions or further guiding the dreamer toward an expected outcome. This phase usually makes up the majority of the dream story and the multiple dream segments that follow – each of which is surfacing and testing the resolution scenario against other contributing aspects of the situation that must be being dealt with. It may take on the nature of a search or journey or frustrating problem to be resolved. It may be accompanied by what Jung called "symbols of the *Self"* (which include *archetypal* figures, nature imagery representing instinctive forces, as well as

the geometries and numbers representative of *integration* and *wholeness*), in order to guide and focus the *ego* and dream plot toward the ultimate resolution (see Chapter 7).

4) Outcome Reinforcement: "Lysis: The result or solution of the dream's action" (Jung). The outcome is observed and the scenario or actions of the *dream-self* accepted (positively reinforced) or discarded (negatively reinforced or inconclusively ended). The dream may: a) end without resolution and begin another attempt (next dream sequence); or b) positively or negatively reinforce a dream plot depending on the direction it and the dream-self is taking; or c) if the *dream-ego* reverses course and accepts the guidance such that resolution is achieved within the dream story, the dream generally positively reinforces that learning with a rewarding dream ending. Such reinforcement is often accompanied by *archetypal* motifs of emergence, growth, *rebirth*, nature scenes, as well as music, bright color and light (see Chapter 7).

Five Functional Categories

A number of problem-resolution, mood control and learning functions of dreaming have been postulated, some supported by research studies and others proposed by psychologists and researchers to theoretically explain their observations. Here I have attempted to consolidate the many theories into five categories for simplicity sake.

Learning Facts and Skills

As noted above, research has shown that in sleep and dreams two types of learning take place: **declarative** (learning facts and kills) and **procedural** (learning a more universal process for how to do something). Much of the declarative learning of facts and skills appears to take place in the NREM cycles of sleep while procedural learning or weaving the new facts and skills into existing memory to create or enhance a process. The *encounter* may deconsolidate and replay parts of the actual waking episode that is being rehearsed (the fact or skill being practiced) much like the replay in the neurons of the mice in McNamara's research. A creative *scenario* may take place in the dream plot in the REM state as the recent facts are creatively woven into like past learning to update procedures with a focus on generalizing the learning in to a process that can be applied in future situations.

Creative Problem-Solving

As discussed in Section 2, there are a number of regions in the brain that are active in REM sleep, which might support a robust creative and analytical problem-solving capability: an "active imagining" as David Foulkes called it; or as Deirdre Barrett describes it (2001), "thinking in a different biochemical state" She and problem solving, particularly if the problem involves visualization or "thinking outside the box."

Although the creative, wholistic, abstract nature of dreaming has been responsible for many creations in literature, music and all forms of art, some of that is the dreamer using inspiration and form of the imagery and experiences to inspire their creations in the waking state. A great deal of the creations and inventions, however, appear to be in response to an emotionally important unresolved problem (unfinished business) that the dreamer was working on prior to sleeping on it. *The Committee of Sleep* (Barrett, 2001) describes a multitude of these that not only changed the life of the dreamer but changed the lives of many by virtue of their creative invention.

Robert Stickgold (2009), who considers dreams to be the enablers of "the most sophisticated human cognitive functions," contends that dreams seem to be more about what the brain calculates as most

important, even an unexpected but very emotional event that occurred shortly before you went to sleep. He states that dreams help us find new patterns and create combinations which break through well-worn ruts - dreams are where "we bring things together in fresh, often startling ways, drawing on stores of knowledge from the past, the present, the possible future, in order to find new associations."

This ability to make creative new connections at a moment of surprise and insight, is illustrated in the dream of Elias Howe who was trying to solve the mechanics of the sewing machine needle. His *encounter* with the problem was pictured as being chased and threatened with spears. The solution was revealed in the image of the spears, which were shaped like sewing needles, but the hole in the pointed end.

The ability to creatively connect previously diverse perceptions was illustrated in the *"Father's Face"* dream discussed earlier. Here the dream creatively "pictured" a connection between husband and father, revealed the source of conflict with her husband being the unresolved business with her father: "*I have a recurrent dream of being terribly angry with my husband, who I am always running away from. These dreams continued until one night I turned around and faced my husband and looked at his face… it was my father's face!"* This moment of surprise led to new insight which reversed her previous misconception that it was all husband issues.

Psychological Restoration

Carl Jung stated that the general function of a dream is to restore our psychological balance by producing dream material that re-establishes the psychic equilibrium (Jung, 1964). He considered the totality of the human mind, the *psyche*, to be a self-regulating system, not unlike the body, one that self-heals or seeks to maintain a balance. Fritz Perls also understood dreams to be seeking integration, *wholeness* and closure (a "Gestalt") stating dreams or dreamwork to be "the royal road to integration." Restorative dreams can take on many forms depending on the nature of the situation but often introduce a *counterfactual* or *compensating* scenario to offset a misconception.

Figure 5-3 **The "Evil Entity" Dream**

- ***Bringing Our Awareness Back to Reality:*** Jung stated that dreams act to restore balance by recognizing our *ego* misconceptions and *compensating* for deficiencies in our personality to bring our awareness back to reality - warning of the dangers of our present course. This is the negative reinforcement discussed earlier and illustrated in the "*Evil Entity"* dream. As you might recall the dreamer had a fundamentalist upbringing and a view of her natural instinctive urges as sinful (an evil entity within), thus adopted an unhealthy practice of suppressing those thoughts by going through a prayer ritual every time she had one. In her dream she was trying to exorcise an evil entity by going through her ritual. But instead of the entity disappearing the sky became surprisingly darker and stormier the more she tried (the dream introduced a *compensating* view). Finally, when she would not stop, a loud voice jolted her awake as it boomed: *"Stop — you are only making it worse."*

- ***Emotional Release and Mood Control*** The ability for dreams to restore our mental balance by calming our emotions was illustrated in the "*Willy Pissedoff*" dream above. Ernest Hartmann observed that in the case of trauma related nightmares, dreams also play a role in emotional dampening and release. "The process seems to consist of cross-connecting or interweaving—making connections with whatever related material is available in memory and imagination, guided by the dominant emotions of the dreamer, which gradually become less intense and change their character as the trauma is resolved or integrated" (Hartmann, 1996). This is illustrated in the following example of a series of nightmares which became more intense until they forced a healthy release of emotion, at which point the nightmare ceased. The dreamer had gone through the emotional trauma of her father's death, and because her family was unable to cope with the tragedy, she found herself managing all of the funeral arrangements and matters associated with the estate. As a result she had not given herself a chance to grieve his death. Then she began to have a series of "*Father's Death*" dreams about his death that became nightmares. *"In my first dream I saw my father at a distance walking off into the mist. But then the dreams became nightmarish. In my next two dreams my father began to turn more and more into a skeleton and was beckoning to me from afar. In the fourth dream my father, now a skeleton, appeared at a birthday party for a little girl. He pulled at her and screamed at me, trying to take both of us. At that point I woke and cried for days. In the next dream that followed my father was no longer a skeleton but was as he was in life, very pleasant."*

- ***Maintenance of the Self*** Jung spoke of dreams as maintaining a sense of self – a sense of who we truly are not only as an *ego* personality but the totality of who we are and who we can become. Jung was not alone in his thinking. Michel Jouvet (1998) indicated that dreams maintain a sense of self by "reprogramming cortical networks to maintain psychological individuality despite adverse waking experiences". Ernest Hartmann (2011) stated that emotions guide the integration of new material into established memory to establish our "emotional being - our basic sense of self". Such maintenance of the self or restoral imagery was illustrated in the dream of a woman in her 60s who began to see herself as old, unable to recover the abilities and talents that she once had and considering herself as "no longer the person she once was". This "*Restoring Self*" dream appears to re-integrate the fragmented parts and re-establish a greater sense of the whole self*: "I entered a stone castle. As I went down the stairs, I saw on my left a large stone archway and a room beyond. On the left side of this room was a young woman. As the sunlight streamed in she came forward, and I saw that she was me. She walked toward me and we blended into one person."*

Adaptive Learning

Adaptive dreams are those with the aim of problem solving and, in the process, learning how to better deal with adverse life situations, physical and emotional threats as well as conflicted or impactful social situations.

There is a lot of support among researchers suggesting an adaptive function for dreams. Antti Revonsuo's *Threat Simulation Theory* (2000) states that dreams simulate threatening events and rehearse avoidance responses in the safe virtual environment of the dream – all to better prepare us for dealing with waking life. More recently Revonsuo, Jarno Tuominen, and Katja Valli (2016) have suggested dreams also simulate social situations. Fred Levin (2009) also considers dreams to be "adaptive learning engines" that help us identify unconscious threats and develop action plans to deal with them. Wamsley (2016) suggested that and dreams reorganize, interleave, and reintegrate fragments of the present event with past experiences and other content to create scenarios that prepare for the future. Stewart and Koulack (1993) suggested that dreams help us adapt to stressful waking events by activating habitual defense mechanisms matching the stress situation with earlier solutions to a similar problem, thus creating scenarios intended to integrate the two. Hartmann (2011) suggests that the emotion-guided making of new connections provides an adaptive function of weaving in or combining new material with what is already present in memory stores - emotion guiding both the dream imagery and the organization of memory based on what is important to us. Richard Coutts (2008) proposed that dreams improve our ability to meet waking needs by testing waking concerns in dream scenarios (a decision-making process), adapting or rejecting them depending on their outcome.

Adaptive learning dream might begin with an **encounter** that pictures the waking-life problem or threat, then **introduce a scenario** that provides alternative solutions in a dream plot, one that *compensates* or corrects for the viewpoint of the *ego* that no longer works. The scenario may then be **tested and mediated**, taking the dreamer through that scenario with the aim of demonstrating or experiencing a solution that better adapts to the waking life situation. Finally, the dream may **emotionally reinforce** a proposed scenario, the action of the *dream-self* or a successful outcome.

This process was illustrated in the *"Ice Cave"* and *"Rusty Car"* dreams where a waking life emotional problem and conflict was be resolved with the introduction of a clear resolution scenario by dream figures of *unconscious* origin who spoke to the *dream-self* with statements that had an almost literal or metaphorically clear relationship to both the dream story and the waking life story. In both cases as the *dream-self* eventually accepted and acted on the guidance they were rewarded with a positive emotionally impactful ending.

This process of presenting and rewarding a scenario by illustration, without the actions of the *dream-self*, occurred in the following *"Clever Dog"* dream. The dreamer was dealing with a conflict involving male aggressiveness and how to act in a social environment in a way that would not always result in getting hurt and rejected. Whenever he was bullied his reaction was to "fight," getting angry and attacking those who were teasing him which only brought on more teasing. He had a dream which demonstrated an alternative approach which he might use to adapt to the situation. *"Two unknown men were trying to convince us to let them kill a dog they considered aggressive and threatening* [encounter]*. The dog suddenly decided to roll over and play dead in order to spare its life* [alternative scenario or *counterfactual*] *At that point the dog turned into a cute puppy, and the men stopped, convinced that the dog was no longer a threat* [testing the scenario]. *The scene was suddenly illuminated by a street lamp overhead"* [reinforcement and learning (light at moment of connection)]. The adaptive resolution being to go along rather than reacting with a counter-attack ("roll over and play dead").

Transformation

Transformative or *transcendent* dreams are also adaptive but tend to focus on a goal that goes beyond dealing with an immediate problem or threatening situation, to that of personality growth and evolution. Such dreams may take the form of a lengthy series of learning dreams over some period of time or even a lifetime. "a meandering pattern in dreams in which individual strands or tendencies become visible then vanish then return again" - a slow imperceptible process of psychic growth, as Marie-Louise von Franz put

it (Jung, 1964). Jung called it a process of *individuation* in which gradually a wider and more mature personality emerges. Sometimes, however, the learning culminates in a single life changing dream or "big dream". The book *Dreams that Change Our Lives* (Hoss et al. 2017) contains roughly 100 dreams that the dreamers claimed changed their lives in a single dream. A few of those examples are included in the *prodromal* cancer dreams, the healing dreams, visionary dreams and precognitive dreams in Chapter 2 and transformative dreams in Chapter 7.

According to Jung, *transcendent* dreams (as do other learning dreams) depend on the *transcendent function* and the principle of *compensation*; the action of the *unconscious* alter the inner model *(existing myth)* that the *ego* strongly identifies with. As the eventual integration of *conscious* and *unconscious* material (*old-myth* and *counter-myth*) is achieved a new higher order synthesis or new self (*new myth*) emerges. This is evidenced by a somewhat resilient change in personality, perspective, attitude and behavior – a further step in the *individuation* process.

These dreams tend to contain a great deal of *archetypal* imagery as the inner *Self* makes itself known and asserts an organizing force with an aim at *integration* and *wholeness*. The structure is not unlike that of an adaptive dream but one aimed more at personality change and a different attitude and view of self and life which goes beyond simply adapting to the immediate situation. As with other problem-solving dreams the **encounter** may picture our conflicted waking-life situation but with a focus on a core conflict, a completely defeated ego, trauma or dysfunctional belief that has gone unresolved most of your life. The *scenario introduction* would attempt to correct the dysfunctional view by **introducing a scenario** (dream plot) that would not only address the immediate conflict but also the deeper imbalance or condition within the *unconscious* or *psyche* in relation to becoming a *whole* and *individuated* person. The **testing and mediation** would be focused on *integrating conscious* and *unconscious* material. The imagery might contain a strong presence of guiding *archetypal* figures and patterns of integration, *wholeness*, *individuation* and *transcendence* (see Chapter 7). If successful the **reinforcement** imagery can be dramatically beautiful, colorful and bright, often nature imagery suggesting growth, renewal and *rebirth* and a sense of closure.

Whereas the "*Ice Cave*" dream focused on how best to adapt to a conflicted work situation, it was also a *transcendent* dream in that it addressed core long standing issues related to acceptance of my true inner value, reliance on self instead of those in authority and dealing with fear. The dream plot pictured and dealt with all of these issues – taking me from a fearful passenger with no control at the mercy of the elements – to a person in control, walking through the door to the front of the boat embracing the unknown but exciting new situation.

The **encounter** can also involve release of suppressed *Shadow* material – necessary to bring about an eventual *transcendence*. When something is suppressed over long periods of time, the energy build-up can result in explosive releases which appear in our dreams as explosive imagery. In this dream it was the anger toward the woman's husband whose action and attitude prevented her from pursuing her art: *"The woman threw a large pillar of stone into my painting, and the cloth of the painting flew up around the base of the pillar exploding in bright red and black."*

Encounter with our *Shadow* side followed by the *compensating* action of the dream and eventual *rebirth* is pictured in the following "*Crushed*" dream illustrated in figure 5-4 (Hoss & Gongloff, 2017). The young woman had just been fired from a job that was important to her career. This was the second time in a row. A once proud person old *Shadow* material began to surface and she now felt, "I have no future, it is all over for good." At that point she dreamed: *"A building falls on me and I am crushed under the rubble. All goes dark, and I stop breathing. I know I am dead, and it is all over, there is no future. Then I become another person in the dream who is strong and determined and digs my body out of the rubble. Suddenly, I come back to life and realize that I can go on."* Here was a literal *death of the ego* motif. As the dream juxtaposition of her "dead" self (*existing myth*), with the strong and *whole* inner *Self* (*counter-myth*) the

dreamer emerged as a new and stronger person than before with the insight that she had the inner strength to pull herself out of the situation (*new-myth*). As a result she started her own company and today runs two. Whereas this was to a degree a restorative dream, in that it restored her sense of self, as well as an adaptive dream which illustrated a resolution to her immediate problem, it was *transcendent* as well in that her inner model of self was transformed into something new and stronger than before.

Figure 5-4 **The "Crushed" Dream**
The "crushed" dream – transforming the existing myth

"I realize that I could go on"

"It's all over, there is no future"

Transformative dreams often result in a sense of closure. I experienced that sense of closure in the case of the "*Retirement Party*" dream discussed previously: "*I dreamed that my friends at the office gave me a retirement party. They bring me four presents that are intended to be symbolic of my retirement….*" In waking life although I retired early, I consulted for a bit, so really never had a formal retirement party and had really wanted one. The dream seemed so real that when I awoke, I felt a sense of closure and satisfaction as if I really had that retirement party. The dream allowed me to *transcend* my prior life and identity of self in the corporate world (*old myth*) and take on my new life and career focused totally on dream studies (*new myth*). Interestingly upon waking I did not recall the fourth gift until I saw it at the international market the next day - a golden Tibetan "song" bowl used for meditation. This final gift I related to now being able to focus full time on my spiritual path and dreamwork career.

The Cyclic Nature of the Process

Each dream or dream segment rarely results in a resolution but rather progressively bring in new associated memories and test various solutions until an overall satisfactory resolution can be achieved. Also, once a resolution is found, that is likely not the end of it, that is unfortunately only the end of that cycle. The next cycle (which I will discuss shortly) may begin with some other aspect or remnant of the *old-myth* being triggered by an external event, or the evolution and release of other unconscious suppressed or repressed material.

The state of renewed inner harmony may be fleeting since there are always so much external stimuli to be processed, suppressed and repressed internal material to be dealt with and alienated *fragments* of our personality awaiting integration. As Jung indicates, the process of *individuation* is one of cyclic evolution and is never totally completed. It is hoped that each cycle will bring about a greater maturity, a heightened awareness of self, and a more mature mythic structure that more closely matches waking experience.

Cycles Within a Dream

If you were to recall many of the dreams within a night, or even all the sequences within what seems like a single dream, you would generally find a common theme flowing through them – a common underlying issue that they are attempting to resolve – often relating to some imbalance within your deeper *unconscious* psyche which needs to be dealt with before the waking life issue can be resolved.

The following *"Sinister Male"* dream sequences illustrate how dreams might illuminate an underlying issue and, in each sequence, bring in past associations (those that contribute to the conflict) and deal with each one at a time. In this case some simply encounters that identify the contributing associations, and some attempts at resolution, which is not always complete when there is a complex of contributing issues to be resolved.

In this case the core underlying issue is that of *masculine/feminine* integration. The dreamer found herself in life in an urgent needin to increasingly assert herself in both work and family situations – but faced emotional barriers created by very poor *masculine* role models in her life. The conflicts were complex, including: a) a fear of being considered "sinister" (her mother taught that little girls that expressed themselves were considered "sinister"; b) a fear of being "squashed" if she asserted herself (experience from both her father and abusive ex-husband) and c) identification of male with alcoholism (her ex-husband was alcoholic). As her need to assert herself became more urgent, she had the following five-part dream – each part attempting to deal with these three issues. After four sequences some degree of resolution did appear to be achieved, only to be defeated by another negative memory association (alcoholism) introduced in the fifth segment.

In the first segment of the dream she *encounters* the core issue to be resolved: *"Two <u>sinister</u> men pull a man out of a car that had been blocking traffic. After some discussion they kill him and slam the door."* Here the association with her mother's attitude that *masculinity* in a female was "sinister". The two men (conflict) and holding up traffic become a metaphor for this conflict holding up her progress – but I the end it is too much for the dream to deal with and she rejects the *masculine*.

In the next sequence she *encounters* a contributing association the past experiences of being "squashed" whenever she attempted to assert herself. *"An unknown male, <u>squashes</u> a beautiful dragonfly and smears it on another man."* One of her childhood nick names was little "dragonfly" and here we see the experience of being squashed in her past – being transferred or projected on *masculinity* in general.

The next segment then made an attempt at *masculine/feminine* integration, but er dream-*ego* rejects it: *"I am in a hotel room. I roll over and there is a man was in my bed. I am upset that the hotel had booked him in same room."*

The dream again makes an attempt at *integration*, by demonstrating and reinforcing (with a positive learning experience) that the resolution to her problem is a balance of *masculine & feminine* attributes working together: *"I go to the office to change rooms. It is in a storage warehouse and I have to crawl*

through a dark hole - trapped in the darkness. Then a man and a woman together 'pull me up from the darkness' into the lighted room."

Now with that learning experience having successfully taken place, the dream again attempts *masculine/feminine* integration: *"I go back to hotel room but as I enter, I see and old couple, a man and a woman, lying drunk on a cot. I am totally disgusted. I pack up and leave.* Here again the integration is rejected, this time due to the introduction of a new association, that of alcoholism.

Long Term Cycles

As the above example illustrates, many of our issues have been with us since childhood, and have become a solid part of our inner model of self, our *mythical* structure – once protective learning or strategies – but now dysfunctional and inappropriate. Unfortunately, they generalize and form *complexes* and further conflicts as we experience life. These can be hard to unravel (as it was above) and become the subject of many dreams over many years.

An example of a long-term cycle of dream took 18 months or more to complete, only to begin again with the next. It is told in its various parts in Chapter 7 for a dreamer I will call Gail. This *"Gail's Journey"* series was both adaptive as well as transformative. It begins with the following initial dream were: *she descends down a wooden castle stair and meets Carl Jung sitting on a throne carved with snake heads, who sends her on a journey on a ship, which enters an underground cavern, continues through a jungle and eventually stops at an island. There Jung instructs her to enter a round hut and, "stay there till you are done." She finds she cannot exit the hut so surrenders to that fact, sits around a fire in the center and begins to see visions of a beautiful woman riding a fire breathing dragon, who throws her a red ball which she catches. She then falls asleep within the dream.*

This dream initiates an 18-month series of dreams (described in Chapter 7) each focusing on one or more of what appeared to be six emotional conflicts or barriers that kept Gail stuck, unable to pursue her passion in life. An underlying core issue was that of redefining and integrating *masculine* and *feminine* roles which had been distorted in her early life experiences. Although at a conscious or personality level the dreams were aimed at resolving conflicts, at a deeper *unconscious* level they aimed at her *individuation* (becoming the whole integrated person she was meant to be). The dreams dealt with self-acceptance, recognizing her inner strength, mother issues, male and female role models, guilt related to nurturing her grown sons versus following her own goals, approval by her mother as well as those she considered in authority, and finally release from insecurities. After 18 months of dreams and dreamwork (the dreams themselves bringing about the resolution) she had a final confirming dream where she was walking on a path where there were 6 newly planted trees to the left (*transformation* of what was once 6 barriers) with an old tree to in front to the left with sun shining through it (acceptance of who she had become) and a flowering tree in front to the right (birth or flowering of who she was becoming).

Within a few months, however, the next cycle was to begin. She again descended the stairs to again find Jung – but he was not there! There was nothing but endless dark tunnels with eyes in the walls staring at her and whispering voices that she could not make out. Eventually she was able to exit the tunnels into the light realizing this was to be a new journey, continuing to work on a still incomplete issue, fed by a different set of past associations. See Chapter 7 for descriptions of the Journey.

Does this Process Relate to All Dreams?

It is difficult to say whether all dreams follow a problem-solving aim or structure since dreams rarely obey any one a set of rules or observations. Story-like dreams appear to – but some are so hyperconnected that the aim of the dream can be very elusive. However, the various classifications of dreams we talked about in Chapter 2 appear to, in some way, include problem-solving, restoral and transformation processes – or at least don't exclude them.

Nightmares (although having multiple causes) tend to be triggered by stress and trauma – and appear to deal with the problem although often unsuccessfully as the dreamer awakes in anxiety due to the inability to accommodate the emotional surge. Sometimes however the nightmare and memory upon awakening can be part of the resolution process – such as a needed emotional release as in the "*Father's Death*" dream discussed above. In *somatic* or dreams about physical illness we find ourselves trying to deal with threats to self, although in this case the threat is physical harm or illness to our physical self.

Regarding paranormal dreams, Ann Faraday (1974) once stated that the reasons dreams often contain extrasensory phenomenon is that the *ego* is using all resources available to it, even paranormal ones, to remain in the "top dog" position. This is her term for preserving the superiority of the *ego*-self.

In lucid dreams, the will of the dreamer may come into play to influence the dream, but control by the *dream ego* is limited. The lucid dream story line and figures don't always cooperate with the will or control attempts by the *dream-self*, suggesting that the deeper processing that takes place in a common REM state dream, still goes on in a lucid dream – and there is anecdotal evidence that it does.

One example of problem solving in a lucid dream was given in Chapter 5 – the one I had when going through a very stressful situation. In brief when an up to that point depressing dream went lucid I called out to what I considered to be the "wisdom behind the dream", *'Show me what I need to get through this situation." At that point I found myself in a universe of light crystals, with a feeling of intense bliss. There was singing all around, but I couldn't make out the tune or lyrics. I again turned to the "wisdom" and said, 'this is wonderful but what is the answer – what do I need to get through the situation? Suddenly in front of me among the crystals, tiny 3-dimensional red hearts began to appear and float around in a clockwise manner, forming a giant red heart. Then the lyrics of the song became clear, the tune by the Beatles ...'All you need is Love.'* Whether this was purely creative analytical problem solving of my sleeping brian, Jung's collective unconscious at play, or and a higher level of consciousness at work (or all three) is uncertain – but the problem resolution function was clearly present.

Another lucid dream that clearly illustrates the process of Jung's concept of personality integration taking place, is reported by Robert Waggoner (2015): *"There is a black woman behind me. I pick her up and place her in front of me asking: "who are you". "I am a discarded aspect of yourself." I sense the truth of this and decide to accept her completely. As I mentally accept her she suddenly collapses into wisps of colored light which enter my torso.*

CHAPTER 6
COMPOSITION OF A DREAM IMAGE

The Unconscious aspect of any event is revealed to us in dreams, where it appears not as a rational thought but as a symbolic image – C.G. Jung

W hat we experience in dreams is both visual and non-visual. Up until this point, I have mostly referred to dream content in terms of imagery, i.e., the visual content. When working with a dream, it is wise to consider all of the content, or dream *elements*, some of which are not visual imagery but rather other sensory representations as well as the actions taking place. Working with a dream is way more than just working with the imagery or dream *elements*, however this is where the exploratory work generally begins.

Dream Imagery and Elements

Although most dreams are noted for their imagery, there is a lot that is meaningful besides visual imagery taking place in the other sensations and activities that are present. Jung and Perls both believed that nothing appears in a dream at random, that everything in a dream is there because it has some meaningful relationship to the dreamer's mental and emotional situation.

Table 6-1 is a categorization of the dream *elements* to be considered when recalling and working with a dream. It is derived from a listing in *The Mythic Path* by Feinstein and Krippner (1997) which they based on the Hall & Van de Castle content analysis categorizations. The first group, including dream figures, setting, objects, nature, certain activity and descriptors (color and shape for example) are primarily visual, and therefore might fall under what I have been referring to as imagery. Sensations, dream emotion and certain other descriptors are primarily non-visual *elements* of a dream that are just as important to consider as the visual imagery. Spoken or written words are both visual and non-visual and are very important *elements* in the dream that can often relate to *compensating* guidance. Therefore, I will use the term dream *elements* as the primary term for what is experienced in a dream, whereas imagery is more aligned with the visual experience.

Table 6-1 Consider all of the Dream Elements

- **The Setting:** The description of the setting or environment of the dream might relate to the "place" you are in emotionally in waking life. Example: *"I am in a dark place"* might relate to a being in an emotionally "dark place" in waking life.
- **Objects:** Note the objects. The inanimate man-made things can contain some of the most valuable content for *role-play*.
- **Dream figures:** Known and unknown persons, or an animated object that you interact with. Who are you in the dream: yourself; someone or something that you identify as you; an observer? Known dream figures can contain valuable personality associations, and the unknown dream figures valuable collective clues.

- **Nature Imagery:** plants or animals, natural *elements* (example: earth, fire, air, water, rock, elemental metals, trees, etc.) might contain a mixture of personal and *archetypal* associations with our natural roots; animals perhaps instincts or emotional urges/responses; other natural *elements* (ex: the *great tree*) perhaps the natural growth of the personality.
- **Color and other Descriptors:** Colors that stand our are important clues to emotional content**.** How you describe a dream *element* can contain valuable metaphors. A crystal clear dream object might reveal something that has become "crystal clear" to you in waking life.
- **Patterns, Numbers and Orientation:** Geometric shapes and numbers often represent *archetypal* organizing forces. Left/right and up/down (see fig 7-3) can relate to *conscious* (right/up/light) versus *unconscious* (left/down/dark) material or realms.
- **Words and voices:** These are usually guiding cues, although usually metaphors to be understood within the context of the dream story and its relationship to your life story.
- **Emotions**: Note the feelings evoked by the dream when you are telling it, as well as the emotions that were felt in the dream, or when awakening.
- **Activity:** Note the actions and interactions that you and the others in the dream are engaged in. What are you trying to achieve? What is inhibiting your progress and how? The barrier to progress in a dream can relate to your own *impasses* or internal barriers to progress.
- **Sensations:** Consider the importance of sensations such as touch and bodily feelings (cold, soft, hard, wet etc.). Some sensations may be externally induced (cold room, need to go to the bathroom, etc.) but often they can be emotionally significant or contain a useful metaphor ("*it felt warm and fuzzy"* for example).

Composition of a Dream Element

We learned in Section 5 that theorists such as Freud, Jung and others consider dream images or *elements* as *condensations*, that is they represent combinations or linkages between associations, each part of the *element* relating to a different but linked association. Or as Jeremy Taylor put it, regarding this multitude of connected associations, "there is no such thing as a dream [thus dream image] with only one meaning," there are many levels of meaning.

Condensation can create some interesting visual combinations such as the "*Old Shoe*" dream discussed previously or that of a thermometer/slide-rule combination illustrated in Chapter 8 (figure 8-1). The unusual image of a slide rule thermometer is an obvious combination of various associations - one related to the thermometer, another to the slide rule and perhaps another related to the red of the thermometer fluid. Each of these imagery fragments combined into one image to represent a meaningful connection – in this case slide rule (engineering) and thermometer (degree) and red (perhaps emotional temperature). Here the image pictorially spelled out the word "engineering degree." But the associations go beyond the simple word combination, they recall personal memories, emotions, perceptions, and contextual associations with the experiences that created each imagery fragment. In the above case the simple picture brought forth all of the memories and hopes and perceptions the dreamer had regarding obtaining an engineering degree – as well as the devastation when he was laid off - finding his degree to be useless in the situation he found himself in.

In another example, words were combined with imagery to spell out the emotionally salient situation: *"I dreamed I saw a license plate with the words 'HIDE 45'."* The dreamer had just reached his 45th birthday and was looking for a way (a "license") to hide the fact. The dream condensed the desire to hide the dreamer's age of 45, with the desire for a legitimate way to do it, a "license." In contrast to waking life, where we combine letters and words to form meaningful sentences, dreams combine images to "spell out" meaningful associations that are quite rational once we understand the language.

Descriptors are obvious examples of combined dream *elements*. For example, dreaming of a *"red car"* is an obvious combination of red and car, or a dream of a *"male child"* is a combination of male and child.

Condensation has a lot to do with the way the brain works. Visual processing is distributed in the brain, for example color being processed in a separate brain center than shape and other aspects of the visual image (Ratey, 2001). The information from the different centers of the brain are then integrated in the occipital-parietal regions to form the visual image that we "see." If all the elements of an image are processed in separate centers, then in a dream each fragment of an image may represent a different emotional or memory stimulus. The composite image therefore becomes the composite of all those emotions and memories.

This general term *collective* extends to combinations that include the more specific *archetypal* figures and motifs discussed in the Chapter 4. For example, the "Taco Bell" dream of the black whip from "south of the border" combining in the words "raw ambition" took on the meaning of black and south of the border (*unconscious* origins) combined with whip (something holding him back) combined with thought/works "raw ambition" – to provide the full meaning that his *Shadow* or "raw ambition" was unconsciously holding him back.

Figure 6-1 illustrates the concept that the full meaning of a dream *element* is a combination, or *condensation*, of the associated elements that make it up: 1) personal content and 2) *archetypal* or *collective* content.

Figure 6-1
The Composition of a Dream Image/Element
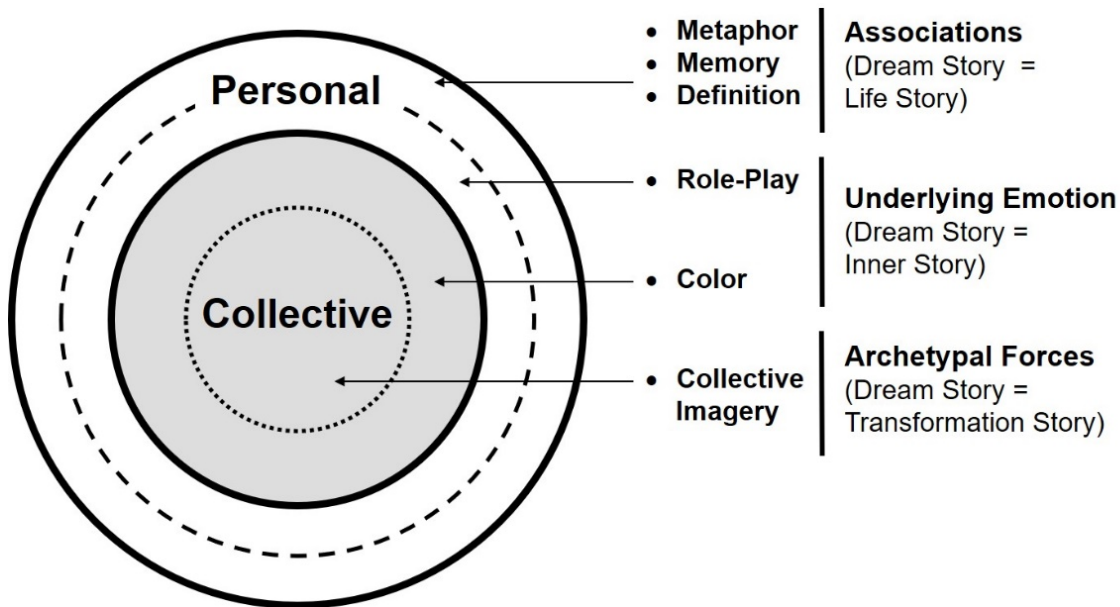
Peeling the "Dream Onion"

The circle represents the combination of personal and *collective* content *condensed* within a single dream image or *element* and the many layers or levels of meaningful content. It also illustrates that there are different approaches for dealing with each layer of a dream *element*, including: a) Associative or Metaphor work (which Jung called Amplification) to relate the dream story to the waking life story; b) *Role-play* and Color work (what I call Image Activation) to reveal the underlying emotional conflicts or barriers; and c) *Archetypal* work in order to understand the *collective* origins or forces at work and how that dream *element* might relate to the dreamer's journey of *individuation*. All of these methods are discussed in detail in the next few chapters and are brought together in Chapter 11 as part of the *Transformative Dreamwork* protocol. Below is a brief summary.

Personal content*:* includes symbolic representations of the dreamer's personal memories, thoughts and emotional experiences that stimulated the dream *element*. When the dream is told, the personal content is translated into figurative speech and metaphors descriptive of the dreamer's waking life situation. At a deeper level, personal content also includes emotional content such as conflicts, *fragments* of self and elements of the dreamer's personal mythology that are activated by the situation the dream is dealing with.

Collective or Archetypal content: includes any of the figures, geometries, actions or motifs referred to by Jung as emerging from the *collective unconscious*. I use the terms *collective* and *archetypal* somewhat interchangeably but consider *collective* the more general term and *archetype* one which relates more to the specific *archetypal* figures and specific images Jung describes as such (introduced in Chapter 4 but described in Chapter 7). Color is also a pseudo-collective/personal imagery modifier where the emotional response to color has a somewhat *collective* nature (color elicits somewhat common emotional responses in humans – see Chapter 9) but the specific emotional association is personal. Some colors can have *archetypal* origins (such as black in relation to unconscious material) but also evoke personal emotional associations (ex: "nothing is as it should be" – table 9-7).

Recognizing Personal Content

Personal content relates to personal "meaning" or associations that the dream *element* itself holds for the dreamer – the essential function of the thing, the memories that are recalled, the feelings it evokes, and perhaps even cultural associations. The dream *element* can contain something as simple as the expression of a thought in a picture form, a figure of speech that relates to the waking life events, or an emotional memory from some past experience that relates to the present experience. At a deeper level it is the underlying emotions, conflicts and *impasses* that is pictured by the dream image.

The concept of dream imagery relating to personal associations (the dreamer's memories, feelings, thoughts and concepts) is based in part on the functions of the associative and visuospatial processing center of our dreaming brain. The associative function of these centers establishes linkages between internal associations and emotional and episodic fragments of the waking life event that the dream is dealing with. These centers work with our memory systems to relate those associations to our inner model of self and our social world view.

Look for the dream imagery to relate to emotional events of the day in relation to our expectations or beliefs and past emotional experiences. Do not try to understand dream *elements* or images in the same terms or context used to identify them in waking life (a "door" is not just a "door"). Dream images and *elements* almost always represents a deep and complex collage of feelings, past experiences and memories associated with such an object.

The approach to understanding the personal content in the imagery and color will be detailed in Chapters 8 and 9 as they follow the *Transformative Dreamwork* protocol.

Working with Personal Associations

- **Metaphor Work** - look for phrases, word-play and action themes in the telling of the dream story, or the descriptions of the imagery, to sound like they also might describe something going on in your life at the time.

- **Define** – defining the **purpose** or **function** (what it is and what it does) of an object in the dream reveals your own personal association, the objects essence in your own words. This reveals is the "right hemisphere" meaning of an object (more akin to its dream meaning) as opposed to its waking "left hemisphere" name or label.

- **Known persons** – generally are borrowed by the dream to represent a personality characteristic so you might define their personality, how they are like and unlike you and how they might approach the unresolved waking situation you find yourself in?

- **Memories** – Dreams resolve problems by bringing in past experiences or associated events to compare with the present experience. Explore if the action, setting or objects in the dream recall something from your past, in particular if the imagery is something from your past. When you do get specific; what one specific past event comes to mind and how does that relate to your present situation?

Exploring Underlying Emotion

- **Role-Play (give the dream a voice)** – using a scripted *role-play* (the 6 "magic" questions) is a simple and quick way to reveal the underlying emotions and emotional conflicts or *impasses* pictured by the dream image – that which has you stuck and unable to resolve your situation and move forward. (see Chapter 8)

- **Color Work** - as you will learn in Chapter 9, color relates to emotion. Color adds valuable emotional content to a dream image and sometimes is the most important information (as the *"Change Purse"* dream above illustrates). Ignoring color will render meaning of a colored dream image incomplete. Most all dreams are in color, but color fades quickly if you don't pay attention to it. Sometimes this can be helpful since the color you recall may be the one that contains the most emotional information. So work on the color of the dream image you are working with and/or the colors that stand out in the dream. As illustrated in the *"Change Purse"* dream color pairs are important in revealing conflict. Chapter 9 contains two Color Questionnaire tables (9-7 and 9-8) which contains some of the common human emotional responses to color – which are intended to trigger your own associations and aid with this color work.

Recognizing Collective Content

The concept of *Collective* or *archetypal* imagery, is based almost entirely on the observations and theories of Carl Jung. *Collective* content consists of influences and imagery emerging from the *collective unconscious* of the human *psyche*, content that is not individual and cannot be derived from the dreamer's own personal experiences. Jung linked these motifs to the evolution of consciousness and the basic mental processes taking place in the human mind including *individuation*, your own psychological evolution as an individual personality. An introduction to *archetypal* imagery was provided in Chapter 4 and a more in-depth discussion is presented in the next chapter (Chapter 7). In this chapter I discuss the relationship

between personal and *collective* how the two might be sorted out when exploring an dream *element* or dream story. As an introduction, a brief compilation of a few basic *collective* or *archetypal* motifs found in the various works of Carl Jung (1964, 1971c, 1971e, 1972, 1973) are listed below:

Elements of Conscious Origin

- **Setting:** illuminated or sunny; whiteness; typically imagery in the right field of view, above or ahead.

- **Conscious personality *figures***
  o **Ego:** generally, you in the dream, the *dream-self* or a figure you identify with.
  o **Persona**: a figure acting out the characteristics of your waking persona; sometimes a person you know (present or past) with a personality characteristic reflecting your persona.

- **Dream *elements*:** known persons, familiar settings and man-made constructs

- **Acceptance of Material into Conscious Personality**: *dream-self* reverses its viewpoint or direction; movement to the right, into the light, perhaps clockwise;

Elements of Unconscious Origin

- **Setting:** dark or blackness; typically imagery and places in the left field of view, below or behind.

- **Dream *elements*:** Unknown dream figures, dressed in black, dark or a shadowy, unseen, non-specific male or female *figure*. **Symbols of the *Self*** as organizing/ integrating *archetypal* patterns such as balanced or center-oriented geometries, numbers and direction an motion. Expressions of the **natural origin** and connectedness the *psyche*: organic (primitives, animals, nature) and inorganic (the stone white or shiny black, gold/silver metals, crystals).

- **Archetypal *figures*:**
  o ***Self -*** central organizing force of within the *psyche* – can appear as a guiding, wise, unknown, unseen or god/goddess-like dream figure;
  o ***Shadow -*** suppressed or unrealized aspect of the personality which have not been integrated into the *conscious* personality and which the *ego* does not identify with – can appear as a dark or shadowy unknown figure (typically of the same sex) that acts or appears in a role counter to the views and aims of the *dream-self* or *ego*;
  o ***Anima & Animus -*** the personification of the introduction of *conscious* and *unconscious* integration; the *feminine* and *masculine* component within a man's and woman's *psyche* respectively; they often appear as an unknown male figure in a woman's dreams and unknown woman in a man's dream. An imbalanced group of males or females (unknown or even known) might indicate a need to adopt and balance a particular *feminine* or *masculine* attribute to resolve the dreamer's situation.

- **Going within the Unconscious:** movement to left, down, under, behind, into darkness; perhaps counter-clockwise motion.
  o **Suppressed/Rejected material**: frozen, dead, moving to the left or under or into darkness

- **Arising from the Unconscious:** emerging movement from below, behind, or from the left; movement from darkness into light; perhaps clockwise motion.
  o **Release of suppressed material**: explosive action, volcanoes, earthquakes, explosions; sometimes end-of-the-world imagery

Problem Resolution and the Transcendent Function

As noted earlier, Jung claimed that dreams contained a *transcended function* which enables transition from one psychic condition to another resulting in a new attitude toward oneself and life – the aim being *individuation* or becoming a *whole* person by reconciling (*integrating*) our *conscious* and *unconscious* parts. This process begins with the separation or conflict, depends on an *unconsciously* driven *compensating* event (counterfactual or opposing schema) which brings about eventual *integration* of *conscious* and *unconscious* material, and finally at *transcendence* or change. This sequence itself might be observed in a series of dreams or one concluding dream. Some of the imagery or motifs related to the process, as compiled or deduced from Jung's writings (Jung, 1964, 1971, 1972, 1973) is summarized below:

- **Problem, Impasse or Conflict:**
  - ○ **Story-Line:** picture-metaphor of your waking emotional situation; imagery of conflict, decision making, feeling trapped, afraid, lost, a barrier to proceeding.
  - ○ **Dream *elements*:** A dream figure, situation, fear, barrier, separation or crossing you must overcome to progress. A difficult decision point or alternative paths imagery. A pair of equal *element*s (conflicting equal forces) parallel lines and numbers (11, 22 etc.), an equal pair of the same sex, contrasting color pairs.

- **Departure, Giving in or Turning Within:**
  - ○ Symbolic "death of the *ego*;" giving up, death, fragmentation, separation, departure, beginning a journey; searching; descending or going into darkness or within the earth, under, down stairs into the depths; giving up control; loss; fall/winter; sunset.

- **Compensation:**
  - ○ An alternative solution or event that opposes or reverses your direction or thinking in the dream such as; a wise or guiding figure; voices or words; a moment of surprise, insight or discovery; presentation of a new approach or viewpoint; bizarre or unexpected imagery combinations or actions by someone you know that are out of character; humor; certain color combinations; or a moment of decision; the opposing actions or urgings of the Self or Shadow.

- **Integrating or Unifying/Balancing Force:**
  - ○ **Integration:** Unification of opposites imagery (male/female unification, marriage, sexual attraction, balance number of males and females in a pair or group, black & white patterns.
  - ○ **Wholeness**: geometric forms and numbers relating to balance and *wholeness* such as: four or four-ness, the circle, a ring or the numbers 0 and 1. Center oriented imagery such as the circle or circle with something in the center; the spiral, the cross; horizontal/vertical emphasis; circular or spiral movement (circle dance, a tornado, walking around a block, for example).

- **Resolution/Transcendence**
  - ○ **Individuation imagery:** the "great tree" or stone, triad geometries; a sphere or crystal.
  - ○ **Return/Renewal/Rebirth**: rewarding ending; emergence imagery; rebirth child, egg motif, primitives; renewal imagery (spring, new growth, flowering); illumination or moving into the light,

Exercise: The Influence of Collective Content

Personal Content

A number of approaches to decoding the personal content with in a dream element are listed above, to be further developed in Chapter 8. For the purpose of understanding how personal and *collective* content may

mix to influence the full meaning of a dream *element*, I will illustrate it with an exercise. I will use the image of a door as it might appear in a dream to demonstrate.

First let's explore the personal content or personal associations represented by the door image. Knowing that the right hemisphere identifies an object by function, purpose or contextual role, is an important key to understanding the language of dream imagery. In order to identify some of the personal associations in a dream image (a right brain creation), one simple trick (of the many listed above) is to simply reverse the process. Ask the dreamer to describe the "function" or "purpose" of a dream image, and you will learn a little bit about what it represents to them on a personal level. Experience this by trying the imagery experiment below in figure 6-2 and the box that follows.

Figure 6-2
Dream Images can be Decoded if we Look at their Function and Emotional Content and not their Literal Identity

Left Brain

Right Brain

"It's a Door"

"It's something that keeps people out"

EXERCISE – DEFINE THE PURPOSE OR FUNCTION

Figure 6-2 illustrates a fun experiment with personal association and imagery.

1) Imagine that you dreamed of a door. Use the image of the door in figure 6-2 or close your eyes and envision what your own door might look like.

2) Now ask yourself "what is the function of that door?" (You might say "to open up to a new place" – or - "to protect me" or "to control what comes in and out").

3) Do the words you used to describe the function of that door also relate in any way to a present situation, or a way you feel in life right now?

As you try this experiment with the image of the door, you will find that you create your own internalized door with its own personal function. Invite others to try the experiment and you will see that each will define the door a bit differently. Also note that your definition might have taken on a personal meaning, relating in some way to something happening in your life, or a way you are feeling at the time. If you try it again in the future, you may find that the function you attribute to the door has changed.

This is a "waking dream" of sorts, in that the right brain creates its own internal image from the suggestion of a door, and that internal image is created from your own personal experiences and memories surrounding

"door-ness." This is exactly what happens in a dream. Imagery is created out of associations that are contextually related to your life situation. As in this exercise, if you simply define the "function" or "purpose" of any dream image or *element* you will gain insight into its meaning for you.

This is also a good illustration of why dream or symbol "dictionaries" can be highly misleading. Each image in a dream is personal, based on personal experiences and associations. A dream "dictionary" may simply contain the author's own personal associations, or a collection of associations derived from other equally impersonal sources. Although you may connect with a few of the dream "dictionary" metaphors, there is no way that a "dictionary" can determine the true personal content within your dream image. Only you (the dreamer) can provide that information.

The Influence of Collective Content

The influence of *collective* content on a dream *element* might also be illustrated by continuing the exercise with the door. In figure 6-2 you defined the function of your door image in order to reveal its personal associations. Now try the exercise again (see the box below) for each door image in figure 6-3.

Figure 6-3
Exercise in *Collective* Influence
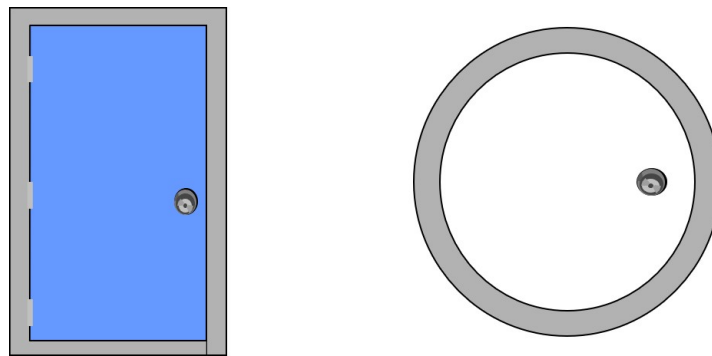
NOW TRY THIS

1) Review your associations with the typically shaped door in figure 6-2. What was the purpose or function you defined for that door.

2) Now imagine you dreamed of the blue door on the left in figure 6-3 (if your image is not in color imagine it in blue).

3) Define the purpose or function of your new BLUE door.

4) Now look at only the round door on the right in figure 6-3 above. Close your eyes and imagine you dreamed of a round door in no particular color.

5) Define the purpose or function of your new round dram door.

6) Did your associations with the door change, with different colors and shapes, from that of the original rectangular door in figure 6-2 ?

If you had the same experience as most, you will have noticed that the purpose or function you attributed to the blue door and the round door changed from the typical rectangular door. If a door is a door, then why are the associations different? Changing the shape and color of the door image changed its personal associations for you. Your responses may have changed based on a common waking life association (the round door might have reminded you of a ship's porthole for example) or your associations may have been surprisingly more esoteric (finding something mystical behind the round door for example). Responses to this exercise always differ among individuals, but often the rectangular brown door relates to a control or safety function, permitting people/things in or out. When the door is imagined as blue, the responses change, sometimes to a calmer less guarded association and more open or opportunity related. More on color association will be discussed in Chapter 9.

Condensation of Personal and Collective Content

Condensation or the mix of personal and collective content can be observed in a single dream image or in a dream scene where there appears to be a meaningful relationship between some of the elements that are predominantly of an *archetypal* nature and others in the scene that have a more personal association either metaphorically or once personal dreamworking approach such as role-play or the Color Questionnaire is applied.

Combinations in a Single Image

The *condensation* of personal and *collective* imagery, including color, in a single image is illustrated in the following "*Change Purse*" dream: *In my dream I was having a long dialogue with an associate about an upcoming battle. When I awoke, I realized that I had been talking to a leather change purse! My associate in the dream was a slightly rounded rectangular shaped, zippered change purse, red on the top side and a green-brown color on the underside. I kept flip-flopping it over in my hands, trying to decide which side and color I liked best.*

The dream came at a time of a "pending battle" at work that involved an organizational "change" and the dreamer's role in contributing to this change. The metaphors in the dream story, "pending battle" and the "change purse" were recognizable figures of speech that related the dream story to the waking life situation. Aside from these obvious metaphors there were three additional element combinations of note in this image: 1) First the change purse was a bizarre combination of an inanimate object and a human figure, in that this object appeared as a human companion to the dreamer; 2) the second was the combination of the change purse image with color (in this case two colors seemingly in conflict – two sides) and 3) the third less obvious is the shapes that stood out – rectangular and rounded corners – both shapes relating to possible *collective* forces aiming at completion (square) and *wholeness* (round).

The shapes involved will be explained more in Chapter 7 and the colors in Chapter 9, but what is important at this point is to understand how the *condensation* of imagery taking place established the full identity of the dream image. The various elements (each with their own associations) combined in this one image to tell the full story of the dream's attempt to find a solution or closure (round/square shape) from the dreamer's conflicted "flip-flopping" over whether to pursue the situation with an assertive, win-oriented style (red) or to apply a bit more self-control and not take on so much responsibility as the opposing color (green-brown) might imply (see tables 9-7 and 9-8).

Pattern Combinations in a Dream Scene

Often collective and personal imagery combine in a pattern to represent personal elements or matters that require attention or are in or out of balance. For example, Jung related fourness or the square to completion and balance in the personality. Therefore, three people sitting around a square table with one chair empty might illustrate something (represented by the missing person) being the element required to resolve the dreamer's situation. Jung related the four-color "primaries" (the presence of red, yellow, green and blue) to a balanced state. In chapter 9 you will learn about how color relates to emotion One color missing in a grouping of the other three therefore might relate to an emotional condition that is missing in order to reduce anxiety and attain a more balanced emotional state.

This "*Latin Priest*" dream relates to a relationship between a *collective* center-oriented geometry (both a circle and spiral) and the imagery of a Latin priest and an airplane, both of which represented personally meaningful associations. The dreamer in this case was passionately embracing a new concept of spirituality that was in conflict with his earlier Latin American Catholic upbringing, when he had this dream: *I was in an airplane which landed in a spiral motion on the rim of a large circle in a Latin American village. In the center of the circle was a priest dressed in black, with a gun, protecting the village. The priest threatened to shoot me if I returned back to the plane."*

Jung discussed center-oriented imagery as the psyche or Self with the focal point of the ego being at the center, i.e. the issue the *ego* must deal with in order to resolve the situation. Here in the center of the circle and spiral was the priest with a gun – his *Shadow* self, triggered by the *ego,* adopting a new belief (the airplane) that threatened his well-established childhood Latin Catholic upbringing. The *Shadow* informs the *ego* that it must symbolically "die" in order to embrace that new belief (go back to the airplane) – the *death of the ego* motif indicating that part of self (the memory system) must "die" or be neurally reconfigured to adopt the new belief. Note that the airplane was a "man-made" construct, likely relating to the new believe as a *conscious* conception.

Figure 6-4
Personal and Collective Pattern Orientation
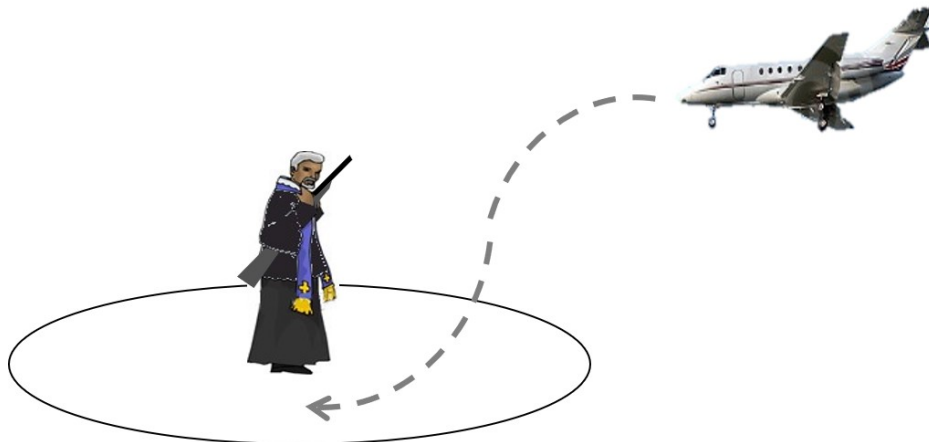
EXERCISE
RECOGNIZING COLLECTIVE AND PERSONAL COMBINATIONS

1) Look through one of your more story-like dreams, and using the listing at the beginning of this chapter, underline the dream *elements* that fit each category (figure, object, setting, nature, activity, words or voices, sensations, emotions and descriptors).

2) Circle dream *elements* that appear as a combination - a descriptor plus the image it describes (such as a soft kitten, a dark hallway, a square room, or color descriptors such as a black car or green door). Write down your associations with the dream *element* apart from the descriptor – perhaps define the *element* and its function. Now write down your feelings associated with that descriptor (such as soft, dark, square, etc.). Place the two associations together to create a phrase or sentence. Can you sense how the combination of the *collective* and the personal association brings a different or fuller meaning to the dream *element*?

3) Next look at the imagery that has a clear geometric shape or direction of movement such as a square, circle, triad or spiral. Look for objects or dream figures that are: oriented around a geometric pattern such as four people sitting around a square table; or at the focal point of a circle or spiral; or movement in a geometric pattern such as moving around in a circle or square. How might the *archetypal* associations that Jung gave to these images relate to possible mental balancing, integration and resolution processes taking place in the dream?

*Just as the human body represents a whole museum of organs, each with a long evolutionary
history, so we should expect to find that the mind is organized in a similar way – C.G. Jung*

Jung spoke of *archetypes* as a manifestation of the *collective unconscious*. He found a relationship
between what he termed primordial or *archetypal* imagery in dreams and similar images and patterns
found in alchemy and human mythology (Jung, 1971b, 1975). Furthermore, he attributed psycho-
logical importance to these *collective* and/or *archetypal* patterns that appear in both our dreams and our
waking life drawings, paintings and mandala creations. Again I use the terms *collective* and *archetypal*
somewhat interchangeably but consider *collective* the more general term and *archetype* one which relates
more to the specific *archetypal* figures and specific images Jung describes as such.

Working with Collective Imagery

The best way to approach *collective* or *archetypal* imagery is to understand that it largely involves what
mental PROCESSES are taking place or HOW the dream is attempting to resolve a problem as opposed to
specifically WHAT that problem is in relation to your waking life. *Archetypes* relate to the *unconscious*
aspect of a conscious event and the forces attempting to restore balance triggered by that event. They have
more to do with how some waking event: impacts the state and nature of your inner self; triggers the
integrative forces between *conscious* and *unconscious* material; and effects your *individuation* in general
(growth as the *whole* person you are meant to be).

Although *collective* or *archetypal* imagery relates to *unconscious* processes, these are the resolution
processes, the source of. The personal dreamwork establishes WHAT specific event triggered the dream
and WHAT are the underlying emotional conflicts that the dream is dealing with. The *collective* or
archetypal dreamwork establishes HOW the vast *unconscious* wisdom of your natural inner being is
attempting to maintain or establish psychological balance, learning and personal growth. *Collective*
dreamwork (which Jung called "*subjective*") therefore goes hand in hand with personal dreamwork (which
Jung called "*objective*"). Noting *collective* elements can provide clues that allow you to find a better fit
between the dream story and the waking life story.

When working with *archetypal* imagery, it is best not to begin your dreamwork by trying to find and analyze
all of the *archetypal* and *collective* images in the dream – or you will end up in a misleading "symbol
dictionary" mode of dreamwork. It is best to begin by simply observing the obvious *archetypal* imagery to
understand the basic structure or resolution patterns that might be taking place – as a guide to organizing
what you discover in your personal work (Chapter 8). Once you understand the personal underlying issues
the dream is dealing with, then a more in-depth exploration of the collective *archetypal* imagery is used to
understand how the dream (and your *unconscious*) is attempting to resolve the problem – guidance which
can provide valuable insight to how best to deal with the situation in waking life.

In this chapter the various *archetypal* and *collective* images or motifs will be discussed, and some examples
provided as to how they might appear in a dream. Note that these were for the most part based on a best

attempt at defining and classifying the many observations and writings of Jung (or his colleagues), observations which are theoretical in nature and, having evolved over time, can at times be a bit elusive and fluid. Therefore the "meanings" of these *archetypal* motifs should not be considered as fixed or exacting but rather should be treated as possible patterns and themes to be explored in the context of the dreamer's personal situation.

Jung's Model of the Psyche

As discussed in Chapter 4, Jung defined the human *psyche* as composed of three components: the *conscious* self or *ego*, the *personal unconscious* and the *collective unconscious*.

Ego

The *ego* was defined as the center of the field of consciousness, our sense of identity and existence. It is the "I" that you identify yourself as, all that you believe yourself to be, the *conscious* self, the central experiencing and discriminating complex of consciousness grounded in body sensation and memory. It organizes our thoughts, feelings, sensory perceptions, and intuition, and regulates access to memory. It links our inner and outer worlds, forming a model that determines how we relate to the external world. Jung considered the *ego* to evolve out of the central organizing principle of the *psyche*, the *Self* (described below), where it forms over the course of early development as the brain attempts to add meaning and value to its various experiences. The conscious mind is selective, and thus the *ego* is powerful part of the self in that it selects what it considers most relevant from the environment and establishes a direction to take based on it, while the remaining information sinks into the unconscious.

In a dream the *ego* is most often represented as yourself or the dream-self, or dream-*ego*, or a figure the dreamer identifies with. Sometimes you will be a non-present observer, watching yourself in the dream. Sometimes you will maintain this strong sense of self throughout the dream, and simply interact with the other parts. Often you will play multiple roles at the same time, having the thoughts of more than one figure. This appropriately illustrates that our inner self has many aspects that can exist simultaneously. Therefore, who we consider our self to be at any point in time is a matter of focus.

Our *dream ego* aligns itself with the same personal myths that drive our behavior in waking life. In the "Taco Bell" dream discussed previously, the dream-*ego* was torn between the stimulation of his ambitions and power (the whip), and the desire for finding his true value (the wallet south of the border) just as the dreamer's *ego* was torn in waking life.

You may find your *dream-self* switching roles as the dream introduces an opposing scenario or counter-myth, attempting to resolve a conflict by forcing the *ego* to experience both sides. *"I dreamed I was arguing with a friend and was trying to convince him to drive the bus. However, I also knew that I "was" that friend, that I was capable, but was struggling to let go of a small scrap of paper (credentials) I was holding onto."* Here the dream tries to resolve the misconceptions of the *ego* by placing dreamer in both the role of being aligned with the myth (the lack of a credentials thus the small piece of paper) and being aligned with the counter-myth ("you know how to do what you want to do – you don't need any more credentials, just get into the driver's seat and move forward").

Personal Unconscious

This is the *objective* layer of the *unconscious* containing personal life-experiences experiences, and memories. It also contains repressed material and parts of the personality that the *ego* does not identify with, as well as clusters, or *complexes*, of emotionally charged associations which gather around a theme or archetype and unconsciously influence behavior. The *Shadow* (discussed below along with illustrative examples) and counter-myths can be suppressed *fragments* of what once was the *conscious* self but having been rejected, now reside in the *personal unconscious*.

Collective Unconscious

This is the impersonal, transpersonal or *subjective* layer of the *unconscious*. It is composed of non-personal, human species-wide, inherited biological, instinctive and evolutionary material as well as permanently unconscious *complexes* or *archetypes*. It includes remnants of previous evolutionary stages of the human mind and thus a system of adapted functioning. He considered it to contain a central organizing principle which he called the *Self* (with a capital S) which is defined further below along with examples of how it makes itself known in dreams. The *collective unconscious* makes itself known through the expression of the *archetypes* as: a) universal images within human mythology, art, religion and architecture as well as dreams and b) instinctive behavior patterns that underlie all human thought.

Archetypes

The term "*archetype*" has its origins in the ancient Greek "archein" and "typos" which mean "original" and "pattern or model" – synonymous with *collective*. It relates to the "original pattern" of which all other similar persons, objects, or concepts are derived, modeled, or emulated. Carl Jung considered *archetypes* to be patterns or models of behaviors and personality. In Jungian psychology, the *archetypes* represent universal patterns and images that arise from the *collective unconscious*. They are not learned but are innate, universal, and hereditary patterns or models which function to organize how we experience inner and outer life. Borrowing from a computer model, they are like the operating system of our mind.

While Jung identified hundreds of *archetypal* patterns and images and did not put a limit on the number that can exist, he identified four major *archetypes*: the *Self, Shadow, Anima* and *Animus*. The *Self* (capital S) he defined not only as the organizing center of our *psyche* but but as the totality of our *psyche*, containing all other *archetypes*. Aside from the four basic *archetypes* he further defined 12 motivational *archetypes;* and went on to identify many others that are observed in the human personality and dreams. The totality of his work with *archetypes* is beyond the scope of this book – I will only provide an introductory summary and orientation. More information can be found in *Man and His Symbols* (Jung, 1973) and many of his other *Collected Works* (Jung, n.d.).

Four Basic Archetypes of the Unconscious

Figure 7-1 illustrates the four basic *archetypes* as defined by Jung in relation to their *conscious* (upper right in the light) and *unconscious* (lower, left in darkness) origins or associations. In general (but not a rule by any means) unconscious material tends to appear as dark/black or moving from/into darkness, toward the left or to/from underneath. *Conscious* material on the other hand tends to appear as illumination/white or moving into the light the left of the right field of view or to/from above or at ground level. Although the *Self* is shown as the organizing force at the center it also includes the entire *psyche* and all of the other *archetypes* (the totality of the circle). What Jung termed "symbols of the *Self* also include imagery and motifs that represent the forces of these *archetypes* in particular the centering, organizing and

transformative forces of the *Self*. The *Shadow* can appears as opposing but also balancing forces for the *conscious* personality. The *Anima & Animus* often appear as forces integrating *conscious* and *unconscious* material. The *Persona* which is the aspect of self that the *ego* presents to the world, may appear as the *dream-self* and its patterns of behavior or known dream figures which the *ego* emulates.

<div align="center">

Figure 7-1
Four Basic Archetypes

</div>

The Self

The *Self* represents the entire *psyche* (not only the center but the entire circumference) - the unified unconsciousness and consciousness of an individual which both complement one another to form this totality – a concept, Jung claimed, could only be grasped through the investigation of one's own dreams (Jung, 1973). It contains all of the *archetypes*. Jung considered it to be the central organizing principle of the personality from which the structural development or blueprint of the *ego* stems (Hall & Nordby, 1973); the *ego* being a structural counterpart of the original center. Thus, Jung suggested that there are two different centers of personality: the *ego* making up the center of consciousness; the *Self* at the center of personality and organizing principle. Perls referred it a representation of our non-actualized potential.

The *Self* can emerge as a superior male figure such as the cosmic or wise old man, guardian or superior woman such as priestess, sorceress, earth mother. Although I don't consider the gender distinction between dreamer and *Self* that important in understanding the dream, Jung defined the *Self* appearing as the same gender as the dreamer.

Jung however identified a multitude of images as representation of the forces of the *Self* – which he called "symbols of the *Self*". In addition to the various personifications of guiding or *compensating* figures discussed below, symbols of the *Self* can include geometric patterns (see figure 7-4) such as: a) any of a multitude of center oriented, circular, spiral or mandala shapes representing a tendency toward centering and *wholeness*; b) images representing conflict resolution and conscious/*unconscious* integration such as black and white patterns, couples, marriage, and pairs or balanced groups of opposites. They can also

include nature imagery, animal and organic representing our natural instinctive origins, such as the cave or deep water representing our *unconscious* and the *great tree* representing the slow but purposeful process of *individuation*, or the great stone representing the natural original substance of *Self* (like the one that rang like a bell when the boat in the "*Ice Cave*" dream landed on it).

One representation of the relation between the *ego* and *Self* is center-oriented geometry particularly the circle with focal point pictured at the center. Jung considered the *Self* as representing the whole circle and the center the *ego* (or focus for the *ego*). Of interest in orienting yourself to the dream is that often what appear in the center identifies the issue the *ego* must deal with in order to resolve the situation. This motif appeared in the following "*Latin Priest*" dream where the dreamer was embracing a new concept of spirituality that was in conflict with his earlier Latin American Catholic upbringing: *I was in an airplane which landed in a spiral motion on the rim of a large circle in a Latin American village. In the center of the circle was a priest dressed in black, with a gun, protecting the village. The priest threatened to shoot me if I returned back to the plane.*" Here the dream was focusing on the *Shadow* being triggered by the *ego* adopting an opposing belief, the priest protecting the *old myth* - the issue the *ego* must deal with to resolve the conflict and be able to fully accept the new spiritual concept.

The Persona

The *persona* is how we present ourselves to the world. The word "persona" is derived from a Latin word that literally means "mask." The *persona* represents all of the different social masks that we wear among various groups and situations intended to shield the *ego* and adapt to the world around us and fit in with the society in which they live. As we grow, particularly as children and adolescents, we learn that they must behave in certain ways in order to be accepted by our parents and peers or to fit into society's expectations and norms. The *persona* develops as a social mask to contain the instinctive urges and emotional impulses and reactions that are not considered socially acceptable. It adopts many of the Motivational Archetypes discussed below to adapt to situations in life. Becoming too closely identified with our *persona* or a motivational *archetype* can lead us to lose sight of our true selves. The development of our *persona* is in part what *fragments* our personality into the "me" and "not me" discussed earlier – the parts we consider acceptable to reveal and the parts we feel we must suppress. The *persona* may appear in dreams as the misconceived views of the *dream-self*, a figure you identify with in the dream or a person you know from waking life whose personality is like the *persona* you are projecting or wish you could project in the situation the dream is dealing with.

The Shadow

Jung indicated that one of the initial images encountered in the process of *individuation* is that of the *Shadow*, perhaps to convince the dreamer to "accept what seems to be criticism from the *unconscious*" (Jung, 1973). The *Shadow* represents lesser known elements of the self, perhaps a *counter-myth*, or suppressed aspect of the personality, which have not been integrated into the *conscious* personality and which the *ego* does not identify with. These elements can arise from instinctive urges, desires, weaknesses, disowned or suppressed or repressed material which the person feels are negative and unacceptable. A person might consider them unacceptable to one's moral values or the norms or expectations of peers, parents, or society. The *Shadow* also might represent positive material and desires that are considered unattainable. Even vulnerable, sensitive or loving qualities might be denied, due to a hurtful experience or peer and family pressures and culture. One danger of the *Shadow* is that we tend to project it on others – we often dislike or react to something about another person because we dislike that within ourselves.

In dreams the *Shadow* often appears as a dark or shadowy, unseen or unknown figure, often of the same sex as the dreamer (as Jung defined it), acting in opposition or as a balance to the views of the *ego*. It can

appear as a figure or dream *element* in a repulsive, frightening or threatening role, when it represents characteristics that you have rejected within yourself. When you face the *Shadow* in a dream you may find you are facing some aspect of yourself as in this example: *"I have had this recurring dream for years where I am running away in fear from some dark figure. One night I turned around in my dream and faced the person. It turned out it was me!"*

However the *Shadow* appears it acts as a positive force in that it is there as a balance for the *ego* and initiates the process of *integration* by picturing what the dreamer must deal with in order to work thought the issue or conflict that triggered the dream – as it did in the "*Latin Priest*" dream.

The Anima or Animus

In Jung's definition the *Anima*, in Jung's definition, is the *feminine* component in the man's *psyche* that balances the *masculine* component that a male *ego* generally identifies with, either due to cultural or social norms or the female role models in his life. It often appears as an unknown female figure in a man's dreams, sometimes a mother image or mate of the *Shadow*. Likewise, the *Animus* is the *masculine* counterpart in a woman's dreams, the *masculine* component within the female *psyche*; often appearing as an unknown male figure in a woman's dreams. They are the personification of conscious/unconscious integration.

Personally, I consider the effort to define which is *Anima* and *Animus* in a dream, in relation to the dreamer's gender, to be overly complex and counterproductive and of little help in working with a dream. The attributes have little to do with the dreamer's biological gender in any case. It is more productive to understand the unknown male and female figures as representing *masculine* and *feminine* attributes within you. Although they have little to do with your actual gender – the definition of these attributes tend to align with biological, inherited and cultural norms to a reasonable degree – implying a collective, inherited, perhaps genetic origin to these *archetypal* attributes. There are no hard and fast definitions, but *masculine* attributes are generally considered qualities traditionally associated with men, a few being: father, strength, assertiveness, aggressiveness, individual dynamics, a tendency toward left brain processing (linear logic) and such. *Feminine* attributes on the other hand might be considered qualities traditionally associated with women, some being: mother/nurturing, intuitive, communicating, social group dynamics, a tendency toward right brain processing (wholistic and intuitive).

A balanced personality means the person has access to either depending on the situation, thus the changing mixtures of male and female figures in our dreams. The mix of male and female figures in a dream may therefore represent the mix of attributes we are applying to the situation the dream is dealing with – and perhaps the introduction of one or more unknow figures, or the union of male and female figures (embracing, sex, marriage, or a morphed image) might be a re-balancing that the dream is trying to establish to resolve the situation.

The *masculine* vs. *feminine* approach to the conflict of a dreamer was illustrated in the "*Book of Truth*" dream from Chapter 5. The dreamer was conflicted, searching for truth whereupon he met a *wise old man* who *"...pointed down a descending wooden spiral into the earth and said 'Truth lies within'."* When the dreamer descended he was embraced by an angelic female. These *archetypes* will be discussed further below, but the male and female dream figures appeared to relate to his *masculine* and *feminine* approach to his finding "truth". Up to that point his search had been all mental, a traditionally *masculine* attribute. He was then told and shown that the truth lies within himself – his inner *feminine*. This changed his search in waking life from one of reading books to a successfully balanced one of meditation and reliance on his inner intuitive to discriminate between truth and fiction.

Other Commonly Observed Archetypal Figures

Much of this chapter will describe how to recognize and work with *archetypal* or collective themes and patterns in dreams and not so much the *archetypal* figures that might represent those patterns and forces. There are simply too many to describe. *Man and His Symbols* (Jung, 1973) is a good place to start but what I wanted to do here is just mention three figures (in addition to those above) that are quite often observed in dreams. These Jung considered some of the characterizations or symbols of the *Self* – guiding forces that help bring about integration and *wholeness*.

Wise Old Man or Woman, Great Father/Mother

The appearance of a guiding, powerful, divine or wise man (often an elder), or a similar woman, can represent a guiding aspect of the *Self*. They may appear as a helper, teacher, doctor or other authority figure serving to offer guidance and words of wisdom; or the personification of spirit or the divine. The *wise old man* or *great father* might take on attributes of the initiator, guardian, guru, ruler, father as well as knowledge, reflection, insight, wisdom, cleverness, and intuition as well as moral qualities such as goodwill and readiness to help. As noted above these *archetypes* appeared in the "*Book of Truth*" dream. "*Suddenly I saw a wise old man sitting on the left, who pointed down a descending wooden spiral into the earth..he said, 'Truth lies within'.*" The *wise old woman or great mother* is the female counterpart, usually personified as a superior guiding female: a priestess, sorceress, earth mother, or goddess of nature or love, part of the creation myth as the 'primordial mother', wisdom of the eternal *feminine* nature. *As I go down the spiral in this example I reach the bottom and am embraced by an angelic feminine figure – a guiding goddess.*

Another appearance of the *great mother* is in a dream I call "*Gail's Journey*" which will be detailed later. It is a dream containing both the *wise old man* characterized by Carl Jung sitting on a throne carved with snake heads, and the *great mother* sitting on a dragon. *The dreamer descends down a wooden castle stair and meets The Journey carved with snake heads who sends her on a journey across water, leading to her eventually entering a round hut and Jung instructing her to, "stay there till you are done". She sits around a fire and above her is a beautiful woman riding a fire breathing dragon, who throws her a red ball which she catches.*

The Hero or Heroine

The Hero is generally a main dream figure who combats and overcomes adversity through feats of courage, bravery, strength or ingenuity and vanquishes evil in its various forms - often sacrificing their own personal concerns to liberate others or for the greater good. The Hero motif might be seen to follow the basic stages of life's journey of *individuation* - from an initial unconsciousness stage before the *ego* has awakened, through various stages of struggle through life, to a final state of reaching one's full potential or *wholeness*. In dreams the hero is generally you, your *dream-self*, embarking on a transformational journey: going with (into the *unconscious*); meeting, confronting and defeating our conflicts and fears and integrating our Shadow side; and eventually, after many dreams or dream segments, being transformed or reborn as a new self with a new attitude.

Trickster

The *Trickster* is a figure who exhibits a great degree of intellect or secret knowledge and uses it to play tricks or otherwise disobey normal rules and conventional behavior. It may appear as a disruptive figure in your dreams, or a joke to keep you from taking yourself too seriously, or more often as a surprise,

unexpected change or reversal in the dream plot - perhaps when you have misjudged a situation. The character in the "*Willy Pissedoff*" dream discussed earlier is perhaps the personification of the *Trickster* causing the dreamer to laugh at himself. Other examples is in trying to find your way back to where you were earlier in the dream only to suddenly find that the landscape has completely changed or disappeared, or the stairs are impassible or hallway too narrow to pass through – are all plot changes revealing the "secret knowledge" of the *Trickster,* or *compensating* message for to pay attention to in orienting yourself to aim of the dream.

Motivational Archetypes

Although there are many different *archetypes* and *archetypal* patters, Jung defined twelve primary types that symbolize basic human motivations (figure 7-2) . Each type has its own set of values, meanings and personality traits (brackets): Ruler (control), Creator/Artist (innovation), Sage (understanding), Innocent (safety), Explorer (freedom), Rebel/Outlaw (liberation), Hero (mastery), Wizard/Magician (power), Jester (enjoyment), Regular/Everyman (belonging), Lover (intimacy), Caregiver (service). He divided them into four *motivating orientations*: 1) Ego – Leaving a Mark on the World, 2) Order –Providing Structure to the World; 3) Social – Connecting to others; 4) Freedom – Yearning for Paradise. He additionally oriented those that fell into each of the 4 orientations, by *common driving force*: *Ego,* Soul, and *Self*.

Fig 7-2
Jung's Motivational Archetypes
(Derived from Conorneill, 2018)
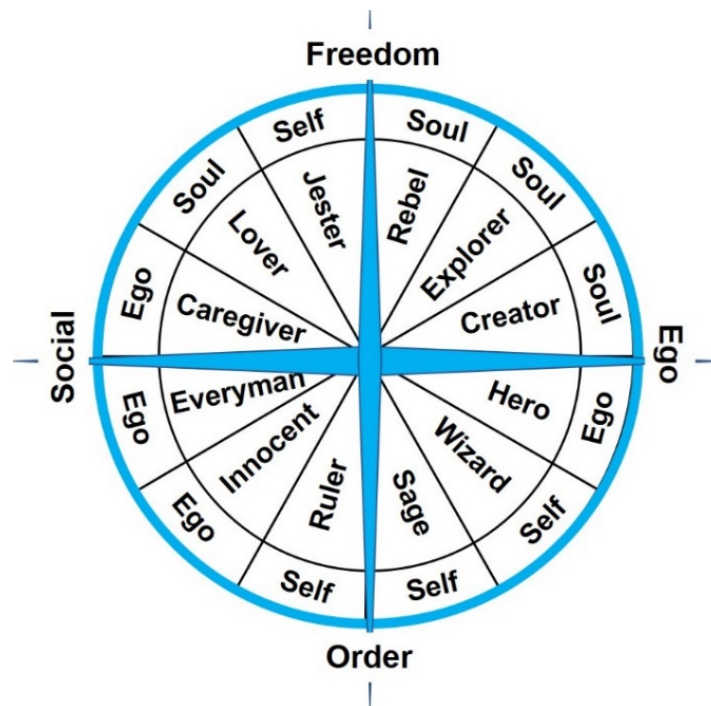
For example, the Caregiver is a Social orientation as it is driven by the need to fulfill *Ego* agendas through service to and meeting the needs of others. The Hero is also driven by the need to fulfill Ego agendas but does so through an Ego orientation, courageous action that proves self-worth. Note that these *archetypes* have a lot to do with a person's motivation and might be helpful in therapy, but are difficult to recognize in the dream, and perhaps not necessary for most dreamwork. Going further with these motivational *archetypes* is therefore beyond the scope of this book.

Conscious versus Unconscious Elements

In order to understand whether and how a particular dream, dream segment or sequence of dreams is attempting to resolve a problem, it can helpful to briefly orient yourself to the apparent structure of the dream. The learning structure (or Jung's "purposeful structure") was discussed in Chapter 7. Observing the Archetypal structure can also be helpful, in particular sorting out the *unconscious* and *conscious* forces which might be at conflict or for which integration is being attempted. This section will therefore describe some of the visual clues to the origin of the imagery in the dream. Figure 7-3 is an overly simplified diagram but might be helpful in visualizing the discussion herein.

Figure 7-3 - Dream Orientation
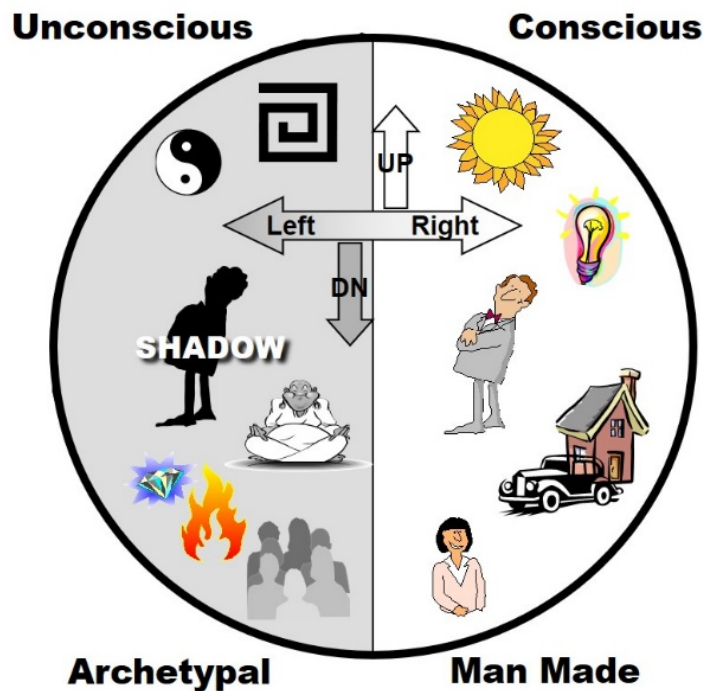
The Unconscious

The *unconscious* realm can on one hand contain negative threatening suppressed and repressed material, your *counter-myths* and undesirable or non-integrated *Shadow* self, and uncomfortable or uncontrollable instinctive forces - but on the other hand very positive images and personifications of forces for balance, integration, *wholeness*, transformation and *individuation*. In any case, being from the *unconscious*: a) the material is generally unknown and therefore can appear as dark or coming from the darkness, an unknown person or figure; b) it is from deep within the non-conscious realm, therefore can appear as emerging from below or from the left (right brain); c) going within at a time that nothing works, the *ego* has given up, can appear as a symbolic death ("death of the *ego*"); d) being from our collective natural origins it can appear as nature imagery, animal or mineral; and e) since the *collective unconscious* contains the *Self* as an organizing force for our personality, the imagery can appear as empowering, guiding, orienting, cosmic or divine in nature.

The Dark Side

Because what emerges is unknown, out of the *ego*'s control, counter to the aims of the *ego* and generally requires the *ego* to give in (symbolically die) in order for the new self to emerge, the *unconscious* imagery may naturally appear as fearful, dark, shadowy and frightening. Undesirable *fragments* of our personality that threaten the existence of our image of self might be seen as something evil or threatening, i.e. the monsters in our dreams. Suppressed material or issues we have suppressed because we don't want to deal with them, might emerge as dead things, as *fragments* of self that have been "dead" to our *conscious* persona, that the *ego* does not want to confront, as was the case of the "*dead body to the left*" in the "*Boxer*" dream above.

Because suppressed material and feelings are "frozen" into inaction, or when we find ourselves "frozen" in conflict, it may appear as winter motifs, or things encased in ice. *"I dreamed that some friends and I wanted to go sailing, but when we arrived at the lake we realized that the lake was frozen and our boat was encased in ice under the surface."* Isolating yourself emotionally from a situation, as this dreamer did, can also appear as being encased in ice: *"I dreamed my daughter was lying dead on a pile of ice cubes."*

The symbolic *death of the ego* comes at a time when the *ego* has given in and turned within, into the darkness of the *unconscious* – a dark situation but actually the beginning of a journey of transformation where the *unconscious* forces can begin the process toward rebirth of the new self. The "*Crushed*" dream was a perfect example of the symbolic *death of the ego*, the dreamer having been fired now twice, the *ego* pictorially died in the dream, gave in knowing it was all over for good: *A building falls on me and I am crushed under the rubble. All goes dark, and I stop breathing. I know I am dead, and it is all over, there is no future.* This however was the moment when the *unconscious* provided a balancing, *compensating* image of a strong inner self digging her out of the rubble.

The Bright Side

On the more pleasant side of *unconscious* imagery, Jung (1973) indicated that dreams "differentiate the undifferentiated portions of the personality," i.e., they bring forth and identify one's inner hidden potential and help bring about the evolution of the greater *Self*. As our *ego* consciousness becomes more self-aware and comfortable with our inner *Self*, *unconscious elements* may appear beautiful, dramatic and exciting. The black of the *unconscious* becomes a beautiful shiny black; discoveries become joyful and things of value appear, such as gems, gold and silver; unknown dream figures become guiding entities.

A major event or turning point in our *individuation* or evolving inner potential, can be observed as fascinating dramatic natural *elements* (volcanoes or tornadoes) or as beautiful nature imagery such as the tree (or tree of life), crystal waters of life, spring and symbols of rebirth, or the new child: *"I had climbed into an enormous tree. My child was with me and was fascinated with the view. We sat for a long time among the leaves, feeling the gentle spring air, and looking out over the most beautiful valley I have ever seen with distant mountains and lush meadows and woods. On the branches was a thick layer of freshly fallen white snow, and the child was playing with it."*

As the *ego*-self fears or resists the *unconscious*, the inner *Self* will try to *compensate*, by showing its beauty, guiding us gently or not so gently, with surprising insight, discoveries, actions or words. This was the case in the following "*End of the World*" dream. The dreamer was struggling some emotions rising within her that threatened who she believed herself to be. She dreamed: "*The sky is boiling and the ground shaking; it is the end of the earth. I am on a mountain top, but water is rising all around me. Suddenly a voice calls out, 'the water is just your unconscious, jump in and you will be fine'. I jumped in and was terrified, waiting for the end, but instead it was beautiful!"*

Our Origins - Nature and Animal Imagery

Jung related nature motifs to collective instinctive forces and our origins or natural roots. Animals might contain both instinctive and emotional characteristics (a fluffy kitten or puppy representing very different emotions that say a cat or dog or tiger). A woman pondering a tempting affair dreamed: *"I wanted to hold on to a fluffy warm puppy, but I knew if I did it would pee all over me."*

The great stone, the depths of a cave, water (particularly deep water) were often related to our *unconscious* origins, as they were in the "*Ice Cave*" dream. Water can also relate to emotion which seems to rise in us uncontrollably from *unconscious* origins as they did in the "*End of the World*" dream where the dream literally announced, "*the water is only you unconscious…*" The *great tree*, or natural wood, Jun related to the process of *individuation* - a "powerful involuntary growth fulfilling a definite pattern, the roots deriving nourishment from deep within the *unconscious* to become new growth within the *conscious* personality" (Jung, 1964)

Jung (1973) considered animals to be our connection with our natural roots – animals such as the bird, perhaps symbolizing the goal of *transcendence*. He attributed an instinctive nature to our *Shadow*, and also described how the animal motif represents our deeper primitive instinctual nature, the autonomous emotions erupting from the *unconscious*.

This is illustrated in the following dream of a woman caught in a negative relationship with her husband and his mother, who had rejected her artistic talents threatening to destroy her sense of who she was (the *great tree*): *"My husband threw my artwork out onto a huge tree which moved downward and disappeared into the ground, into a rectangular area shaped like a grave. As the tree disappeared, a furry form rose up from the grave and grew into a large creature with a woman's face that had that triumphant self-satisfied look that my mother-in-law always has when she makes trouble for someone."*

Nature imagery and the *great tree* often appears at the point of *transcendence* or rebirth of the new self as it did in this dream: *"I had climbed into an enormous tree. My child was with me and was fascinated with the view. We sat for a long time among the leaves, feeling the gentle spring air, and looking out over the most beautiful valley I have ever seen with distant mountains and lush meadows and woods*

Our personal associations with (or reactions to) the animals that we see in our dreams, can define what they represent in our dreams. For example, this "four cats" dream represented a situation in which the dreamer was trying to contain her emotions: *"I dreamed my four cats were running all over and I was trying to get them inside the fence."* Primitive animals can be a motif for parts of ourselves that have not fully evolved: *"I dreamed of a big red amoeba."* Sometimes the animals will represent the characteristics we attribute to them in our culture or experience. One young woman who was falling in love dreamed of *"warm fuzzy kittens."*

Some animals may be associated with our deepest instincts or fears. I have observed that this is the case with snake imagery, which Jung symbolically considered a symbol of *transcendence* embodying a kind of mediation between earth and heaven. In mythology, snakes have also been associated with creation of the world of form, and the awakening of the Kundalini. It often shows up in dreams accompanied by emotion or an instinctive drive, apparently emerging from the *unconscious*. The following dream is an example of this, in which the snake seemed to represent a fear of the unknown that was surfacing within the dreamer heralding a transformation (black and white pattern) and something arising from within that was "trying to get out of the basket": *"I dreamed of a black and white snake with two heads that was trying to get out of the basket it was in."*

Sometimes the animal represents the element they live in, for example birds and fish. Birds can represent a "flight of ideas," feelings of freedom, spiritual aspirations – things of the mind and the spirit – metaphorically "of the air." Fish naturally relate to water, which to Jung was symbolic of the life-giving forces within the *unconscious*. In the following "brown fish" dream, the fish related to the emergence of a fear of "being out of her element," as the dreamer moved into a new and exciting job situation: *"I dreamed it had rained so hard that a pond overflowed, and brown fish were floundering on shore. I was trying to get the fish back in the pond."* The dream continued with the image of gray kitten playing with a snake, which was further associated with her fear of the unknown but of her pending transformation as she stepped out of the familiar to boldly venture into unfamiliar areas.

The Conscious Personality

The *conscious* realm of your *psyche*, or personality, contains: personal memories; the *ego*-self and its various states and behaviors; and your belief system or personal *mythic* structure. This is material the *ego* generally knows and is more comfortable with or at least can access from memory and past experience. Therefore the *conscious* realm generally appears: a) in the light and to the right (left brain) – becoming light or moving to the right as something is accepted into consciousness; b) as persons we know or figures in well-defined roles; c) as friendly, cooperative or well-defined dream figures representing non-integrated *fragments*, behaviors and states of the *ego*-self that we are familiar with; c) as *conscious* constructs such as man-made *elements* that we use to proceed in life (vehicles, tools, buildings, etc.); d) our *dream-self* or someone/something representing our *ego* self and the roles we play in the dream.

Our present viewpoint or belief *(existing-myth)* may represent itself in the story of the dream particularly in the introductory scene. In the "*Ice Cave*" dream, the scene was a perfect *picture-metaphor* for the dreamer's waking life aimless search for a new position his company that would show him a way out of his situation, stuck in fear but with no thought that he could walking out the door and find something better: "*"I dreamed all night that I am on a long journey as a passenger in an enclosed boat with no control, at the mercy of the water, just aimlessly moving through a black underground tunnel or cave. I am constantly trying to work around the people gathered in a few square windows that are standing in my way, searching for a position in the windows that will show me a way out."* The misconception that the *conscious ego* had trapped itself in was represented as being a helpless passenger in the boat, considering only positions in the windows – both boat and windows being man-made constructs representing his *conscious* viewpoint. The *unconscious* aspect was the ice cave – the fear and suppressed conflict that left him stuck.

This only resolved itself when the *Self* introduce an alternative *(compensating)* scenario– *At one point an unseen authoritative 'travel guide' behind me stated: 'you Can walk out the door'*. Once my *dream-self* abandoned the *myth* (being a helpless passenger who would lose his retirement and have to start over if he left) and I realized my true self-worth and walked out the door of the boat – the acceptance of this *new myth* appeared as my *dream-self* moving to the right into the light of a beautiful rewarding natural scene. "*when I finally did walk out the door, the boat emerged from the dark ice cave onto a crystal stream in a beautiful, sunlit colorful land with trees and mountains and singing in the air."* The unconscious *compensation* (the unseen voice) presented an opposing alternative, the "take charge" counter-myth of walking out the door. As my *dream-self* reversed its view and consciously accepted the *unconscious* guidance – the dream reinforced the action as the boat emerged to the right into a scene of light and beauty. As Jung stated, it is the *ego*-self that must involve itself in the process of accepting the new myth into the consciousness personality.

Directionality

Jung (1973) discussed right-left orientation of dream imagery in relationship to *conscious* and *unconscious* material respectively, as it emerges in the dreamscape. He observed a tendency for *conscious* or transcending material to appear on the right and above, and for *unconscious* material to appear to the left, below or into the background in dreams. Jung (1972, p.36) also discussed directionality as it related to movement in the dream, and as it is associated with the spiral: rightward or clockwise motion being toward consciousness, leftward or counterclockwise motion as being toward the *unconscious*.

Left/Right, East/West

We saw the *Shadow* side of the personality appear to the left in the "*Boxer*" dream above and as the *unconscious* guiding force in the "*Rusty Car*" and "*Ice Cave*" and "*Jokester*" dreams among others. There may be biological factors influencing the left-right orientation in dreams. Dream orientation has a curious correlation with the eye's left and right visual fields being separately processed by the right and left-brain hemispheres respectively. Penfield and Roberts found that stimulation of certain portions of the right hemisphere produced eye shifts to the left, and vice versa (Springer & Deutsch, 1980). It is known that these two brain hemispheres process information differently. Might it be that the left and right orientations in the dreamscape are representative of these processing differences?

This is conjecture but if directionality in dreams has something to do with hemispheric processing, then the dream figures and *elements* that are to the left in dreams should exhibit a relationship to the characteristics of right hemisphere processing. Referring to table 3-2, the dream *elements* that emerge from the left (right brain processing) might relate to: anomalous experiences that don't fit the inner model; unprocessed or unresolved emotional and social situations including repressed threatening emotional memories and traumas; representations in the form of analogies and metaphor; value representations; insights and forces that attempt integration in a holistic, synthetic manner as well as the reference image (the Gestalt) for the whole self. This sounds similar to the imagery and forces referred to by Jung as emerging from the *unconscious* (left) in dreams.

Likewise, *elements* to the right in dreams should relate to left hemisphere processes. Thus, dream *elements* that emerge from the right might relate to: storylines which take the *ego* through a time sequential deductive learning process; things that can be named; consciously accessible memories; spoken or written words; and behaviors or information with which we are comfortable because it fits our "rational" model of self and reality. These are very close to the characteristics attributed by Jung to the *conscious* realm and the right orientation in dreams.

Also, as material is accepted into and recognized by our rational consciousness, it would make sense that it would move "into the left hemisphere" and thus toward the right field of vision in dreams. The "*Ice Cave*" dream above demonstrated this as the *dream-self* accepted the *compensating* guidance the boat emerged to the right into the light. It was also observed in the "*Jokester*" dream in Chapter 2 illustrated right-oriented movement when a new part of self was accepted into the personality: *"a Shadowy figure entered from my left and argued that this jokester had been quite useful and that we should give him a chance. After some discussion I agreed, and the jokester figure was told he would be given a chance to prove himself. At that point he walked off to the right down a sunlit path."*

This right-left orientation was also illustrated in the "*Office Party*" dream. Right and light were associated with the *conscious ego*-self and left was associated with *fragments* of the personality left behind: *"My job was to bring each of the groups through the woods into a lighted area on the right to join in a circle dance. After bringing the first group to the circle, I got so caught up in the self-importance of my role as leader,*

that I dallied. By the time I got back to the other three houses, most of the people had left and gone home. They exited into the darkness on the left."

Above/Below, Behind/In Front, North/South

Note that *conscious* and *unconscious* differentiation in dreams is not exclusively seen as left/right, East/West horizontal orientation motifs. Often a vertical organization such as above/below, North/South or ascending/descending can represent the duality of *conscious* and *unconscious* (perhaps being biologically behind the frontal cortex). *Conscious* material is often seen as in front or ahead, while *unconscious elements* might appear from behind, as illustrated in the "*Ice Cave*" dream where the voice came from an unseen "travel guide" behind the dreamer.

Ascending or moving north might relate to bringing something into consciousness. *"I dreamed I was flying"* often relates to conscious control over nature or perhaps a fantasy. *Conscious elements* often come from above as in this "*Latin Priest*" dream. The dreamer began to embrace a new concept of spirituality which threatened the embedded teachings of his Latin American Catholic upbringing. *"I was in an airplane which landed in a spiral motion on the rim of a large circle in a Latin American village. In the center of the circle was a priest dressed in black, with a gun, protecting the village. He threatens to shoot if I return to the plane."* Here the new spiritual concepts the dreamer was consciously adopting appears as an airplane (man-made and coming from above), entering into the *unconscious* (counter-clockwise spiral) where the *Shadow* of the *old-myth* is triggered in opposition to the *ego* viewpoint.

Unconscious material is often seen as below, under water, underground, thus metaphorically below consciousness (perhaps biologically being below the cortex): *"I was following some people into a cave near the woods, when I looked down to see a deep hole with a swift swirling vortex of crystal water rushing in, leading to an underground river."* Suppression, or emergence of suppressed material, is often observed to be associated with *elements* to or from below. The following dream, which we will discuss further in Chapter 9, came to a woman who was suppressing a desire to go out and have fun (the red hat) in order to take care of a troubled daughter: *"In the dream I was one of three women, and was wearing a red hat. We were going into town, walking along a road, when suddenly we sank into the ground.*"

Illumination

Illumination in dreams also appears to relate to awareness and consciousness, or conscious acceptance. Just as the cartoon metaphor represents an idea with a light bulb, our dreams seem to do much the same. As we learned earlier, Hamilton (2005) noted dramatic increases in light as a dreamer achieved higher levels of consciousness and self-awareness during a transformation experience. As noted above, the *conscious* realm is often represented by the brighter, illuminated regions in our dreams. When a new concept is accepted into awareness, the dreaming brain literally "illuminates" that concept as in the "*Ice Cave*" and "*Jokester*" and "*Office Party*" dreams discussed above.

A particularly interesting observation of light appearing at the moment a concept is accepted, appears in the form much like the classic cartoon image of a light bulb lighting to represent an idea. We saw this in the "*Clever Dog*" dream in Chapter 5: *Two unknown men were trying to convince us to let them kill a dog they considered aggressive and threatening. The dog suddenly decided to roll over and play dead. At that point the dog turned into a cute puppy, and the men stopped, convinced that the dog was no longer a threat. The scene was suddenly illuminated by a street lamp that appeared overhead."* Perhaps the illumination reflects actual neural connections being made at the moment of learning?

On the other hand, the *unconscious elements* of the *psyche* are not "illuminated" by the *conscious* mind and thus they may appear in the areas of darkness in dreams. For example, in the "*Office Party*" dream, the *unconscious elements*, those persons left behind, remained in the darkness. In the dream examples above, there was a definite distinction between light and dark, usually aligned with left and right. In the "*Office Party*" dream, the dream figures that joined the circle dance went to the right into the light, and the people that remained were to the left in the dark. In the "*Jokester*" dream, the guiding *Shadow* figure came from the left and the jokester, once accepted, moved to the right into the light.

Known vs. Unknown Dream Figures

When working with dream figures, you will likely get a different result if the figure is someone you know in waking life versus an unknown or ill-defined characterization. The unknown figures tend to originate as unconscious archetypal forces (*Shadow, Self, Anima, Animus*). The known persons are often "borrowed" by the dream to represent personality characteristics (ego state or persona); a personality trait or characteristic that you associate with them. They might picture: a way you are acting that is like that person; perhaps a memory (reminder of a past positive or negative situation with that person); or quite often a *counter-myth* or characteristic being tested by the dream, that the dreamer might acquire in order to resolve the situation they are in. So, when meeting a person you know within your dream it is always good to ask yourself "how would X approach my situation or conflict."

Figure 6-4
Collective: Masculine/Feminine State of Integration/Balance
Personal: Known Figure = Personality Characteristic

integration

wholeness   How would Joe handle it?
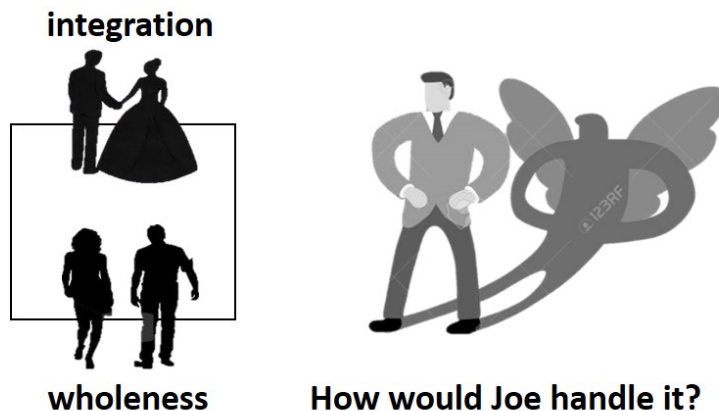
The mix of *masculine* and *feminine* might condense in a dream scene to represent a balance of the two attributes as it relates to your approach to the situation or conflict the dream is dealing with. When the unknown male or female figure plays a distinct role (fireman, policeman, dancer, etc.) then it may be a *condensation* of that action role, a *masculine* or *feminine* attribute and possibly the influence of role models from your past. When the figure is a person you know that can also be a combination of a *masculine/feminine* attribute with a personality characteristic or quality that the person represents – that is, your dream bringing up that figure or their personality as a representation of a *masculine* or *feminine* role model. At times the known person in your dream could represent themselves, but this usually only occurs when the dream is dealing with a situation that directly involves that person.

Natural versus Man-Made Imagery

Archetypal motifs from the *unconscious* often include imagery from nature both organic and inorganic, animals and minerals – as a representation of the influence of our natural and/or instinctive origins or roots. On the other hand, man-made imagery tends to represent *conscious* mental creations or concepts and personal associations.

Depending on the role, machines might be metaphorically related to the "mechanical" nature of a behavior pattern, or a "mechanism" for progressing or achieving some goal, as has been observed in certain vehicle dreams. I have observed, as has Patricia Garfield, that man-made objects, such as machinery, plumbing, buildings and cars, can sometimes relate to parts of the physical body (our vehicle), with broken machinery often relating to disease or sickness. In any case, it is a dreamer's personal associations with the mechanical object in the dream that is important to understanding that dream *element*.

The mix of natural and manmade imagery within a scene might therefore combine to represent the *unconscious* versus *conscious* forces at play. In the "*Rusty Car*" dream the natural desert, driver and unseen companion appeared to be more related to material of an internal or *unconscious* origin the inner emotions of feeling without life or dead, whereas the man-made image of the car related to his *conscious* mechanism for moving forward (the new assignment). The distinction was also apparent in the "*Latin Priest*" dream. *"I was in an airplane which landed in a spiral motion on the rim of a large circle in a Latin American village. In the center of the circle was a priest dressed in black, with a gun, protecting the village. He threatens to shoot if I return to the plane."* Here the new spiritual concepts the dreamer was consciously adopting appears as an airplane (man-made and coming from above). In the third segment of the four segment "*Tornado Spirit*" dream: "*a childhood friend I knew, who later became a missionary, was riding a tricycle down toward the creek".* The natural elements of the creek pictures the natural origin of the spirit, and the tricycle is a man-made object perhaps representing *conscious* childhood religions concept.

Even when a dream *element* appears to be *archetypal*, it might be helpful to explore possible personal associations. Organic and inorganic images may contain a distinguishing characteristic or function that can contain meaningful personal associations. The image of a crystal stream, for example, may be a *archetypal* symbol of the greater *unconscious* or "source of life," but if the dreamer was to *role-play* the water it may reveal a sense of feeling "refreshed" that might relate in some way to the dreamer's waking life experience. It is always useful to test *collective* imagery for personal associations perhaps in relation to a feeling sense.

Imagery of Guidance and Compensation

The corrective or *compensating* nature of dreams appears in many forms – aimed at: revealing our misconceptions and actions that have bound us in conflict; providing an alternative path and bringing about an *ego* reversal in our thinking, and to lead us in the direction of transformation and release.

Guiding Dream figures

Various personifications of the guiding *Self* were discussed above. As an inner guiding force with a sense of knowing, the *Self* acts by *compensating* for misconceptions of the *ego*-self. It might appear as a guide or unknown figure that speaks with authority, or as a divine or wise old guardian pointing the way as in the "*Book of Truth*" dream. It can be an unknown, invisible or *Shadow*-like figure as in the "*Rusty Car*" dream and the "*Ice Cave*" dream discussed earlier. In each of those dreams it was an authoritative figure or voice that introduced an alternative resolution or "what-if" scenario, counter to the *ego* view, and challenged the *dream-self* to follow it.

A Voice or Written Words

At times vocal or written words are presented with no visible origin. Jung identified the appearance of the voice in dreams as the *compensating* intervention of the *Self.* This was the case in the "*End of the Earth*" dream where it was the end of the earth and water was rising all around terrifying the dreamer, when a voice spoke with a *compensating* message: *"the water just represents your unconscious, jump in and you will be fine."* In the *Somatic* dream section of Chapter 2 the appearance of guiding written words occurred in the dream of a man who was adjusting to a vegetarian diet he had just gone on: *"I dreamed of a fishing boat and on the side of it was written the words 'eat more fish'."*

For the most part, the words spoken by the voice in the dream are metaphors and need to be first understood regarding how they relate to the context of the dream and then, most importantly, how they relate as an analogy to the dreamer's waking life situation. This is the case in the "*Journal*" dream in Chapter 6 where: "*I opened my Journal and was disturbed to see that I only had a few pages left. Suddenly a voice said 'No there is more'. It was then that I realized that I had opened it too far back and indeed there was half a Journal left."* When the dreamer first came to me asking me what it was all about, he had taken it literally as talking about his journal. As we worked briefly on his personal associations and concerns he quickly realized the voice was referring to his waking concerns, that he did not have enough time left in his life to accomplish all he felt he needed to accomplish – the analogy being "no there are more pages in your life than you think." In the dream the words related directly to the journal, but both the journal and the words metaphorically related to the dreamer's waking life concerns.

Moment of Surprise

The guiding or revealing/*compensating* message in a dream, can come at a moment of surprise – which can be a surprising event or a surprising mixture of imagery. As noted earlier, Pavlovian research has shown the moment of surprise to be a moment of learning. This element of surprise can be seen at the moment of learning in many of the examples provided herein.

In the "*Father's Face*" dream illustrated such a surprising imagery mix brought about a moment of new insight and learning. *"I have a recurrent dream of being terribly angry with my husband, who I am running away from. These dreams continued until one night I turned around and faced my husband and looked at his face – it was my father's face."* This was also the case on the "*Book of Truth*" dream where the dreamer upon going down the wooden spiral within the earth, expecting to find the book, was surprised that no book had appeared but instead he was embraced by an angelic female figure. In the *"Willy Pissedoff"* dream the sudden appearance of the oddly named character came as a surprise which completely altered the mood of the dreamer.

Odd Imagery Combinations

In addition to surprising imagery combinations, sometimes the two imagery fragments themselves can represent a moment of insight regarding a previously unrealized conflict. In the "*Old Shoe*" dream the face of the dreamer was combined with an old shoe – revealing insight as to how the dreamer was treating his friend – diminishing him like an "old shoe". The "*Father's Face*" dream above was also such a case – the insight that the dreamer was projecting unresolved father issues onto her husband, being pictured by the odd imagery combination of the father's face on her husband's body. The dreamer's companion in the "*Change Purse*" dream was not a person (as perceived by the *dream-self*) but rather a two-colored change purse - an odd image that revealed a conflict, the nature of which was represented in the opposing colors (red versus green-brown) of each side.

Humor

Compensation in the form of humor is a form of surprise where the actions or visual image of something in the dream is other than expected – and it comes off as humorous. It can appear as an actual joke created within the dream story, a silly or unexpected way of portraying yourself or another in the dream, or a silly mixture of imagery – perhaps showing us the "silly" way in which we are viewing something. You may laugh in the dream but maybe it is not all that funny upon awakening yet meaningful in the context of your view of life. Such was the case of the '*Willy Pissedoff*' dream discussed earlier: *"I dreamed I was in front of a crowd, about to give a speech, when I was introduced to a man named 'Willy Pissedoff.' I was trying to control myself to keep from laughing."* The dream provided the opportunity for the dreamer to see his anger from a different perspective and laugh at himself and release a little of that tension.

A Question or Decision

Sometimes the *compensating* action comes in the form of question or the need for a decision, with the reversal and reinforcement occurring as the dreamer ponders the answer. In this "*Cleaning the Latrines*" example the dreamer was frustrated with her life as a housewife: *"I dreamed that our whole family was travelling on a large ship We were in a dirty, crowded dormitory section. My job was to clean the latrines which had an overpowering smell. A voice asked, 'do you dislike the job?' I pondered the question and finally said, 'I don't mind, it's for my family.' At that point we were moved into a large spacious beautiful part of the ship.* Here as she thinks through the answer, she reverses her viewpoint as she realizes the satisfaction of doing it for her family.

Emotional Reinforcement

If we accept the guidance of the dream and reverse our direction or viewpoint, the dream often emotionally reinforces the action of the dream-*ego* so as to store that new learning (see Chapter 5). Positive emotional reinforcement was apparent in the "*Cleaning the Latrines*" dream above. As the woman answered with this new viewpoint, she was rewarded by being moved in the more beautiful space. The dream then ended with an image that could almost be a picture of neural connections expanding as they weave this new viewpoint in to memory: *"I turned on the lamp. The light spayed out in a swirling silver mist like the starlight of a spiral nebula engulfing everything in its glow."* Such reinforcement was also obvious in examples such as the "*Ice Cave*" dream as the boat emerged into a beautiful sunlit scene, the *"Rusty Car"* dream as the driver and the car came back to life, and the "*Crushed*" dream as the woman who was dug out of the rubble came back to life.

Sometimes the reinforcement can be negative, a warning, if the actions of the dream-*ego* are seen as harmful. We saw this in the "*Evil Entity*" dream where the dreamer went through a ritual of suppression, and the sky darkened as a voice called out *"stop you are only making it worse."* Another example is this "*Warm Fuzzy Puppy*" dream: *"I dreamed I wanted this warm fuzzy puppy. I placed the puppy on my husband's back and it pissed on him and then all over the floor. I said, I don't know if I really want it, because it will just make a mess of things."* The fuzzy puppy related to the warm fuzzy feelings surrounding a tempting but illicit relationship – the dream making it obvious what the potential outcome might be; a burden on her husband and making a mess in their home life.

What is important when working with dreams that contain a positive or negative ending is to go back to understand what specific action brought about that ending – for example the decision the dreamer made which led to her being moved to the more beautiful space in the ship, in the "*Cleaning the Latrines*" dream.

Patterns of Integration & Wholeness

Look over your dream records and you may notice geometric shapes or movements and perhaps curious combinations of numbers. Jung (1964, 1971, 1972) discussed these geometric shapes and mandala-like imagery and the number patterns that accompany them (some shown in figure 7-4) as evidence of a natural, instinctive, organizing force or focusing image, that appear at times of dissociation or disorientation. He found a fundamental cross-cultural conformity in mandala-like and balance or center-oriented geometries, and their counterparts in numbers. The images below come from some of his writings and can be helpful in orienting yourself to processes taking place in a dream. But don't take them as rules or fixed meanings, but rather as suggested motifs to be explored.

Figure 7-4
Archetypal Motifs (derived from Jung's writings)

❑ **Circle, Sphere, One**
   Wholeness, Symbol of the Self, Unification of Whole Self; Center = Ego within Self; path to individuation (focus on problem to be solved)

❑ **Spiral or Circumnavigation**
   Spiral: Material emerging from or going within the Unconscious (CW or CCW respectively)
   Circumnavigation: Journey of Individuation

❑ **Two, Duality and Pairs**
   ▪ **Pairs of Equals (twin images, 2 of same sex) = Conflict and Indecision (2 equal forces in conflict for dominance/emergence)**
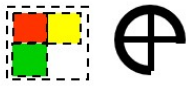
   ▪ **Pairs of Opposites (male/female, black/white patterns etc.) = integration process; union of opposites, conscious + unconscious union**

❑ **Three**
   ▪ **Unified Three (equilateral harmony) = transcendent or creative force, spirit**

   ▪ **3 becoming 4 (shape or grouping of four with one element missing, (ex: 2 males + 1 female) = search for the missing element necessary for completion, a need for closure, an anxious state; a pending transcendence**

   3/4   25/75

❑ **Four or Four-ness**
   ▪ **Square pattern, grouping of four, quartering of a circle, four primary colors, 4 quarters = completion, a solution, order, restoring harmony, 4 personality functions**

   4
   25/100

Circular or Center-Oriented Imagery

Jung spoke of circular and center-oriented patters as representative of the totality of the human *psyche* and its relationship with all of nature. The circle takes on a *feminine* quality, and represents the ultimate *wholeness*, the whole *Self* and the natural centering force within the *psyche*. Jung (1971c) saw the center-oriented motif as the organizing center of the *psyche* or *Self* or a new center for the personality as it comes into consciousness. The center may appear as a circle with an object in the center which I often observe to be an evolving *ego* state, or a focal point for the issue that must be dealt with by the *ego,* in order to resolve the conflict the dream is dealing with so as to continue the process of growth and *individuation*.

The centering force may also appear as circumnavigation – that is moving in a circular or spiral pattern, drawing the *ego* towards the center. This might include walking around a path in a clockwise or counter-clockwise direction, going around a corner, or descending or ascending a spiral stair. Note that in the "*Office Party*" dream, the dreamer stated, "*my job was to bring each of the groups through the woods into a lighted area to join in a circle dance,*" symbolically representing bringing the guests (the *fragments* of the personality) into a circle dance of integration.

Jung considered the spiral motif to be a pattern of new creation and new ways of thinking that spontaneously arise from the *unconscious*. The spiral has also been related, by anthropologist Angeles Arrien (1998) to growth and evolution. It is an evolutionary pattern often associated with spirit, that can lead into the *unconscious*, or bring forth new creation from the *unconscious*. Within this new creation, the older pattern returns on a higher level.

I find the spiral often appears in dreams as a tornado, i.e. a storm of natural forces from the *unconscious* that brings forth new concepts. This was the case of the four-part "*Tornado Spirit*" dream discussed previously "*I dreamed there was a spirit that came up from a creek destroying trees in its path, like a tornado.*" In the following dream, the dreamer was experiencing an upwelling of anxiety and unidentified fears as she was thrust into a legal situation: "*I saw a wall of wind coming toward me, with dozens of gray counter-clockwise spiral cloud forms in it. I felt it hit me and push me back.*"

I have most often observed the center to be a focus on what has to be dealt with (or integrated) for closure or *individuation* to be achieved – the *unconscious* aspect of the *conscious* situation. This appeared to be the case in the "*Latin Priest*" dream where the focus of the conflict to be dealt with was the *Shadow* of the early Latin American Catholic belief system: "*I was in an airplane which landed in a spiral motion on the rim of a large circle in a Latin American village. In the center of the circle was a priest dressed in black with a gun, protecting the village.*" At the center was the Latin American priest, the protector of the childhood religious concepts that were in conflict with the new spiritual concepts spiraling in as the airplane.

The circle or unity-of-one motif also can appear in the form of the number 0 (likely due to its circular shape), or more frequently as the number 1 (as symbolic of unity). It is common to see patterns of 10, or often 100 (or its quartering in the number 25), as representing this state of ultimate *wholeness*. In one dream the dreamer was engaged with some friends, "*throwing quarters into a circle.*"

Duality: Conflict vs. Union of Opposites

The number 2 and pairing of dream *elements* can relate to either conflict or conscious/*unconscious* integration and unity, depending on the content of the pair. When the pair contains identical *elements* (example: two of the same object; two of the same gender; parallel lines) or even the number 2 – it often relates to conflict – two equal forces vying for dominance or acceptance into the *conscious* personality. When the pair contains opposite *elements* (example: a male and female, equal mix of male and female;

black and white pattern; cross) – it generally relates to an integration of *conscious* and *unconscious* material, *myth* and *counter-myth* towards ultimate balance and *wholeness* (Jung, 1972).

Conflict

In the "*Boxer*" dream discussed earlier in this Chapter – it was two males fighting - the nature of the emotional conflict hidden within the color of their shorts. In the "*Change Purse*" dream the conflict was pictured as the two sides of the purse and the opposing colors on each side. In the "*Clever Dog*," dream in Chapter 5, the conflict of how to deal with bullying appeared as a pair of males: *"Two unknown men were trying to convince us to let them kill a dog they considered aggressive and threatening. The dog suddenly decided to roll over and play dead in order to spare its life."*

The following "*Dirty Rat*" dream occurred within a dream series I will call *"Gail's Journey"* which will be discussed in more detail below (Hoss et al. 2017). The dream segment contained two image pairs picturing conflict. The dreamer was feeling terribly guilty, conflicted over desire to pursue her own passion in life versus feeling obligated to continue to nurture her two grown sons and let them live at home. She dreamed: "*I see two trees sprout up in the middle of the living room. An evil energy manifests as two dirty rat heads. Something tells me I must look at them even though I do not want to. Finally, I go nose to nose with one of the rat heads & stare it right in the eyes and command it out. Suddenly they both turn into tiny little mice that scurry away.*" Here there are two dual images: the two trees (a conflict involving her *individuation*) and the two "dirty rats" representing her guilt (feeling like a "dirty rat") that was fed by the conflict between nurturing versus pursuing her own goals, Geometric patterns such as parallel lines can also picture a conflicted situation as in this example: *"I dreamed all night of train tracks, and that I was on a train that I could not control."*

Integration of Opposites

Unification often appears in dreams as a unity of opposites, the integration of opposing *elements*, the yin and yang. As we learned in Chapters 4 and 5, dualities form as our *conscious* personality evolves and individualizes. The basic process of evolving as a *conscious* personality, attempting to adapt to the rules of our parents, teachers, peers and society, can fragment us and separate our *conscious ego*-self from our *unconscious* un-realized *Self* – the "me" and "not me", *myth* and *counter-myth, persona* and *Shadow*. The resolution is a drive towards integrating the opposing forces (often *conscious* vs. *unconscious*). It is not a situation in which one wins and the other loses, but an integration in which the attributes of both are merged – such that a third *transcendent* or greater element (*new myth*) emerges. This appears in our dreams as interactions and union between equal or opposite dream *elements* such as: male/female, black and white, horizontal and vertical etc.

When the conflict relates to an imbalance or over-identification with one or the other inner *masculine* or *feminine* attributes then we often have dreams with male and female interaction or union. They more often appear as unknown male and female figures but can just as often appear as you interacting with a person you know of the opposite sex (that person perhaps relating to a *masculine* or *feminine* role model). A balanced whole personality might be considered to consist of an equal mix of the two characteristics, whereby either can be accessed as readily when needed to deal with a life situation. The unity can be symbolized by marriage, sex, or activities relating to the union of the two opposite sexes.

Jung (1973) described these as *Anima* and *Animus* and spoke of the unity of the *masculine* and *feminine* in dreams as a unification between *conscious* and *unconscious* attributes. Sometimes the union can represent some *unconscious* material that you are integrating with: *"I dreamed I was having a sexual encounter with a woman at work to whom I have never really been attracted."* When we worked on the dream, the

dreamer's immediate association was that she represented his growing emotional enjoyment of his working environment and career. Many years later however he married the woman.

As you will learn later, the "*Gail's Journey*" dream series (Hoss, et al. 2017) was filled with the theme of *masculine/feminine* integration – motivated by a need to assert herself offset by the negative influence of poor masculine role models in her life. Her initial integration dream illustrates that the attempt at or need for integrating *masculine* and *feminine* attributes doesn't always appear as a pairing or union of a man and woman: "*I am living in an insane asylum where there are two tall towers. My task is to get 'these things' which are in a pool at our feet from one side to the other. They look like little pink pig-fish. A commanding voice says, 'This is your brain. Get up and write this down'.*" When we explored the pig-fish associations, she stated: "Pigs are cuddly, loving, nurturing" (which she related to *feminine*) "Fish are slimy and scaly" (her view of the *masculine* – feeling "slimy" when she tries to assert herself).

When she began to assert herself by rejecting the *old-myth* or dysfunctional view of *masculinity* the dreams changed. In one segment she releases one of those negative influences (her ex-husband exits the story) as she integrates with a more positive view. "*I am in a medieval castle in the busy central courtyard with my ex-husband who is behaving badly. He walks away* (rejects that role model feeding the *old-myth*). *I catch the eye of a handsome young man who walks over and engages me (new-myth). I realize he is courting me. I am surprised and coy at first, but in the end we take each other's hands and walk off together*."

The integration of opposites may appear as geometric forms or configurations: black/shite patterns, or horizontal versus vertical shapes, such as in a cross. Jung (1972) spoke of black and white and the horizontal and vertical as an integration of *conscious* and *unconscious* respectively. Arrien (1998) indicates that the cross universally symbolizes the process of relationship and integration, and a tendency toward connection. Opposing pairs, representing the integration of *conscious* and *unconscious*, often appear as black and white patterns: "*I dreamed I was in a house and the floor was a checkerboard pattern of black and white;*" or "*The dress I was wearing was white with black polka dots; or "I dreamed of swirling clouds of black and white patterns.*"

The motif of black and white, plus left and right, appeared in the "two headed snake" dream discussed earlier: "*I dreamed of a black and white snake with two heads, that was trying to get out of the basket it was in.*" The opposing black and white, left and right heads of the snake, appeared as conflict (pulling in two directions), but also as a powerful sign of unification of *conscious* and *unconscious* forces at play. The dreamer was involving herself in a new creative venture in her life, which caused some instinctive fears to arise about venturing into the unknown. The *compensating* message appeared to be that although this fear was emerging "snake getting out of the basket," it was leading to an integration within herself (an evolution of unrealized potential into consciousness).

Four-ness and the Square

As did Jung, I find *four-ness* to be one of the most important imagery patterns in dreams. The square shape, and it's derivatives (rectangle, box), the number four (4) or groupings of four (dream figures or associated objects) or actions (walking around corners) appear in about 10% of our dreams. The four motif appears frequently in dreams as square or rectangular shapes and objects, such as the shape of a room, a building, or a table.

Four-ness will appear as the number 4 or 40, as derivatives of the number 4 (as in 1/4, 1/2, 3/4, 25, 50), and as the quartering of the circle or the whole (perhaps a cross inside a circle). It can appear in dreams as four similar objects, a family of four (father, mother, sibling and the dreamer); a group or mixture of male and female dream figures, or as a square pattern or square object. In one dream this quartering of the circle

appeared as a game with quarter coins: *"I dreamed I was with a bunch of friends and we were playing a game of pitching quarters into a large circle."*

Jung (1973) noted that the motif of four or *four-ness* to be related to: the process of *individuation*, a state of completion or closure, a pattern of order and stability, often representing a solution a closure. Jung (1972) discussed the "squaring of the circle" as the *archetype* of *wholeness* and as representing the four unity within the four functions of consciousness (thought, feeling, intuition and sensation) - which equips humans to deal with the impressions of the world received from within and without. Whereas he considered the circle as a symbol of *wholeness* within the *psyche*, the square symbolized a state of *wholeness* within our conscious personality. While the circle (assigned a *feminine* quality) tends to relate to the whole self or greater *Self*, the square or four (assigned a *masculine* quality) tends to represent a state of closure, balance or completion within the *conscious* personality. Jung (1972) also made distinctions between the number five, as associated with the physical body of man, and number four as associated with *conscious* totality.

The following "*Rachel"* dream combines the elements of duality, balance and integration with the symbology of four and the square in relation to resolution of a long-standing inner conflict that leads to a sense of balance or completion in the personality. In life the dreamer had unresolved childhood issues with her mother (whose name was Rachel) who disciplined her whenever she attempted to express or assert herself (causing her to suppress attributes of her inner *masculine*). This carried through to her later life when the inability to express and assert herself was preventing her from pursuing and realizing her full potential. She had a dream that changed all that: "*Four (4) of us were standing in a square* [resolution]. *The couple opposite was to be married* [integration of M & F]. *But an evil spirit "Rachel" had put a hex on him* [the masculine]. *At first I was afraid, but finally told the spirit what I thought of her and told her to go away* [rejection of the mother's influence]. *The spirit slowly faded away and a voice called out, "you now have the truth – remember it."*

I have observed that *four-ness* once achieved will accompany stress reduction, as it did in this "*Colorful Maze*" dream: *"There was a liquid crystal rectangular game of four squares that I had to find my way through. The squares were made up of three colors (red, yellow and green) that were constantly changing at a hectic pace. Finally, it appeared that I solved it, as things seemingly fell in place by themselves and the colors covered the entire surface of the now vertical rectangular game. The colored shapes now changed at a calmer pace. I now felt relaxed, that there was no longer a need to control the puzzle."*

Jung (1971c) also often equated *conscious* forces (thinking) to the horizontal and *unconscious* forces (feelings) to the vertical. The appearance of a rectangle, as opposed to a square, would therefore represent an imbalance in *unconscious* or *conscious* forces, or thinking versus feeling. In the "*Colorful Maze*" dream, the balanced pattern of the square seemed impossible to control, due to the rapidly changing colors. A calm state was achieved only by abandoning the need to control the situation (horizontal), and by letting go of the need to control and going within and relaxing (vertical).

Jung related *four-ness* to the four functions of consciousness, in relation to four "color primaries" and the alchemical elements: sensation (green) = earth; thinking (blue) = water, intuition (yellow) = air and feeling (red) = Fire. While the balance of these four appears solidly represented in dreams, the meaning he attributed to each color, when related to color psychology research in Chapter 9, does not necessarily align with Jung's assignment (particularly for blue and yellow). While he relates blue to water (and water frequently represents emotional states) Jung assigns the function of thinking to it – which does not fit the common emotional associations for that color nor the apparent context of the dreams.

For example balanced grouping of the four colors (red, yellow, blue and green) is illustrated in this "*Blue Sphere*" dream which came at a time when the dreamer was totally exhausted from work anxieties to the point of wanting to quit: *"I dreamed of a blue sphere which was part of a group of four spheres colored*

red, yellow, blue and green that formed the dial on a pay-phone. The blue sphere separated and landed on my finger like a "magic" ring that I perceived would give me the power to solve all my problems." In this dream, the four colors represented the desired state of harmony as Jung states, and blue was clearly pictured as the solution related color "the magic ring that would solve the problem". When the color work was done the dreamer resonated with the statement for blue "I need a peaceful state where I can relax and recover." It was relaxing not thinking that was the solution, which he applies by taking a vacation the next day.

As in the two examples above, when there is an obvious grouping of the four primaries, or three of the four, with one color active or missing, it is that active or missing element that is the key to what is needed for balance or closure.

I have talked about *four-ness* here as a balanced state. However, this is true only when there is a proper balance of the *elements* making up that four. An over-abundance of one *element* over another in a grouping of four can often be as revealing as a missing *element*, in understanding what must be adjusted in order to achieve balance and completion. For example, in the following "four women" dream, the appearance of more women than men appears to represent an overbalance of *feminine* forces acting on the situation: *"I dreamed that I had hired three other women to run my restaurant, which we had purchased from the owner who was the man from the last dream."* In this case, the dreamer was establishing herself as a dream worker, and had been dealing with how best to go about it, by either pursuing the more structured approach in which she had just been trained (the man she bought the store from), or by sticking with the more intuitive approach she was most comfortable with (the three women she had hired). Her struggle in this dream, and many subsequent dreams, was over how to integrate the structured work with the intuitive dreamwork method. As she worked her way through the dilemma over many months, her dreams contained varying mixtures of male and female populations, generally gathered in groups of four. Noticing this pattern provided a valuable clue to working on balancing factors in her waking life.

Three Becoming Four

Jung (1972) related the motif of 3 becoming 4, to the incomplete state of existence, with 3 to 4 relating to the relationship between the incomplete and the complete state. If the mind contains a natural tendency toward completion, then dreams would contain imagery representing that tendency; perhaps emerging shapes, partial constructs, or incomplete patterns with a missing *element*. I have frequently observed the 3 to 4 relationship appearing when the dream is dealing with the need for completion and searching for the missing element that will bring about a solution for closure – as in the "*Colorful Maze*" an "*Blue Sphere"* dreams above. You may dream of walking partway around a circular or square path, or an unbalanced grouping of three people (perhaps yourself with two people of the opposite sex), or numbers and patterns as illustrated in figure 7-4.

The incomplete four was seen in the "*Office Party*" dream which began in four houses, but only three of the houses were distinct. The fourth appeared incomplete. This motif of 3:4 can appear in circular form as well, such as a circle with a quarter missing as in this dream: "*I dreamed we were trying to swing a large satellite dish antenna around to receive communications, but it would not work. One quarter segment of the antenna was missing.* It is important to note this pattern in your dreams, since the missing *element* in the grouping may be associated in some way with the missing element required for resolution in your waking life. If the missing part is obvious (color, person or object), make that missing *element* the subject of your imagery work, in order to determine how that missing piece relates to what is missing in your waking life – such as a "communications problem" the dreamer was having with his internal life.

Balanced 3 or Triad

A balanced triad, three or triangle motif also appears in about 10% of our dreams. Above I discussed "three" appearing in dreams as a representation of the incomplete state requiring the fourth element for completion. When there is a seemingly balanced pattern of "three" (such as an equilateral triangular shape) however, Jung related it to a symbol of *transcendence*. It might be understood symbolically as the *transcendent function* or creative force which brings about a resolution (the third element) by integrating conflicting *conscious* and *unconscious* forces - leading to a new state of order ("four"). Anthropologist Angeles Arrien (1998) indicates that the triangle carries the theme of self-discovery and revelation and can represent goals and visions.

Although this can get overly analytical or tedious for basic dreamwork, Jung played with the number combinations a bit. Jung (1973) stated that although the incomplete state of existence is expressed by a triad, a state of completion can retain the triadic geometry as two penetrating triangles. He also indicated that traditionally "three" was related to the *masculine*, "six" to creation and evolution, and the conjunction of "two" and "three" to the process of integration, the even and odd, female and male (Jung, 1972).

Three or the balanced triad also seems to take on the theme of revelation and discovery, often in a religious, spiritual or "outside force" context. This was the case in this "*Santa Claus Trinity*" dream from Chapter 2: *"I dreamed that it was the end of the world and Christ was coming in the sky as the Holy Trinity."* The spiritual revelation theme was also present in the "triangular sign" dream in Chapter 2: *"I was being shown a huge brightly lit triangular-shaped sign with red lettering which said, 'make yourself a perfect channel and wait, and all things will be given to you'.*

Numbers as Personal and Collective

The *collective* significance of numbers as a counterpart to geometric images was discussed above, however, numbers can have strong personal or cultural associations as well – so all should be explored when working with numbers in a dream.

From a *collective* standpoint, Jung (1973) stated that numbers are not concepts for calculation consciously invented by man but considered them as spontaneous and autonomous products of the *unconscious*, and thus *archetypes*. Jung talked about numbers as the counterpart of geometric, mandala like shapes as representation of the forces for *wholeness* or completion (ex: four-ness or 4 or 100, or zero, or one). Numbers can represent a transition to *wholeness* or lack of some element preventing completion (ex: ¾ or even 75). Sometimes, number patterns or sequences can represent various states of integration, conflict and patterns of completions. For example, patterns, such as 11, 22 might be representative of conflicting forces of equal strength at play.

It is just as likely, however, that numbers or number sequences can have a personal association. Numbers in dreams can relate to the year of an event, or the age of the dreamer now, or at some time in the past or future, associated with the event the dream is focused on or even the memory of a house number (past address). *"I dreamed of a long-standing conflict that I have had between the direction that my career is taking me versus my own personal goals in life. Both conditions are equally attractive to me but take me in different directions. The number 4 appeared in pairs in various ways in the dream."* In this dream, there seemed to be a *collective* significance of the pair of fours, i.e. conflict between two conditions that are both satisfying (complete) in and of themselves. When we explored the personal associations however, it turned out that 44 also related to the dreamer's age at the time she entered this career, as well as to a personal item significant to the situation.

Numbers can at time be literal synchronicities with the dream. You might recall the example in Chapter 2 where the phone number in the dream was an actual working phone number which the dreamer called the next day, leading to a much-needed bond of friendship that the dream story had related to. *"I dreamed I was searching for my lost child and was desperate to find a phone that would work. I suddenly saw a phone number."* The appearance of numbers in dreams can also be related to cultural or personal beliefs, as in the study of numerology.

Collective, literal, and personal associations should be explored when working with numbers. The "hide 45" dream from Chapter 2 is another example of numbers relating to age, in this case as a birth date that the dreamer wanted to find an acceptable way, or "license," to hide: *"I dreamed I saw a license plate with the words 'HIDE 45'."*

Numbers can have Personal Associations:
- Date (yr), Age
- Recalled Associations or Memories such as a house address
- Beliefs (Numerology for example)
- Synchronicity – literal significance as a meaningful coincidence

Numbers can have Cultural Associations:
- 7 is considered spiritually significant and related to levels of consciousness in many cultures for example

Numbers can appear as *Collective* Patterns:
- Patterns relate to unification of the self (Jung)
- Numbers related to Geometric Patterns (for example 4 as related to the square, both symbolic of a state of completion)

The Alchemical Elements

As noted earlier, Jung considered alchemy to be a historical counterpart of his "psychology of the *unconscious*" and analogous to the process of *individuation*. The work of alchemy was a process of creating the philosopher's stone an alchemical substance capable of turning base metals such as mercury into gold (something eternal that can never be lost or dissolved, comparable to the divine). The processes originally had four stages which, as noted earlier, Jung (1971b) saw as a symbolic of the fundamental process of *individuation*: 1) Negredo (blackness and decomposition/death; the *Shadow* self); 2) Albedo (whiteness appears; life conquers death; integration i.e. *Anima/Animus*); 3) Citrinitas (drawning of the inner light of one's own being, ex: the *wise old man* or *woman*); and 4) Rubedo (*wholeness* and the awareness of one's divine *Self*).

Alchemists also considered our physical universe to be made up of four basic elements: earth, fire, air and water. Jung saw a symbolic relationship between these elements and the four functions he assigned to the human personality - thought, intuition, feeling and sensation as in figure 7-5. Although he assigned the elements these functions, in other parts of his writings he gave them some very different characteristics as shown in the lower text in that figure.

Figure 7-5 The Four Alchemical Elements (Jung)

The Elements
Alchemical & 4 Fold Structure of Psyche
Jung's 4 Functions of the Personality
Thought · Intuition · Feeling · Sensation
Mind or Spirit · Transform-ation · Uncon-scious · Natural Roots

Earth

Jung (1973) considered many earth symbols, earth-altars, trees, stone and stone structures, to be "symbols of the *Self*" to which we must submit in the process of *individuation* (becoming an individual). Jung (1972) discussed the stone motif as related to the new center of the personality, the *Self* - our unrealized potential emerging from the *unconscious*. Earth imagery, such as caves, trees, rocks, and ground relate to our natural origin, the *unconscious* origin from which our *conscious* personality evolved. Trees and natural wood imagery he related to *individuation*, growth of the *psyche*, emerging from the inner self - as opposed to growth of our instinctive self which is represented by animals. Entering or emerging from caves can be associated with exploring and entering into, or material emerging from, our *unconscious*.

Fire

Fire is a mythological and alchemical symbol of transformation. This was seen in the "*Gail's Journey*" dream briefly discussed above. The image of fire, symbolic of transformation, appeared in the center of the round hut (the scene forming a mandala motif) in which she was to *"stay until she was done."* Fire may also be associated with the conflagration of our emotions, and explosive anxiety or anger. It can be a sign of self-emergence as it combines with an earth symbol as in a volcano. Both motifs are illustrated in this volcano dream: *"All of a sudden a volcano exploded, and we were running from the lava. The red of the lava seemed significant."* In this dream, it related to both an emotional upheaval (the emergence of emotions and desires associated with redness) and the emergence of a more assertive side of self.

Air

Air symbols such as wind, flying, and birds are often associated with mind and spirit. It can also be associated with thought and conscious activity or concepts. In the "*Latin Priest*" dream, for example, the airplane related to new spiritual concepts that were being considered. Birds or airplanes can represent thoughts, concepts, goals and aspirations, but as with any dream *element* you need work on and understand your personal associations with the flying object to understand its true nature. If you are flying in the dream it is necessary to relate your <u>feelings</u> or experience when flying in the dream to recent feelings or experiences in waking life. In one case a the dream flight might be "exhilarating" or "freedom" or "a new sense of magical control" in other dreams flight might seem "frustrating that I can barely get off the ground" or a feeling of being "out of control."   Flying unassisted is an unnatural act, and therefore most often represents fantasies or feelings of control or overcoming a situation by getting "above it all." When questioning younger people with frequent flying dreams, I find they admit to a fair amount of daydreaming. Flying is often an action that takes place in lucid dreams as described earlier.

Water

Water has a long history of mythical and evolutionary associations that may account for its many forms in our dreams. A survey of dreams in the UCSC dreambank.net database by this author indicated that roughly 30% of dreams contain water in some form. It can symbolize the "life force" in dreams relating to rebirth and growth. Water may represent the depths of the *unconscious*, as you may recall from the "*End of the World*" dream which literally translated water as representing the *unconscious*: *"Suddenly a voice said 'the water is just your unconscious, jump in and you will be fine'."* Often water appears as an emotional force, particularly when the water affects the dreamer (drowning, swimming, rain, floods). In the "*End of the World*" dream it was both the *unconscious* and the emotions rising from within the *unconscious.* Water as emotion was also the case in the following dream: "*Later a flood came by. I tried to save my dog which was in the water, but he would not let go of a piece of wood held tight in his teeth."* In this dream, the flood represented a flood of emotions in which the dreamer would drown if they let go of something they were holding on to – in this case their troubled daughter who was living at home.

It is important, when working with the water symbol, to focus on the state of the water in relation to your own emotional or even physical state in waking life. It can relate to blockages if the water is stagnant or the flow impeded. As a metaphor, rough water can relate to emotional turmoil; dark, deep water to matters concerning the *unconscious*; frozen water to suppressed emotion or parts of self; bright, flowing or bubbling water to healthy excited or sensual emotions; crystal water to the source of inner life; and dirty "muddy" water to illness or emotional uncertainty. Test your own personal associations with the water image in order to understand what it means for you.

The Journey of Transformation

Carl Jung, as discussed in Chapter 4, observed that human transformation (*transcendence* and *individuation*) can symbolically take on the aspects of the mythical "hero's journey." This journey is not unlike that of the *transcendent* dream discussed in Chapter 5 (which contain much of the archetypal imagery discussed here); but one largely made up of a series of dreams (or dream segments) aimed at *transcendence* – a change from the existing state within the *psyche* (*existing myth*) to a higher level synthesis (*new myth*) resulting in a new attitude, perspective and behavior. Depending on the complexity and depth of the issue, it is also a journey that can last months, years or a lifetime – bringing about degrees new learning and change is cycles.

Figure 7-6
The Journey of Transcendence and Individuation

"DEPARTURE"
Death of the Ego
Going Within
(old-myth)

"INITIATION"
Journey & Encounter
Guidance/Compensation
(counter-myth)
Testing/Integration/Reward

ORDINARY WORLD
Waking Conscious
(*personal myth*)
Actualization

"RETURN"
Transcendence
Renewal/Rebirth
(new-myth)
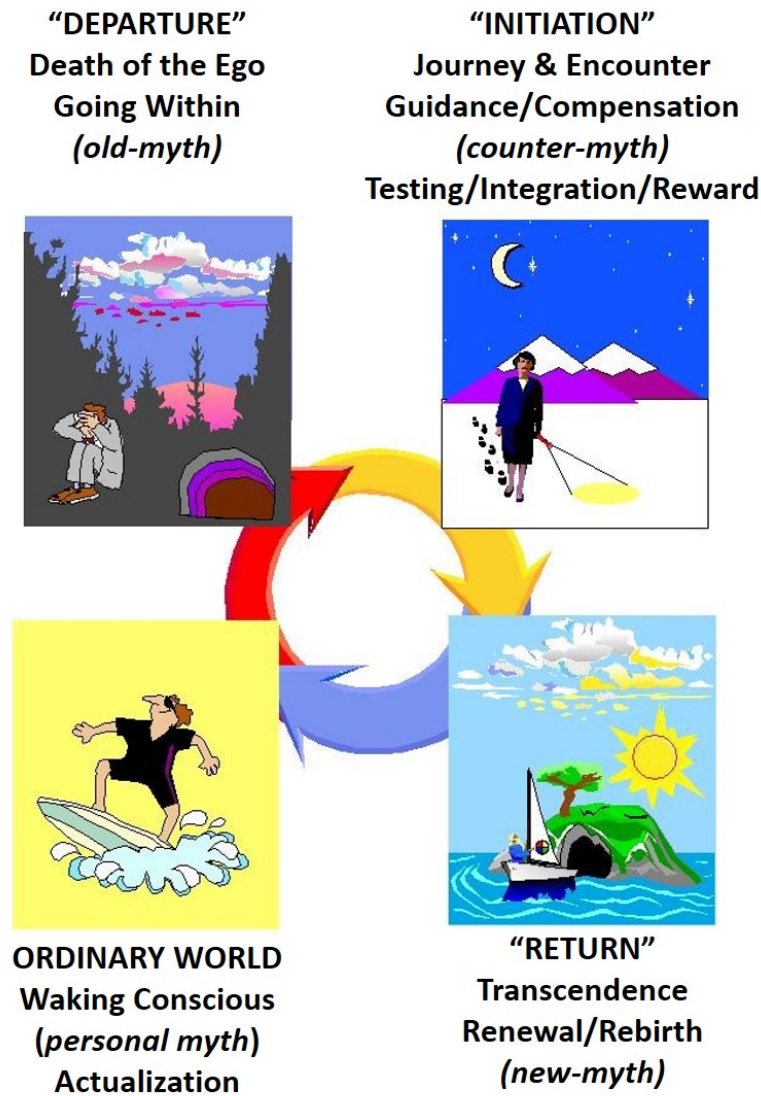
Jung saw such a dream driven *transcendent* journey as like the mythical "hero's journey" described in Chapter 4 which can be condensed into phases, as illustrated in figure 7-6.

- **Departure**: In the "hero's journey" this is described as, "beginning in the "Ordinary World" (daily life) where there is a call to action." Relating this to dreams such a "call to action" might be triggered by some situation (event, trauma, desire, discovery, ambition, etc.) where there is an inner emotional barrier, or conflict at a fairly deep *unconscious* level involving the dreamer's inner model of self and reality (*existing myth*). It is generally a situation where the efforts, views and behaviors of the *ego* no longer works, and the *ego* gives up – a symbolic "death of the ego" and turning within. Whereas the imagery of "going within" is a common theme in many problem-solving dreams, it may be a principle theme in the initial dream of the Journey of Transformation.

- ***Initiation (the Journey):*** As defined in the "hero's journey" this phase includes motifs such as: "meeting the mentor"; followed by "tests, allies and enemies"; "facing the inner conflict"; a symbolic "death and rebirth" and finally "reward." This is symbolically the journey phase and consists of a series of dreams or dream segments each of which follow roughly the same learning structure as any dream; **encounter** (*facing the inner conflict*); **scenario introduction** (*meeting the mentor*); **testing & mediation** (*tests, allies and enemies*); **ego reversal** (*death of the ego*) and **reinforcement** (*reward*). All the dreams generally relate in some way to the resolving the waking conflicts, but a genera theme runs through the dreams with a focus on deeper imbalances within the *unconscious psyche* that are contributing to those conflicts. Therefore, themes of *integration*, balance, and *individuation* will pervade the dreams.

- ***Return:*** In the "hero's journey" this is a "returning home to the "Ordinary World" a changed person." This is usually a concluding dream in a journey cycle which might involve imagery of renewal, *rebirth*, light, color, music – and various forms of reward. It might involve emotional *reinforcement* of the learning within the dream (re-consolidation) or in the dream-to-waking continuum ("ordinary world") as the dreamer reflects on the impactful insight provided by the dream.

Understanding a bit about the imagery of a *transcendent* journey can be helpful when orienting yourself to a dream, but, since dreams don't always follow a strict structure, sequence or set of rules, don't over analyze. Dreams are hyperconnected, holistic in nature so sometimes the two or more phases of the journey will appear simultaneously in a dream and sometimes not at all.

The Imagery

Hamilton (2005) observed that individuals going through a psycho-spiritual transformation experience increasing levels of consciousness that are reflected in the dream imagery they report. In the earliest stages of their journey, where they turn inward to face their *Shadow* self, he noted dream themes of darkness, fear, worldly concerns, animals and *elements* of an instinctual nature. As the individual progressed to higher levels of self-awareness, the dream imagery would evolve, evidencing fewer instinctive *elements* and more creativity and clarity, plus an increase in light, color, beauty, natural landscapes and mythological imagery. There would be encounters and conflict between opposing sides of self. Eventual integrations would be accompanied by celebration, joy and *rebirth* imagery. With further levels of *transcendence*, spiritual imagery begins to appear with qualities of peacefulness, sacredness and splendor. Finally, as the pure *Self* is experienced, imagery of purity (such as whiteness and snow) and integration (such as marriage) was observed. During the daily progression toward higher levels of consciousness, he observed a corresponding and dramatic increase in color and light in the dreams, with appearances of multiple colors often combined with white, and the appearance of "clear light" at the highest levels.

The imagery appearing throughout a Journey of Transformation is not unlike that in other dreams, however, a greater degree of *archetypal* imagery appears to be present (particularly in the initiating and concluding dreams). Also a common theme flows through most of the dreams in the series, which may on a personal level relate to resolving waking life issues, but focuses heavily on the deeper underlying cause and resolving imbalances within the *unconscious* psyche. *Archetypal* images relating, *integration* of *conscious & unconscious* material and a focus on *individuation, wholeness* and *transcendence* will be consistently present. These *archetypal* forces and mages appear in most any dream regardless of its function (creative, restoral, adaptive or *transformative*), however, there is a subtle difference in the consistency of theme and recurrence in a series of dreams that one might call a Journey of Transformation.

Example: Gail's Journey

As an illustration I will use an example which I call "*Gail's Journey*," a dream series of a woman I call Gail, as told in *Dreams That Change Our Lives* (Hoss et al., 2017). Gail was struggling with a desire to follow her evolving passion in life (involving spirituality and dreamwork) but was dealing with a complex of emotional barriers and conflicts which left her totally stuck: inability to assert herself based on poor *masculine* role models in her life; mother issues (non-acceptance of Gail's new pursuit and guilt over pursuing her goal instead of continuing to nurture her two grown sons); lack of confidence in herself and need for approval by authority figures; risk related fears; and the extreme of feeling a need to reject her career and who she had become in order to proceed.

Her journey began with an entirely *archetypal* Departure dream. This initiated 18 months of dreams each of which illuminate, then address and work through what turns out to be six conflicted emotional barriers – ending in a final concluding dream that pictured these six barriers as having been transfomed to renewal and new growth (the Return). The net result was her ability to now move forward in a more integrated manner which accommodated all of the concerns and risks that were previous barriers. As with most journeys, this was a valuable cycle, but only one. A while later the next cycle began, addressing a piece of deeply embedded unfinished business from the first – but now she was in a better position to deal with it.

Departure

The journey of transformation often begins when nothing the *ego* has done is working and the *ego* gives in, gives up control and turns within. In "*Gail's Journey*" when she presented her "initial" dream, she was totally stuck, Her *ego* had essentially given up – nothing was working – a clear *"death of the ego"* situation. At that point her dreams heeded a "call to action" – she had the following dream:

"I find myself descending a rickety wooden staircase. It is a long, long way down. The walls are like field stone – lit by torches – and the passage is very narrow. It gets darker and darker as I descend. I come to an opening at the bottom. I look off to the right and notice Carl Jung is sitting in a huge mahogany chair – like a throne. There are elaborate snake carvings on the upper back over his head. He points to something behind me and I turn around. I see a sea and a beautiful ship with elaborate representations of serpents at the bow & stern. It pulls up to the shore. He says, "go ahead." I ask if he is coming too. He says "yes." I walk up the wooden plank and get onboard. Suddenly it takes off sailing wildly through an underground river. I am frightened and call to Jung, but he is not there. Finally, the ship stops at a beach. I get off. There is a round grass hut there. Carl Jung is there. He says 'Go in. Stay until you are done'."

"It is barren inside with the exception of a fire pit in the middle and a hole in the roof for the smoke to escape. I look, but Carl Jung is gone again. I look for the door, but it is gone as well - there is no way out. I start to panic but I realize that I have no choice except to surrender to being there. I sit by the fire then begin to have visions. First, a beautiful woman is flying around in a circle high in the hut on a green fire-breathing dragon. As I look up, the scene forms a mandala with the opening of the sky in the middle, the thatched roof forms lines radiating out from the center and the woman with the dragon going around. She tosses me a large red ball. I catch it Then there are bears going around behind her and then rabbits. Finally, I get drowsy, lay down by the fire, and start to fall asleep."

The multitude of *archetypal* imagery in this dream relating to transformation is fairly amazing. It begins with a going within, the descent, into darkness, only lit by flames (transformation), then a journey through a dark underground tunnel – much like in the journey in the "*Ice Cave*" dream discussed earlier. The *Self* as *wise old man* (Jung doing the honors in this case) is the guiding mentor. In the hut there are all the symbols of the *transcendent individuation* process that is taking place: the fire of transformation, the

mandala imagery, the *great mother* on the dragon and the sphere representing *wholeness* that is passed to her which she accepts. As an aside: the red ball was a recurring theme from Gail's past dreams – dreams in which she had not caught it; the red likely related to her ability to finally assert herself, one of the barriers that Gail was to learn to overcome in this dream series.

Figure 7-7
Departure – Going Within, Releasing Ego Control

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- **Giving Up Ego Control:** As the above example demonstrates, the journey often begins as the *existing myth* no longer works, the *ego* gives up control and turns within. What is of special note is where Carl Jung says, "*Stay until you are done*" followed by a realization, "*I realize that I have no choice except to surrender to being there.*" This guidance has been observed in other dreams and appears to be an important message that in order to move forward the *ego* needs to surrender control and let the deep, age old and life-long wisdom of the *unconscious* do its work. It also appeared in dream of a man who was trying desperately to find a way to control and resolve the uncomfortable situation he was in. After failing all attempts, he dreamed: "*I see a merging of black and white patterns in the sky, like swirling black and white clouds. I am trying to control a white rocket through the swirling clouds but with no luck, it is out of control. Suddenly a booming voice says, 'quit trying to control it, let go'. I have a sense if I do it will work out. I wait and eventually a golden light appears, and a golden city arises from the clouds – somehow created by the rocket.*" Here again the *ego* is told to quit fiddling with the situation, let go and let the *unconscious* work it out.

- **Going Within:** This is often observed as a going within, descending into the earth or into darkness, as in "*Gail's Journey.*" Like imagery appeared in the "*Restoring Self*" dream which began: "*I entered a stone castle. As I went down the stairs, I saw on my left a large stone archway and a room beyond and on the left side…a young woman.*" The journey below and into darkness was also the theme in the *transcendent* "*Ice Cave*" dream: "*I was on a journey as a passenger in an enclosed boat…aimlessly moving through underground caves.*"

- **Death of the Ego Motif:** The departure phase often appears symbolically as death - symbolically some part of the *ego*-self must die in order for the new self (*new-myth*) to be born. In Gail's initial dream it appeared as the *conscious ego* totally gives in to the unconscious, as Gail falls asleep within the dream. This symbolic death also appeared in the "*Crushed*" dream: "*All goes dark, and I stop breathing. I know I am dead, and it is all over, there is no future.*" It also appeared as a dead body (dead part of self) in the "*Rusty Car*" and "*Boxer*" dreams.

- **The End of the World:** The end of the world motif appears as catastrophic, the end of the world as we know it – the end of our inner model of reality and who we are – our *existing myth*. It didn't appear in Gail's dream as such, although in the initial dream she completely left the "ordinary world" and entered the underworld. A more literal appearance occurred as water rising around the dreamer in the "*End of the World*" dream: "*I dreamed it was the end of the world and water was rising all around me. Suddenly a voice said, 'the water is your unconscious, jump in and you will be fine'.*" Here the fear of her *unconscious* was being dealt with. The destruction of the world motif also appeared in the "*Santa Claus T*rinity" dream: "*I dreamed that it was the end of the world and Christ was coming in the sky as the Holy Trinity. But Christ appeared as a trinity of Santa Clauses, who merged as one and began pouring gifts of love from an urn. They were invisible, but I felt the gifts hit me, so I ran.*" In this dream, there was a destruction of the deeply imbedded view of God as one that should delivers physical gifts if you are good.

As a side note: the theme and metaphoric imagery of death in dreams may have a biological basis. Edelman and his colleagues, in their theory of "neuronal group selection" (Ratey, 2001) states that neuron groups in the brain that benefit our survival thrive and develop strong interconnections, while those that are unused are eliminated, or literally die (discarded personality *fragments* and behaviors). Might such cellular awareness exist in the brain that the "death" of neuron groups can be literally translated into "death" imagery in dreams?

The Journey - Initiation

Jung stated that the *individuation* process is often symbolized by a journey of search and discovery, a search for a new self or the *new myth* begins, this stage in the journey initiates a series of restoral, adaptive or *transcendent* dreams as each dream, or dream segment, deals with each of what is usually a complex of issues to be worked through. As noted above the elements of the "hero's journey" roughly incorporate with the elements of a problem-resolution and learning structure (Chapter 5) as follows: "facing the inner conflict" *(encounter)*; "meeting the mentor" *(compensating guidance and scenario introduction)*; "tests, allies and enemies" (*testing & mediation*); "death of the ego" *(ego reversal, accepting the guidance),* and "reward" (*emotional reinforcement*).

- **Beginning the Journey:** The beginning of the journey, as well as most of the dreams making it up appear to follow a problem-resolution structure, but one that follows a common underlying set of themes. As with most problem-resolution dreams, there is an *encounter* with a core issue to be resolved, a conflict, a *Shadow* issue or some alienated part of self to be accepted and *integrated.* Gail's initial dream was followed by a long series of dreams, beginning with one that literally indicated she had now taken her first step – in this case **encountering** one of the core issues, that of integrating her inner *masculine* (pictured as the focus of the circular motif). "*I am in my back yard, a beautiful huge yard with many gardens. A man (the leader of a group circling around me) ascends a hidden staircase. I think, "How can this be? I have walked this way many times and never ran into this invisible staircase?"* At this point a **resolution scenario** is introduced by a guiding voice: "*that's because you didn't believe it was there.*" This is followed by a change in attitude [**reversal**], "*I feel like a whole*

new world, that I didn't even know was there, has opened to me!" "I take a confident stance and proceed slowly but steadily toward the staircase [**testing**]. *When I reach where I believe the stairs are, I step out with my right foot and to my amazement, <u>I am on the first step</u>!"* [**reinforcement**].

- *Meeting the Mentor – the Self:* In this first dream above, Gail "meets the mentor" as the guiding disembodied voice of the *Self*. The geometric symbol male figure circumnavigating her was also a symbol of the Self (the mentor) demonstrating that recognizing her inner *masculine* (her inner strength) which she didn't know was there, was the first important step in her journey. As illustrated in the examples below the "mentor" or guiding forces and voice of the inner *Self* remains with the dreamer along the journey.

- *A Journey of Integration:* "*Gail's Journey*" dreams were dominated with the theme of *masculine/feminine* integration – which appeared to be a core theme that initiated the journey – and one only partially resolved in this 18-month cycle (since it continued into the cycle that followed). The difficulty with accepting *masculine* attributes (particularly the ability to assert herself) or even understanding their relationship with the *feminine* appeared to be due to poor or confusing male, or even female, role models in her life.

  Her first journey dream illuminated the *masculine* qualities which she "didn't believe were there" within her. The first dream that followed this theme, demands that she pay attention to this need for integrating *masculine* and *feminine,* but pictures it not a as a pairing or union of a man and woman but rather as a pairing of her conflicted attitudes about those attributes: "*I am living in an insane asylum where there are two tall towers. My task is to get 'these things' which are in a pool at our feet from one side to the other. They look like little pink pig-fish. A commanding voice* [mentor/*Self*] *says, 'This is your brain. Get up and write this down'.*" When we explored the pig-fish associations, she stated: "Pigs are cuddly, loving, nurturing" (which she associated with being *feminine*) "Fish are slimy and scaly" (her view of being *masculine* – feeling "slimy" when she tries to assert herself).

  As the dreams began to bring in the old *masculine* and *feminine* role models (persons from her past) and "dance" with them a bit, her view and perspective of the two roles gradually began to change from those old models to something more integrated. In one segment she releases one of those negative influences (her ex-husband) as she integrates with a more positive view. "*I am in a medieval castle in the busy central courtyard with my ex-husband who is behaving badly. He walks away* (the dream rejects that role model). *I catch the eye of a handsome young man who walks over and engages me (new-myth). I realize he is courting me. I am surprised and coy at first, but in the end, we take each other's hands and walk off together.*"

- *A Journey of Individuation:* At the end of the first journey dream, as Gail initiated the "first step" toward realizing her own inner strength, the segment that followed introduced this learning as part of a greater process of *individuation* - in the symbol of the *great tree*. Jung considered the tree to symbolize *individuation,* a slow but natural and purposeful growth of the personality. "*A man comes from the local nursery and delivers a small lemon tree—perfectly shaped, healthy, green and young. When I turn around, I am thrilled to see the new tree has gotten bigger and much more beautiful.*"

  The tree (and thus stages in her *individuation*) was to become a recurring theme throughout the dreams in this 18-month period as a constant reminder that, although at the personal level the dreams involved dealing with her waking life situation, at a deeper *unconscious* level they were all about her *individuation,* becoming the whole balanced person she was meant to be. In the end the *great tree* motif was pictured dramatically in the concluding Return dream as will be discussed later.

As Gail progresses, an egg motif begins to appear along with that of the tree, projecting a symbolic birth of the new *individuated* self: "*I arrive at a beautiful place filled with trees and sunlight. I scoot down the side of a deep canyon containing beautiful, iridescent blue rocks with gold specks, about the size of eggs. An old man on horseback, who seems to know me* [mentor/*Self*] *appears above and calls down, "I put those there for you — they are yours."*

Before Gail can grow, however, she must again confront issues with her mother. One of the issues is that Gail perceives that her mother considers her new pursuit to be "nonsense." Her dream presents the egg and *great tree* in the center of a circle in order to focus on dealing with that *Shadow* issue as important to her *individuation* and *growth*: "*I am on a circular path. The girl with me reaches up to touch a beautiful hatching baby bird in the tree. I say, 'No, leave it alone, <u>the mother may reject it</u>.' (Shadow issues) At that point the mother bird attacks.*"

- **Facing the Old-Myth and Testing the Counter-Myth:** As in the examples above, throughout the Journey, each dream brings forth an encounter with the interwoven complex of old myths (conflicts, *Shadow* issues) and introduces a *compensating counter-myth* or resolution scenario, inviting the *dream-ego* to deal with each. One of the impasses that left Gail "stuck" was a conflict between feeling "like a dirty rat" for wanting to pursue her goals – versus – nurturing her two grown sons. The dream that followed revealed it a mother issue, a conflict (two equal elements) related to a *masculine/feminine* role perception, to be dealt with in order to achieve *individuation* (tree motifs): "*I see two trees sprout up in the middle of the living room. An evil energy manifests as two <u>dirty rat</u> heads. Something* [mentor/Self] *tells me I have to look at them even though I do not want to. I finally go nose to nose with one of the rat heads and command it out. At that point they both turn into tiny little mice that scurry away into the heat register.*" The dream further positively **reinforces** the action as a positive step towards *individuation*: "*My mother and I then plant the two trees in the yard where they can thrive.*"

- **Death of the Old Myth – Embracing a New Myth:** A "death of the *ego*" motif of sorts can appear in many of the journey dreams as the dream-*ego* abandons the *old-myth* and accepts the guidance of the *Self* and reverses its viewpoint. As Gail began to overcome her need for approval or validation from those she considered "authority figures", a final *encounter* with that *Shadow* side brought forth a dream in which she boldly rejected that *old-myth* and adopted a new view of who she really was. Up to that time Gail had negatively contrasted herself with an authority figure of a friend (Gail T) who had a formal psychology degree and certification. This changed after the following dream: "*I am in a school and a friendly pastor is handing out our diplomas. I looked at the name on my diploma – Gail T (the name of the therapist friend). I say (3 times loudly as I wake) "No, no, no! I'm not Gail T, I am Gail G" (me!). I woke hearing these words.*"

- **Reinforcement/Reward**: Most all of the Journey dreams ended with some form of emotional reinforcement. Positive reinforcement as in the lemon tree dream *"When I turn around, I am thrilled to see the new tree has gotten bigger and much more beautiful"* or the beautiful iridescent egg-shaped blue rocks*, "I put those there for you — they are yours."* Negative reinforcement as the *ego* buys into the old *Shadow* myth, "*At that point the mother bird attacks.*" But as the journey progresses and Gail releases herself from the old beliefs and behavioral models (*old myths*) the dreams become more about reward for the progress being made. As Gail realized she did not need to quit her job and give up on the person she had become, in order to pursue her goals, she releases some of the insecurities preventing her from moving fourth – and her dreams applaud her actions: "*A small airplane flies overhead. The door opens, and a woman jumps out with three parachutes. She breaks away from the others and lands with only one chute. I clap, everyone cheers!* "

The Return

At what appeared to be a concluding point in Gail's 18-month cycle of dreams, she had to a degree overcome six barriers that had prevented her from pursuing her goals. She had arrived at an *integrated* as and practical solution, one where she could pursue her spiritually oriented goals while at the same tim appreciating (rather than rejecting) all she had become in her job career. At that point she had the following dream: *"I am walking on a path. There is a row of 6 newly planted young trees to the left. I see an old tree in the distance with the sun glowing behind it. To the right I notice another beautiful tree in the distance covered with flowers. I go to explore it."* Here the six barriers that she had dealt with become the six new trees (new *mythical* structure established and growing), the old tree bathed in sunlight the acceptance of who she had become professionally, and the flowering tree her new pursuits that had begun to now flower in parallel in waking life. She had indeed returned to the "ordinary world" (her waking life) as a changed person.

- *Actualizing - Bringing the Reward into the "Ordinary World":* As it was in Gail's "return" dream, the imagery at the end of such a Journey is often dramatically rewarding and quite archetypal in nature, filled with light, color, nature, renewal and *rebirth* imagery. As noted in the examples above, the individual dreams leading to this point also include such positive reinforcement as learning and growth takes place step by step. This may be part of a dream-to-waking learning continuum where the impactful insight carries over into waking consciousness ("ordinary world") to continue the transformational process.

Relating Collective Imagery to Your Personal Story

Understanding the *archetypal* or resolution process is only one part of the dreamworking process – understanding how they relate to your inner and outer life is of greater importance. Collective imagery is useful in two ways: 1) understanding the restorative and transformative mental processes taking place; and 2) guiding you to important imagery to do the personal work with in order to aid those processes.

Collective Clues as a Guide to Important Imagery

Collective clues can be used to identify and explore an image that might contain valuable personal content. This orientation process can be seen in the work we did with most all of Gail's dreams. In the one of the tree and bird nest/egg – those images appeared in the center of the circle which led to an understanding that they related to unresolved mother issues. In Gail's "dirty rat" dream the collective clues were the two equal images of the rats (two equal images relate to inner conflict (two equal forces vying for dominance). In Gail's case they pictured feelings of guilt (like a "dirty rat").

Using collective clues as a guide can also be seen in the following "*Boxer*" dream: *"I dreamed I was watching two men boxing for sport, one was wearing red trunks and the other brown. Over to the left, I saw a shadowy figure of a dead body."* Nothing in the scene of the dream related to anything apparent in the dreamer's life – other than a general sense that it might have something to do with conflict since it pictured two men in conflict – but nothing clicked.

The process of going from collective clues to working with the personal content within them can be illustrated with the "Boxer" dream presented earlier. As were the two rats in Gail's dream, the two boxers are a pair of equal *elements* of equal gender (two males). The two unknown males might also be a clue that the conflict relates to inner *masculine* attributes. This initiated questions as to whether an inner conflict exists regarding traits typically associated with the *masculine* such as assertiveness, outward motivation

and such. The dreamer indicated that indeed she was conflicted over asserting herself and initiating action to pursue something she desired. There is also a clue in that the shorts worn by the men were of two different colors, perhaps conflicted emotions. A fourth *collective* clue is the unknown *Shadowy* dead body to the left – perhaps something suppressed. In the subsequent dream work I therefore employed color work and *role-play* to understand the personal factors.

- **Color Work**: I used the Color Questionnaire (Chapter 9) to explore the possible emotional conflict. The dreamer "connected" with the statements: red = "I want to live life to its fullest" versus brown "I want a secure state where I can relax" – the dreamer's desire to "go out and live life" is in conflict with "needing a secure state where she can simply relax."   This is the *impasse* that had her stuck unable to assert herself (*inner masculine*) and pursue her desires in waking life.
- **Role-play**. At first glance a *Shadow* side of self is suspected – something the dreamer is uncomfortable dealing with – but the image alone does not identify what that might be. I therefore asked the dreamer to become the dead body and give it a voice. The dead body stated: *"I like that I can lay here in peace, no one can hurt me anymore"* but then *"I desire release, to feel alive again."* The underlying emotional situation driving the conflict was a traumatic event in the past when she attempted to assert herself in this way, a situation that symbolically left her inner *masculine* dead.

Role-playing Archetypes

Sometimes applying personal dreamworking techniques to an archetype (such as the *Shadow* or dead man above) can provide results that the dreamer can relate to – however since *archetypal* imagery originates in the *collective unconscious* the results often do not relate directly to a waking life situation. Working with a *Shadow* image which is closer to, or a counterpart to, the conscious *ego* or with something like color which is a combined collective/personal image, often works well. But more often if you attempt to *role-play* an *archetype,* that originates more deeply within the unconscious (the *Self*, unknown dream figures such as the *Anima/Animus*, *elements* such as water or air, etc.), what comes forth is often expressions or feelings that characterize the nature or essence of that *archetype*. That alone can be useful, however, particularly if it can be related to a feeling you have experienced in your life.

Some caution is advised when attempting to *role-play* and identify with a powerful archetypal figure which might represent something dramatically counter to your sense of self. If in the process of "becoming" the archetype you become overly anxious, disturbed or disoriented, bring yourself out of it immediately. For example, one dreamer who attempted to "become" and *role-play* a "way shower" in his dream suddenly began shaking. Upon being immediately pulled out of the situation he stated, "I became God, and I know I can't be God". The identification and emotional connection with that *archetypal* figure was too far from his belief system at that point to be easily accommodated.

Trying to *role-play* a geometry or number might also be counterproductive although it might be worth trying. Even working with something as basic as the image of a "sphere" might lead to statements such as *"I feel whole"* or insights such as *"I had a sense of completeness, a feeling of power and of drawing all the other parts into myself."* Nonetheless, expect possible insight, but not necessarily direct association with your waking life situation, when using personal imagery techniques on collective imagery.

CHAPTER 8
WORKING WITH PERSONAL CONTENT

Really become that thing – whatever it is in a dream – really become it – Fritz Perls

In dreams, you "borrow" objects and persons from your waking life experiences as metaphoric representations of feelings, associations, memories, or aspects of your personality. As we learned in Chapter 3, the waking life identity or naming of a person or object has little to do with its meaning in the dream. The parts of the brain active in dreams internalize these dream figures and objects, based on your experiences, memories and associations with them. This is even the case when the figure in your dream is a person you know – it is your internal view of that person and more likely a personality reference. In Chapter 6, I introduced five approaches for working with the personal associations from which your dream images and *elements* are created. I will address working with four of these approaches in this chapter then the fifth (working with color) in Chapter 9.

Table 8-1
Working with Personal Imagery

Work with the Dream *Element* using Personal Association Techniques	Compare the Dream Story and Associations with Your Waking Situation
- Metaphor	- Phrases that also Describe a Waking Situation
- Memory Associations	- Specific Past Experience
- Define	- Personal Associations
- Role-Play	- Underlying Emotions
- Color (Chapter 9)	- Color to Emotion Associations

Table 8-1 illustrates a process for dreamwork that involves exploring various levels of personal associations, beginning first with metaphors in the dream narrative and concluding with deeper exploration of emotional content within the dream image or *element.* It is essentially the same process as detailed in the first two parts of the *GUIDE FOR TRANSFORMATIVE DREAMWORK* inserted at the front of this book. One common element in these four approaches is that they all are based on recognizing metaphor, i.e., analogies or figurative phrases that are verbalized by the dreamer when applying each of the four methods to the dream story and the dream *elements.* Whether the dreamer is telling the dream, or describing associations with a dream *element*, the words used are then explored as how they might also be making a statement about (analogous to) the dreamer's waking life situation. Understanding the metaphor is not always necessary for the dream to have a positive impact on the dreamer. However, I find it to be the most useful way to establish a relationship between the dream story and the life story.

Importance of the Dreamer's Response

The 'Aha' Response

The applicability of a suspected connection (a question to the dreamer regarding the actions, theme, metaphoric phrase or figure of speech) can be determined only by the dreamer but is often recognized by their reaction to it. If a meaningful connection is made, it almost always stimulates a spontaneous recognition response, an "aha" with the dreamer. If it doesn't then leave it alone and move on – it either doesn't fit or it will trigger a response later as the dreamer dwells on it. Note that the "aha" is usually just a recognition of a connection between something pointed out in the dream narrative and the waking life situation that triggered the dream. It is rarely the full "meaning" of the dream – that takes more work.

Non-Verbal Clues

If you are helping someone work on their dream, watch for body language as they tell the dream story. Notice such things as defensive posturing (arms cross, etc.) during one part of the story or a nervous twitch during another or revealing facial expressions and hand gestures. Don't try to analyze the body language, just use it to explore that part of the dream. For example, a dreamer was relating the following dream: *"I am walking down a path with a companion, and we have been walking for a while when we pass by an old mill. I did not want to stop there, so we continued on."* When he described passing by the old mill, he crossed his arms, and then again relaxed as he moved on down the path. This seemed like a sign that he might have been emotionally defending himself against something inside of that dream image of the old mill. Using the *role-play* technique on the old mill revealed that this was the case – the old mill contained an important conflict.

Emotional Response

Dreamwork will often create a spontaneous emotional response, frequently grief, sorrow or anxiety. Sometimes the response will come forth without the dreamer understanding either the emotion or its source. At that point, it is best to stop the work for a minute and let the dreamer recover a bit. In a non-professional setting it is best to stop altogether and simply comfort the dreamer if the response is severe. With a trained professional the source of the sorrow and associated memories might be further explored. The following dream of a woman who had just lost her husband is an example. *"I dreamed I was alone on a beach, and noticed a vase lying in the sand. I awoke feeling very upset."* When I asked the dreamer to "become" the vase she did not say a word but began crying uncontrollably. She did not know why she was crying until she reflected further on the image of the vase, and recognized it as the one that her husband gave her on their wedding day. She said that with him having passed on, she now feels like that vase, "lying alone on the beach".

The First Step – Metaphor

Working with metaphors in the dream story (written or spoken narrative) is often the quickest way to relate the dream to your waking life situation. Metaphors are best revealed when the dream is re-entered and/or told from the standpoint of re-living the dream in the first-person present tense. When orienting yourself to a dream, it helps to underline possible metaphors - phrases or actions that might be figuratively descriptive of a feeling or situation in your life at the time. As you explore your dream narrative, try to avoid the literal meaning of the dream *element* but rather consider them as pictures of personal associations.

As discussed in Chapter 1, metaphors are culturally-derived figurative phrases used in everyday speech, which we substitute as simple analogies for more complex concepts ("we had a warm relationship" is culturally understood and simpler than describing the entire situation). They naturally find their way into our dreams converted to pictographs or wordplay to represent those more complex feeling and situations that stimulated them. The spoken counterpart of the *picture-metaphor* becomes apparent when we tell or write the dream. Perhaps as our speech centers in the left hemisphere awaken, they translate these right hemisphere picture associations into words. The dream images and actions are truly a *picture-metaphors* – the dream pictures a speech metaphor when translated in the telling.

Recognizing Metaphors

Metaphors can be recognized in the dream imagery, in the phrases you use in telling the dream story, as well as in the activities taking place – that when verbalized or written down also seem to describe feelings or situations in your waking life.

Figure 8-1
Metaphor

Dream Images Picture Common Expressions

I dreamed of a man chasing a ball = "I dropped the ball"

A Combination of Thoughts will Appear as a Combination of Images
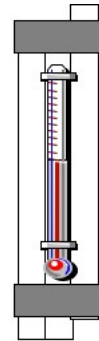
Slide Rule = "Engineering"

Thermometer = "Degree"

Metaphors in the Dream Narrative

Metaphors are most often recognized in the figurative **phrases** used in the telling of the dream story that also might describe a situation in your waking life. Again, they are best revealed when the dream is re-entered, re-lived, and told in the first-person present tense. When reviewing the dream narrative look for phrases that might have a double meaning, i.e., phrases that not only describe the dream story but also in a figurative way, describe the waking life situation. Statements such as, *"I put him down," or "I am holding things up,"* are examples of common figures of speech which might have double meaning. These are figurative phrases and puns, which Anne Faraday termed "**wordplay**" or a play-on-words that seems to describe something going on in the dreamer's waking life. In Ann Faraday's book *Dream Game* (1974) she gives an example where the image of "jeans" appeared to represent "genes."

For example, in figure 8-1 the first image is that of the dreamer chasing ball that fell out of his hands. Not much to go on there but when telling the dream the dreamer might state it as, "*I dropped the ball*" a common and speech metaphor for the more complex concept it represents, "*I failed to do something I was responsible for*" as well as being shorter and more personally associated than the actual description of what took place.

Slips-Of-The-Tongue and Body Movement

When telling a dream, it is important to pay attention to slips of the tongue. Never edit out a mistake or slip of the tongue, but rather underline it. The mind will often slip a metaphor into your dream description, hidden within a mistake.

For example, one subject who was having some sexual problems in her marriage described her dream as follows: *"I am on the surface of a planet where it is winter time and snowing. It is a very cold 'climax' …oops, I mean climate."* The nature of her waking life concern became immediately apparent in her "slip of the tongue" metaphor.

In another example the dreamer had a 35mm projector that he was trying to return to the university. He stated: *"I have a '**rejecter**,' I mean **projector**, that I am trying to take back.*" It became clear with this slip-of-the-tongue that the dream was about rejection. The dreamer had made a statement the day before that caused him to feel rejected, and he was trying to "take it back."

Besides these interesting verbal clues, the mind may produce some revealing body movement at an important point when telling the dream. For example, the sudden defensive crossing of the arms at a point in the dream story could reveal something that the dreamer wants to defend himself or herself against.

Metaphors in the Imagery

Metaphors can at times be recognized in the **picture language** of a dream image in particular odd **combinations of images** – that when described "spell out" what they represent much like words in a sentence. Whereas in waking life we assemble word symbols in a sentence to express something, dreams figuratively assemble picture associations to express their meaning - they are indeed "picture words". The *"Hide 45"* dream mentioned earlier is one example. The slide-rule image in figure 8-1 represents two concepts that combine to spell out a meaningful word combination. This was a dream of a young engineer who had just gotten laid off, devastated that his engineering degree was not as secure as he had always thought it would be: *"I had a troubling dream about my career and whether I made the right choice. I vividly recall the image of a slide rule with a red thermometer on it."* The two *elements* in the dream image combined to literally spelled out "engineering degree." At that time, the slide rule was an item commonly associated with an engineer, thus representing the word "engineering," and the thermometer represented the word "degree." The red thermometer may have also contained another association, that of the "emotional temperature" of the situation.

Often, words that appear in dreams are strange combinations of sounds and phrases that have no rational meaning, but that have a very direct symbolic meaning. *"In my dream there was a voice that warned, 'Beware the Nanfro bird'. I woke in a state of alarm."* Subsequent dreamwork revealed that the nonsense sentence was warning of an impending "Non-Four" condition. In Chapter 7 we learned about the appearance of "four" in a dream (according to Jung) to symbolize a state of completion or balance. In this case subsequent dreamwork revealed that voice was warning of a pending state of imbalance that was being caused by his misconceived desire to "soar to new heights" (the bird).

Metaphors in the Dream Activity

Look for the action or the "parable" like message in the dream story to relates as an analogy to your waking life story. As with other metaphors, action metaphors might best be revealed when the dream is re-entered or told from the standpoint of re-living the dream in the present tense.

- **Activity:** Let's look at an example where the dream narrative reads*: "I dreamed I was walking in a deep ditch."* Upon re-entering and retelling the dream in the first person present tense the dreamer might now tells it as: *"I am in a rut"* - a figurative phrase that says way more about the dreamers emotional situation than the prior description. Sometimes a group or dreamworker might upon observation ask the dreamer – "*might you be 'in a rut'?".*
- **Parable of the Dream Story:** Metaphors in the "parable" of the dream can be seen in the *"Crushed"* dream where the dreamer felt "it is all over for good" only to have a strong part of herself dig her out of the rubble and realize she could go on.

The following dream is an example of the action in the dream playing out or picturing a metaphor. The dreamer went to bed highly frustrated about his attempts to negotiate a business deal with client. *"I dreamed I was a dentist and one of my business clients was in the chair. I was pulling as hard as I could but could not get the tooth out."* This dream activity also figuratively described the waking life situation: *"it is like pulling teeth trying to get anything out of the client."*

Look for theme or role similarity. Define the theme or your role in the dream, and then ask how that is similar thematically to your role in waking life. For example: being lost and seeking your way in the dream may reflect a waking life situation where you feel "lost" and unable to work things out. Being trapped or stuck, undecided or unable to move in the dream may be analogous to your inability to progress, or to a feeling of being stuck, trapped or undecided in waking life.

Metaphors in the "Message"

What is very important to realize that an apparent "message" in your dream is most always presented in the language of metaphor. Whether verbal, written or in the parable of the story – taking it literally can often be problematic unless the possible metaphor is explored. The message generally has a rational relationship or connection to the dream story – but only an analogous connection, or play on words, as it relates to your waking life story.

A clear example of this was the dream in Chapter 2 that seemed to literally warn of impending cancer. *"I was in a clinic and a nurse was checking me over. She felt some lumps on my groin area and exclaimed, 'she is riddled with cancer'. I was not afraid to die but asked the nurse if she could do something to keep me from going through all the pain."* As you might recall, a checkup revealed no signs of cancer, so why did her dream state that she was riddled with cancer! When we worked on the dream, the dreamer revealed that she was a strong believer in astrology and was in a relationship with a man who was astrologically a "Cancer." She wanted to end the relationship but was puzzled ("riddled") about how to do it without "going through all the pain".

The *"Rusty Car"* dream holds another example in the image of the dead man or driver inside the car and the message "*he is just asleep shake the man."* The image was not literally "a man driving a car who was now dead" or even asleep, but rather the dreamer's "inner drive" or motivation that was just inactive and needed to be shaken up. The metaphor of a dead driver who could be woken was literal to the dream plot but an analogy had to be made with the waking situation to translate it into a waking solution.

Working with Metaphors

There are a few handy techniques to effective work with metaphors:

- **Telling the Dream in the Present:** Successful work with metaphors depends on properly telling and recording your dream. Metaphors are best revealed when the dream is re-entered and/or told from the standpoint of re-experiencing the dream and telling it in the first-person present tense. Instead of saying "I dreamed I was walking down a street…" tell it as you are experiencing it, "I am walking down a street…" Use "I am…" and "we are …. ," and "it is ….. " and "suddenly I see…" like terminology.

- **Don't Correct the Errors**: As discussed above it is also important not to correct an interesting misspelling or slip-of-the-tongue. These can be valuable clues.

- **Underline Possible Metaphors**: When orienting yourself to a dream, it helps to underline possible metaphors - phrases or actions that might be figuratively descriptive of a feeling or situation in your life at the time.

- **Explore the Associations:** As you explore your dream narrative, try to avoid considering the meaning of the dream images or *elements* to be literal, their identity is no what it is in waking life. Consider them as pictures of personal associations and explore those associations (as discussed herein).

- **Re-write the Dream Story**: Plug each association back into to the dream narrative in place of the image or dream *element* it appears to represent – then re-read the dream story. Look for double meanings in the re-told dream narrative and themes that might also apply to a way you feel, or a situation you are in, in waking life. It may take some rewording and playing with analogies but in the end some interesting and insightful similarities should come forth.

Individual Work with Metaphors in the Narrative

When working on your own dreams or helping someone else with theirs, apply the techniques above and underline possible metaphors. Things may pop out in the words and phrases such as in the "*Rusty Car*" dream where the word "rusty" was analogous to the way the dreamer saw his talents as being "rusty" at the time and the "dead driver" analogous to his lack of "drive" or motivation to take on the activity.

Orient yourself to the theme of the role you are playing or situation you are in at the beginning of the dream and how it might be analogous to your waking life situation. For example in the "*Ice Cave*" dream it was clear that the imagery at the beginning of the dream was analogous to the dreamer finding himself with no control in a work situation where he was looking for a position in his company that would get him out of the situation he was in; *I was on a long journey as a passenger in an enclosed boat going nowhere, just aimlessly moving through tunnels and underground caves looking for a position in the windows that would show me a way out."*

Group Work with Metaphors in the Narrative

Monte Ullman (1985) indicated that, as we experience our dream story at night, feelings are evoked in the dream which can be accessed and re-experienced through proper dreamwork. He pioneered a group

"Method" for dreamwork (see Chapters 4 and 10) whereby members of the group recognize possible metaphors in the dream story and project their own associations on these metaphors as "if it were my dream." The objective is that the group associations, with the apparent themes and metaphors in the dream, might also trigger personal associations with the dreamer. Care must be taken that the group members honestly imagine taking on the dream as their own and projecting on it as if it related to something specific in their own lives. There must be a clear understanding that the projections of group members are their own, not an attempt at interpreting the dream, and that the ultimate meaning of the dream remains with the dreamer.

The Ullman approach was studied at Saybrook Institute by Kautner (2005) on a group of nine seniors in eight weekly sessions. After each session, the dreamer and a group participant were interviewed. Overall, each participant came away from the groups gaining new awareness and/or insights into their dreams and the dreams of others. It works fairly well at the metaphoric level of dreamwork because we share a somewhat common human experience, as well as similar or culturally common speech metaphors, between the dreamer and members of the group.

Rewrite the Dream Story

Plug the associations back into the dream story and re-write it. This was a method Carl Jung used and is also recommended by Stanley Krippner (1999) – one that might reveal direct connections with the events in your waking life story. For example, when the dreamwork was eventually performed on the "*Rusty Car*" dream, we first underlined the possible metaphors: "*I was wandering through a desert and see an old <u>rusty car</u>. I <u>look inside</u> and find the <u>driver</u> is not moving. I <u>give him up for dead</u>.*" If we then plug the waking life analogies/associations into each of these and re-write the dream story it reads: "*I was wandering through a desert and saw <u>my old rusty talents</u>. I looked inside <u>myself</u> and found that <u>my inner drive is dead</u>.*" At this point the association with the waking event became more obvious.

Don't Stop Here – Dreamwork goes Beyond Metaphor

Working at the metaphoric level with the dream story provides a first level of insight in a relatively fun and safe manner. It may result in an "aha" response as you recognize how the dream might relate to a situation in your life. However, the "aha" is most often just a recognition of what waking life situation the dream was dealing with. It reveals the "what" but rarely provides the "why" – insights to the underlying emotional or motivational issues that has left you stuck in that situation. So don't stop there.

In the "*Rusty Car*" dream for example metaphor work and rewriting the dream story revealed that the dream was about the offer of the teaching position and reflected the dreamers concern over his "rusty talents" and the fact that his internal motivation felt "dead" at that point. But metaphor work alone did not reveal <u>why</u> he was not motivated to the point that he felt the need to turn down this valuable opportunity. What were the underlying emotional conflicts that led to this decision?

It is the underlying emotional conflict or as Jung termed it "the unconscious aspect of the conscious experience" that is the what the dream is actually dealing with – not simply the conscious experience itself. So true dream "work" goes much deeper than simply understanding the apparent metaphors in the dream narrative. The "work" involves going beyond "what is the dream about" to "what is the dream trying to resolve and how" and applying that insight to helping resolve those inner conflicts. So when working on a dream, working with metaphors in the dream narrative is just the surface layer - an introduction to the waking life situation that triggered the dream. A much deeper complex of *unconscious* issues are yet to be explored and worked on – with the ultimate goal of helping you understand how better to move forward in your waking life.

Metaphor Applies to All Stages of Dreamwork

Metaphor is the "language" of the dreaming mind and thus the "language" of dreamwork. Although it is first used with the dream narrative (as above), it continues to apply to work at the deeper levels, whether *role-play*, color work, definition, association, or memory associations. When working with any of these techniques, the verbal expressions that are evoked are treated as analogies (or metaphors) related to your waking life situation.

Let's again take the "*Rusty Car*" dream as an example. When the dreamer was asked to define the function of the "car" the dreamer stated: "a way to move forward." This was an analogy to how the dreamer saw the offer of the new teaching position - "a new opportunity and a way to move forward" in life with their once valued talents. In the *role-play* exploration, when the dreamer was asked to "give the rusty car a voice" they (as the car) stated, "I am too old and rusty to be restored." This in turn was an analogy to the way they felt about their earlier talents (too old and too hard to restore) and their reason for feeling anxious and wanting to decline the opportunity

The Next Step – Exploring Associations

As discussed in Chapter 3, the imagery in our dreams comes largely from the associative cortex, an occipital-parietal-temporal area of the brain which identifies, connects and represents things by association. The associations involve connections between emotions, conflicts, past memories, like experiences, and our inner belief system or *model* of reality and our role in it – the "unconscious aspects of a conscious situation" as Jung put it. Therefore, if you want to know what something in your dream really "means" then explore the personal associations that surface when you relate to it.

There are a number of approaches to exploring your own personal associations with a dream image, *element* or activity in the dream. The first step might be to simply explore your immediate associations; what you consider the thing in the dream to be, its essence, or the memories that it spontaneously brings forth. The deeper approach is *role-play* which reveals the underlying and perhaps unexpressed emotional associations - which we will discuss in the next section. Exploring your own associations as an approach to "meaning" is the most healthy approach because the "meaning" comes from you, the dreamer, and not from the projections of others or a "symbol dictionary" which have no way of knowing what is going on within you.

"Define" the Dream *Element*

One quick and fun way to get to your basic association with some image or thing in the dream is to simply define its **purpose** or **function** – its **essence**. As discussed in Chapter 6, the dreaming brain doesn't use the same labels we use in waking life to identify things (those speech centers are inactive) – it represents things as an association with their context, essence, function or purpose. In the "door" exercise illustrated in Chapter 6, figure 6-2, I presented a simple trick for understanding your personal associations with a dream *element* - simply define its purpose or function. Almost everyone who looks at the door image verbally identifies it as a door. But when asked what the purpose or function of their door is, one might say "to keep things out", another "to open up to a new opportunity", and yet another "to control who gets in or stays out". Personal associations with anything (in waking or in dreams) is very different for different people – so simply relating your definition of its essence, purpose or function is a quick and effective way to reveal at least the very first level of what it "means" to YOU.

Delaney & Flowers (1991) created a whole dreamworking method called *Dream Interviewing* based on defining the essence of a dream *element*. Their technique goes quite a bit deeper than the simple definition approach above. The dreamer is asked to describe the *element* as if describing it to an interviewer who has come from another planet and is unfamiliar with life on Earth. The dreamer is encouraged to give concrete descriptions and include his or her judgments and feelings about the *element*. The interviewer asks a series of specific questions from the alien's point of view, such as "What is (known personality in the dream) like? Pretend I have never heard of him before." Or, "What are cats like in general? We don't have them on Mars. What is the specific cat in your dream like?" The interviewer asks a modifiable series of questions tailored to elicit concise, and not too detailed descriptions of each of the major dream *elements*, including settings, people, animals, objects, feelings, actions/plots. The dreamer's associations arise spontaneously and are kept to a workable minimum. Throughout the process, interviewers are not to ask the dreamer any leading questions and must keep their own associations and interpretations to themselves. Instead, the interviewer recapitulates each description to the dreamer, and asks if it reminds them of anyone, anything, or any part of themselves. This is the interpretation question that lets the dreamer identify the metaphoric bridge between the dream *element* and the dreamer's life experience.

Memory Associations

What Does It Bring to Mind?

When exploring what the thing or person in the dream immediately brings to mind – "what does it remind you of" – might be a simple approach but can become misleading because it involves too much of the cognitive mind (the part of your brain that was asleep at the time). Asking "what immediately comes to mind when you think of that thing?" or more specifically "what specific emotional event does it bring to mind?" can be more effective. That sort of questioning goes deeper into the emotional memories that dreams typically deal with.

As Ernest Hartmann and Fritz Perls aptly put it, the dream image is a picture of our feelings. This is illustrated in the dream example above, of the lone vase laying on a deserted island. At first the dreamer simply saw it as a vase and had no idea what it meant. But when she was asked to imagine becoming the vase, it awakened the memory of that vase being the one her husband, who had just passed away, gave her when they were married.

An Image of Something from the Dreamers Past

We often dream of a person or scene or fragment of an event from our past. This is one of the problem-solving functions of dreams, bringing forth a past event or experience and comparing it with our present situation, in order to learn how to best deal with it. In order to understand why it is there, simply ask yourself (or the dreamer) "What specific emotional event from your past does it immediately bring to mind." It may take a couple of tries because you want to visualize **one** specific emotional event that comes to mind – and compare it with what is happening with you today. Comparing the feelings at the time and any decision you made at that moment, with how you feel or decisions you are making about today's situation can be a critical clue to any conflict you are stuck in today. This past learning, those emotional responses and decisions made at the time, may have been appropriate then, but cause conflict and disfunction in the present day. This is the stuff our dreams work on.

As and example: *"I dreamed I was back at my parent's house with my mother in the kitchen."* Upon asking "what specific emotional event immediately comes to mind" the dreamer states, *"It was the moment she told me that my parents were divorcing."* When asking "what did you feel or what decision did you make at that moment" the dreamer says, *"I was devastated and felt that somehow it was my fault."* These sorts

of early memories and decisions can influence the self-image of the dreamer for life and lay at the core of many current conflicts and issues the dream is dealing with.

Free Association

Another associative approach is to freely associate words with the dream *element*. This was Freud's approach, but one that Jung rejected because it too quickly moves away from the dream into areas or a multitude of *complexes* that may only distantly related to the issue at hand. He preferred to understand memory and emotional associations closer to the event the dream was dealing with.

Marcia Emery, PhD, in her book *The Intuitive Healer* (1999) however, has found some benefit in two free association approaches for working with dream imagery, which she calls "amplification" (this is not amplification as Jung defined it) and "word association." One or two key images are selected from the dream story. Using Marcia's "amplification" approach, the dreamer freely associates words with that specific dream image until an "aha" or connection is made with a situation in their waking life. The "word association" approach is more serial in nature. A dream image is selected, and the dreamer associates a word with it. The dreamer then associations another word with that prior word association. This continues until an "aha" or connection is made with a situation in their waking life. With both techniques, those connections are then further explored as they relate to the dream and the waking life situation.

For example, a person who dreamed of an apple might say "worm" which might lead to "slimy" which might trigger an "aha" – "the person I was dealing with yesterday was a slimy character." Such associations can form a connection between the dream and the event – which can then form a context for further dremwork.

Continue Rewriting the Dream Story

Just as with metaphors, once you are finished working with the associations you can further relate the dream story to the waking life story by inserting them as well into the dream story. Let's continue with the example of the "*Rusty Car*" dream. Using he definition technique the dreamer subsequently defined: the **essence** of wandering as "moving aimlessly"; the **essence** of desert as "a place without life"; and the **function** of car as "something that allows me to move forward." When those were added to the metaphors and the dream story rewritten with all of them plugged in, we get: "*I am moving aimlessly in a place without life and saw something that allows me to move forward, but my talents are rusty. I looked inside myself and found that my inner drive was dead.*" Re-reading the new story now reflects on even more of the dreamer's situation and emotional concerns.

Next - Going Deeper – Exploring Underlying Emotion

The metaphor and association approaches are useful for initial exploration and understanding what waking event the dream appears to be related to, but in order to understand the underlying emotional barriers or conflicts the dream is actually dealing with a deeper approach is needed. I use a combined approach of *role-play* (a scripted version I developed based on Gestalt role-play) and color work (which I developed from color psychology research). I call the combination "Image Activation Dreamwork" and it forms a core part of the *Transformative Dreamwork* protocol herein. I apply it to an exploration of both the personal content within the dream *element* (which I will do in this section) and the emotional associations within dream color (discussed in Chapter 9).

The *role-play* technique is a quick and highly effective approach that "gives the dream *element* a voice" bringing forth the *unconscious* expression of the emotional content that created the dream *element*. I derived the basic *role-play* technique from Gestalt Therapy but developed it as a simple easy to use scripted version – one that is adequate for revealing the underlying emotional conflicts that are needed for further dreamwork. A trained therapist likely will want to go deeper, but the aim here is to be something that anyone can use, the scripting and short responses avoids it going too deep, yet deep and effective enough to reveal information adequate for dreamwork. What is also important is that the information, and what it means to the dreamer, comes entirely from the dreamer – avoiding projections by others that may be working with the dreamer on their dream.

The Importance of Exploring Emotions

Justina Lasley (2004) in her book *Honoring the Dream: A Handbook for Dream Group Leaders*, supports one of the basic premises of Image Activation dreamwork, i.e. that it is important to identify the emotions of the dream and bring that awareness to waking life. We act and react out of our emotions, so it is helpful for the dreamer to be conscious of the emotions at work in waking life. In her book, she features my scripted *role-play* approach and offers several other exercises to help the dreamer become aware of emotions. She states that it is helpful to move the dreamer to the basic emotions of MAD, SAD, GLAD, and AFRAID. This is important, because we often use words such as 'frustrated' and 'confused' in a way that covers up the basic emotion, making it more difficult to understand what is actually being felt and how to deal with it effectively. She does not regard emotions as negative but considers an honestly-felt emotion to be positive. Only unexpressed or misdirected emotions have a negative impact. She encourages the dreamer to make notes in their dream journal regarding the emotions in each dream they record, and to relate those to emotions of their day.

Role-Play – Giving the Dream a Voice

The scripted *role-play* technique herein was derived from the role-play approach used by Fritz Perls in Gestalt Therapy (1974). A true Gestalt session is usually intended for therapy and can go deep very quickly. A therapy session might involve what is known as a "double chair" technique, in which the subject engages in a dialogue between conflicting *elements* or dream figures (representing conflicted parts of their personality) perhaps to arrive at a point of *impasse* and path to resolution.

This degree of Gestalt work is more than is required for basic or general dreamwork. Therefore, I adopted part of the technique by formulating a tightly scripted, step-by-step set of 6 questions (plus a 7th dialog statement), designed to reveal deep content in a way that avoids probing too deeply. I will describe that shortly. The content of a dream *element* is revealed by what the dreamer states, feels and/or experiences when imagining him or herself as the dream *element* and answering those questions as that thing in the dream would. This is validated when the dreamer subsequently reviews what the dream *element* stated and has a "connection" or an "ah-ha" response, as they make a dream-to-waking life association. As with the prior approaches, recognizing metaphor and figurative speech is a key element. However, in this case, you will be looking for the metaphors in the statements "spoken by that thing in the dream" as it is *role-played* by the dreamer.

Perhaps the best way to illustrate the power of "giving the dream a voice" through an example. In waking life, the dreamer was having trouble with his new female boss. He saw himself as a totally capable worker and was, but when she came around, he could never seem to do things to her satisfaction. The more he sensed her disapproval the more he would make mistakes and the more she would disapprove. This cycle was threatening his job. At the core of the problem was that he deeply needed her approval, but his "big male *ego*" made it difficult for him to admit to himself that "he needing approval from this woman!" He

shared the following dream in our workshop: *"I dreamed that I was standing in a sweet potato patch separated from my boss who was on the other side of a barbed wire fence."* When we worked on the dream at the metaphor and associative level, his associations to the barbed wire were "it hurts when I approach her," and "her barbed scolding." Although the metaphor level of work linked the dream with the situation it did little to reveal the underlying emotions or core conflict – so we went a level deeper.

Perl's indicated that everything in a dream is a meaningful fragment of our personality and those *elements* outside the dream-self are "alienated" (out there in the dream rather than integrated) because it contains a conflict or *impasse* that the dreamer is reluctant to face or express. He also pointed out that the more alienated *fragments* of the personality might appear as the least humanized *elements*. Following this thinking, I wondered what might lie inside the lowly sweet potato. Certainly, it was there for a reason! I therefore asked the dreamer to "become" the sweet potato and tell me about himself. He immediately stated, *"I am a sweet potato, butter me up and I'll be good."*

This was an immediate "aha" to the dreamer, and a precise statement of the conflicted feelings that he was having about his need to be buttered up by his boss in order to do a good job. The "sweet potato" was a fragment of himself the dreamer was ashamed of (the failures on the job and the need to be buttered up), and which had been alienated and reduced to the form of the lowly "sweet potato" in the dream. As lowly as it was, it contained the most powerful content.

Figure 8-1
Dream *Elements* can be "Decoded" if we "Give Them A Voice"

"I dreamed I was standing in a sweet potato patch across a barbed wire fence from my boss - In waking life I just can't seem to do anything right, she is always disapproving of me and my work."

"It hurts when I approach her"

"I'm a Sweet Potato, Butter Me Up and I'll be Good"
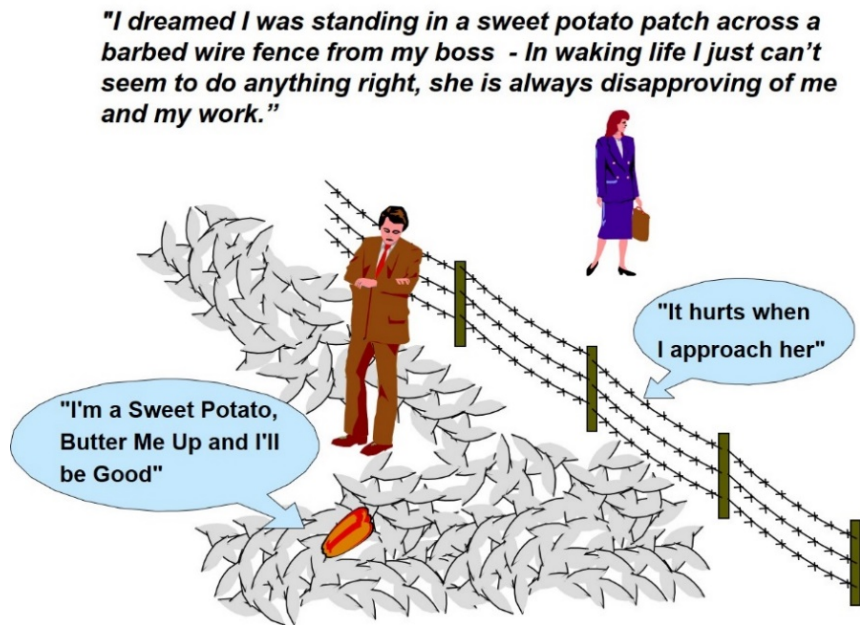
Analogy with Waking Life Feelings

Dream Re-Entry

What *role-play* does is it diverts the focus of the conscious mind into play-acting something in the dream, imagining that it is that "thing" in the dream, while freeing the *unconscious* to speak revealing the emotional information that created, and is metaphorically pictured within, that dream *element*. The simple image of a "sweet potato" pictured and contained all the suppressed emotions of the dreamer in the above example. Such a simple dream image illustrates that "a picture is worth 1000 words" as the saying goes. *Role-play* allows the *unconscious* to express itself in emotionally charged statements that can be related metaphorically or literally express to feelings or a situation in the dreamer's waking life.

A key to *role-play* is dream re-entry. Re-enter the dream scene, perhaps at the most emotionally charged point, and re-visualize being there just as you dreamed it. While in the scene look around at the *elements* in the scene (dream figures, things, activity) and pick a few that attract your attention, that seem important to the story or that you as the dreamer are interacting with – maybe even that curious seemingly inconsequential *element* off to the side (such as that "sweet potato"). Next sit as the observer but at the same time, one at a time, give each thing in the dream a voice. Imaging yourself becoming (as Fritz Perls put it) each one of those "things" in the dream – or at a minimum imagine what they might say – as they express themselves in their dream role. They are all parts of *fragments* of your personality, perhaps emotions that have not been expressed or suppressed parts of yourself that you have yet to fully embrace and own up to. They are out there in the dream looking to be integrated into the whole of you.

If you decide to work with only one or two *elements* in the dream scene, pick the one(s) that more curiously attracts your attention – the emotion contained within should unconsciously draw your attention. It may not be the more present thing in the dream (picking the "sweet potato" rather than the barbed wire for example), but the more curios. Also, perhaps pick the least human – things rather than dream figures (the "sweet potato" rather than the boss for example) since they may contain the more suppressed material, or alienated parts of your personality.

Another approach is to work with multiple *element*s in a dream scene as a group – in somewhat of a dialog with you the *dream-self*. In that way you might capture the variety of perspectives (various dialogs or conflicts) that your inner self has adopted regarding the situation. You might ask them what their purpose is in the role they are playing in the dream; what they like and dislike about that role, and what they would like from you the dreamer in the context of the dream plot or scene. You might use the full 6 or 7 question script below if you like. In any case record what each dream *element* states – then as the observer but recognizing that these are parts of you speaking - ask yourself if the statements sound like a feeling, conflict or situation in your waking life; a part of you that has yet to be expressed or embraced. Working this way with multiple *elements* is illustrated in the Dream Mapping example in Chapter 12.

The 6 "Magic" Questions

As noted above, I adapted Gestalt *role-play* for dreamwork by formulating a scripted, step-by-step set of 6 questions (plus a 7th dialog statement), designed to reveal deep content in a way that avoids probing too deeply. It is scripted in a way that can easily be understood and used for beginning dream workers as well as professionals. The approach can thus be used for personal dreamwork, or in a professional setting can be taken deeper as deemed appropriate by the therapist.

I call the approach a "scripted *role-play*" but my students at the Haden Institute at one point lovingly called it the "6 magic questions". There is nothing necessarily "magic" about them, but I found that adopting this clever name actually made it easier for people to remember. What the students found is that with in just a few minutes, and just a few simple questions or statements, the primary emotional issues, the two sides of

an emotional conflict, that the dream appears to be dealing with is revealed – all from within the one dream image. No cognitive or *ego* interference, it all comes out.

The 6 questions are very carefully designed to target 3 things: role perception; the underlying conflict and the motivation (fears and desires) keeping the dreamer stuck in the conflict. Over the years, I have found that these specific 6 questions best reveal the emotional content needed for further dreamwork. Adding additional questions beyond these is not recommended since it takes the dreamer into too many tangential issues and makes it difficult to then come back to and work on the core conflict the dream is dealing with. The limited script also avoids dwelling on any line of questioning too long and going too deeply – which is fine for therapy but not necessary for basic dreamwork. In a professional clinical setting with a trained therapist, further focusing on a particular line of questioning may be perfectly appropriate and necessary. But for basic dreamwork, these six (plus the 7th dialog) usually provide more than enough information.

The design of the 6-question script is divided into 3 pairs to focus on revealing three things:
1) **Role Perception**: Asking the "thing" or dream *element* to: a) **describe itself** and how it feels in that role and b) its **purpose or function** is aimed at revealing how the dreamer might perceive who they are and what their role is in waking life as it pertains to the issue the dream is dealing with.
2) **The Underlying Conflict:** Asking "what do you **like**" and "what do you **dislike**" about being that dream *element*, is a question pair is designed to reveal the underlying emotional conflict or *impasse* contained within the dream *element*.
3) **The Motivations Driving the Conflict**: Asking "as that thing in the dream"…"what do you **fear**" and "what do you **desire** most" question pair is designed to reveal the emotions and beliefs, fears and desires, that drive and leave the dreamer stuck in the conflict.

The 7th question – **dialog** – is just one part of what it typically a two-part dialog between parts of self at an *impasse* (similar to the Gestalt "double chair" technique). I moved just one statement from the dialog script (described later in this chapter) to the end of the 6 questions, at the suggestion of a colleague Chelsie Wakefield (2012) since it can often create a guidance or solution statement related to the conflict being addressed in the other six. That "thing" in the dream is asked to say whatever comes to mind to the *dream-self*, from the perspective of their respective roles in the dream. What often happens (assuming the dreamer stays in the role) is a statement that can metaphorically reveal a possible solution to the conflicted situation. Some methods call this "receiving a gift" from the dream.

The *role-play* script is primarily designed to work on things, animals or dream figures in an identifiable role in the dream but can be adopted to work with known persons (see the notes). It also can work with *elements* other than images (such as actions, feelings and sensations) but perhaps not as well. To be inclusive, in the procedure below I will therefore refer to the dream imagery, things, dream figures and such, as dream *elements*.

If you are working with someone else individually or in a group, and are not an experienced dreamworker, take care when using the approach. Usually the 6 to 7 *role-play* statements with a simple one or two sentence response is fairly safe. But *role-play* of an extended or deep nature should only be done with a professional present who can help you work through any open wounds. If the dreamer becomes anxious or upset stop immediately. Stick to the scripted questions and short one or two sentence answers and do not dwell on a particular line of questioning, in order to avoid going to deeply into areas that you are unequipped to deal with. Ask the dreamer to answer the questions with the "first thing that comes to mind" in one or two sentences each. Then go onto the next question. At the first sign of a strong emotional reaction, stop and allow the dreamer to choose whether or not to continue with the exercise or simply stop if it is going too deeply. Investigate the emotions with the dreamer before continuing, to make sure that doors are not being opened that can't be closed. Most of the information needed to associate the dream to a waking life situation can be obtained from simple statements, without going too deeply.

The Role-Play Procedure

Below is a four-step procedure for *role-playing* a dream *element*. This is Step #3 of in the *Guide for Transformative Dreamwork* at the front of the book. It contains the "6 magic questions" and optional 7th which are statements that you speak while imagining that you are that person or thing, in the role it is playing in the dream.

The procedure (below) involves picking a dream *element* to work on, visualizing it then imagining yourself as that person or thing, "become" it as Perls would say, feel what it is feeling. Then as that person or thing answer the 6 to 7 questions – from a feeling standpoint, the first answers that come to mind – or answer as you imagine the person or thing would answer them.

Then you switch perspective and listen to or read the responses back as if they are YOU making that statement about something or a way you feel in YOUR LIFE. The result is generally statements that reveal the underlying emotions and emotional conflicts that you and your dream are dealing with.

It is advised to work with a number of dream *elements* in this way to provide multiple perspective on the same issue the dream is dealing with. It is good to plug the results that best apply to your waking life feelings into the dream story, just as we did with metaphors and associations, to create an even more meaningful dream to life story.

   a) Pick a Dream *Element* (person or "thing"):
   Re-enter the dream perhaps at an emotionally impactful point, visualize the scene then pick one or more of what seems like an important dream *elements* or images (person or thing), particularly one that curiously attracts your attention or has an emotional charge to it. Work with multiple images, in particular the inanimate objects or non-human creatures, because they may hold the most interesting content, or as Perls would say, "the most alienated *fragments* of your personality." You might try an *element* that is in color, since it may contain more emotional intensity and picking a colored image also helps if you want to later work on image using the color questionnaire in Chapter 9.

   b) Become the Dream *Element* (that person or "thing" in the dream):
   Close your eyes, go back into the dream and bring the dream *element* (person or "thing") into view. Now take a few deep breaths, relax, and with each breath slowly move into the image and "become" the dream *element* - feel its essence - feel what it feels in its role in the dream. You might position your body into the shape or orientation of the *element* if it helps and look out at the dream from the "eyes" of the dream *element*. When you feel you are there, proceed with the next step – feeling what it is feeling in that role and give the first answers that come to mind. If you can't imagine yourself as the *element* in the dream then at least try to imagine how it might answer these questions.

   c) Give the Dream *Element* a Voice (the 6 "magic" questions):
   Have a person with you ask the questions below and record your statements. If you are alone, voice record or write them down then after each answer go back into the dream and recapture the feeling of the dream *element* and answer the next one. Speak as if you are the person or thing in the first-person present-tense, answering these questions using "I …." Statements ("I am…" or "I like…" or "My purpose is…" etc.). It is best to answer from a feeling perspective "what are you feeling …" when asked the question - but whatever first comes to mind, and maybe a second reflective thought.

1) Who or **what are you** (describe yourself and how you feel): "I am a _____ and I feel __"
   *Alternatively - if the dream figure is someone you know, then "become" that person and describe
   a key personality aspect (that person has) related to their role the dream.*

2) What is your **purpose** or **function** (normally then in this dream)? "My purpose is to _____"

3) What do you **like** about being what you are and your role in the dream? "I like _____"

4) What do you **dislike** about what you are and your role in the dream? "I dislike _____"

5) What do you **fear most**, what is the worst thing that can happen to you? "I fear _____"

6) What do you **desire most** as this dream *element*? "What I desire most is to _____"

7) Dialog (optional): Now look out into the dream and spot the dreamer; what do you want to tell
   them?

d) Relate the Statements to a Life Situation: Read back, play back or have another person
   feedback the *role-play* answers. But switch perspective and listen to them now as if they are
   statements YOU are making about a feeling or situation in YOUR own waking life. Do one or more
   of the statements connect with a feeling or situation in your waking life? Describe the specific
   situation and how the statement(s) relates. Explore the 3 emotional aspects the *role-play* is testing
   for by asking yourself the following:
   a) Do the "I am" or "my purpose or function" statements sound like a waking life role you see
      yourself in?
   b) Do the "I like" versus "I dislike" statements sound like a conflict going on inside your head
      regarding some waking life situation?
   c) Do the "I fear" and "I desire" statements sound like fears and desires you have regarding that
      situation, perhaps fears and desires that feed the conflict?

*If a Known Person? If the *element* is a person you know from waking life, it is likely the dream
   borrowed them to represent a personality characteristic: perhaps a way you are acting in the waking
   situation OR more often they may represent a solution the dream is testing - ask what would they do
   in your situation, how would they approach the conflict you find yourself in?

Option – Working with an Impasse

The *role-play* above may have revealed conflicts that have left you stuck. You may feel you are at an
impasse, unable to move in one direction or another, because you fear that all options available to you won't
work. Some *impasses* are simply points of indecision, while others are more serious, driven by long-
standing beliefs and fears. Many were established by decisions made at a time of trauma, "I will never do
that again" or "I will never speak to him again" or I will never get married and hurt like that again" etc.
Many others were established in childhood by parents, teachers and peers, "Good little girls never…." or
"You are not smart enough…" etc. Some may be more recent, simply conflicts between two choices, views
or *myths*.

In any case resolving an *impasse* requires an inner change, facing the conflict and the old fears, views or
beliefs that keep you stuck (*old myth*); moving through the barrier by introducing, testing and eventually
adopting a new belief or view (*new myth*). It is what dreams attempt to do each night and what the

Transformative Dreamwork protocol is designed to help with as well – by understanding what the conflict is and how the dream was attempting to resolve the problem.

There is an approach however that might augment the process even during *role-play* – dialog – a Gestalt Therapy method for moving through the *impasse*. The therapeutic method often uses a double chair technique where the dreamer sits in one and places the conflicted *element* in the other, then speaks to that *element*, then switches (playing the role of the conflicted *element*) and answers the dreamer. The dialog continues until the core of the *impasse* is reached, often over emphasized with action and expression, and worked through. This is designed for therapy and requires a trained professional to guide the process. However, some of the benefit or insight might be gained by simply extending the 7-question scripted role-play described here, with just a bit more of the dialog that question #7 introduces.

Impasses can show up in many ways in a dream: either literally as a barrier (wall, fence, broken bridge, etc.), an activity making it impossible to progress or achieve an objective (trapped, lost or stuck); or as a conflict you discover within a dream *element* when you *role-play* it (the "I like/dislike, I fear/desire" statements in the exercise above). When working with an *impasse* two ways to begin the dialog: 1) continue the *role-play* of an *element* you are working on from question #7 on (as in the above example) or; 2) pick an image or *element* in the dream that is a physical barrier to progress and dialog with it. In the box below is a method for working with an *impasse* image that appears in the dream.

A small amount of dialog may not resolve the entire *impasse* but will provide alternative viewpoints or solutions that can be tested and eventually adopted. For example, in the "*Clever Dog*" dream, "*Two men were trying to kill a dog they considered aggressive and threatening. The dog suddenly decided to roll over and play dead. The dog turned into a cute puppy, and the men stopped…*" *Role-play* of the dog revealed the following statements: *"I like being a dog because people are afraid of me and don't mess with me; what I dislike is that people are always trying to hurt me. What I fear is being hurt, and what I desire the most is for people to accept me."*

The dreamer was at an *impasse* between a misconceived belief (*old myth*) and a desire: "I have to act aggressively, or people will hurt me" and the opposing desire "I want people to accept me." When the dog began the dialog with the dreamer in question #7 ("what would you tell the dreamer"), the dog said: roll over and play dead, got it? This implied, "keep your anger in check and roll with the punches." Continuing the dialog went something like this:

Dreamer to Dog: "But if I give in it shows that I am weak, they will just attack me more."
Dog to Dreamer: "Wrong, the more I growled the more they hurt me. I was never strong enough to fight them all off. The reason they were hurting me is because I was growling. Stop growling!"
Dreamer to Dog: "But then I am giving in, giving them what they want."
Dog to Dreamer: "What they want is to toy with your reaction, Stop reacting, and it will be no fun for them anymore."

Dialog – Working with an Impasse *Element*

Dialoging directly with something in the dream that appears to be a barrier to your progress may help you quickly understand and define the waking life *impasse* that the dream *element* is representing and dealing with.

1) **Impasse *Element*:** Review the storyline of the dream and ask yourself, "where am I trying to go or what am I trying to achieve in the dream?" Pick an image or *element* in the dream that acts as a barrier or prevents you from progressing or obtaining your goal in the dream.

2) **Role-play the Impasse *Element*, speak to the dreamer:**
It may helpful to eventually try the full 6 question scripted *role-play* but to keep a focus on the physical *impasse* at this point try a dialog with the dreamer. Use sentences that best fit your situation in the dream and the ongoing dialog. Try the ones below as starters:
a) "I am_____(name and describe yourself as the *impasse element*)____"
b) "My function or purpose in this dream is to _____"
c) "I am acting this way (holding you back?) because___"

3) **Switch, and as the Dreamer, speak to the Impasse *Element*:** Put yourself back into the dream, face the impasse *element* and tell it what you want it to do to let you progress, for example: "You are preventing me from_____, I want you to_____"

4) **Switch again, and as the Impasse Element, answer the Dreamer**
"My answer (or advise) to you (the dreamer) is_____"

5) **Continue the dialogue:** answer back first feeling statement that comes to mind. Continue to switch between *ego* self and the *impasse element* (maybe switch physical positions) and continue the dialog until some surprising or insightful statement comes forth that either brings forth deep conflicted emotions (the core *impasse*), or perhaps sounds like a possible resolution to the conflict.

6) **Try Defining the Impasse:**
a) Based on step 5 re-state the *impasse* in your own words in a way that captures the conflict, with a BUT statement that identifies the *impasse* point, something like this:
"I need_____because_____**BUT** if I_____then I fear____will happen".
b) Are the needs and fears: logical, realistic and healthy or unrealistic and unhealthy?

7) **Compare to Life:** Does this conflict sound familiar? What waking life situation does it bring to mind? What is required of you in waking life to bring about what appears to be a possible resolution from steps 5 above. Is that resolution realistic, appropriate and healthy?

Dream Example

Exploration and Insight
Working with Personal Content

Part 1: Exploration - Association & Metaphor Work

Step#1 Record the Dream Story

Reenter the dream (or dream segment) and describe it as if you are re-experiencing it, in the first person, present tense Give it a Title and Sketch the scene from above or any odd imagery.

Dream: *"A friend of mine Jane is <u>painting over</u> my newly <u>painted</u> gray walls, red and blue. <u>I try to wipe it off</u> with a rag. I woke screaming!"*

Title: *Wiping away the Paint*

Step #2 Record Your Life Story at the Time
Describe any emotionally important situations: positive (unexpected joyous event) or negative (upsetting or annoying, conflicts, hurtful) or decisions you made in your life at the time.

Life: "In waking life I am very nervous about moving across the country to take a new job."

Step #3 Dream to Life Comparison:

3a) Dream Orientation: at the onset does the dream *metaphorically* picture some emotional situation in your waking life? Does it introduce an impactful, surprising or guiding event or resolution, (perhaps opposing the view of the dream self) that alters the view or actions of your dream-self?

ANS: "The theme of a conflict was apparent - the dream-self having painted her walls gray versus the sudden entry of Jane who painted them blue and red, causes me to panic."

3b) Metaphors in the Dream Story
Look for (and underline) action, phrases and word-play in the dream story that sound like they also might describe something going on in your life at the time.

<u>"Painting over"</u> is a possible metaphor for "covering up something" or "making it look better"
<u>"I try to wipe it off</u> is a possible metaphor for "avoiding thinking about something"
Waking Life Association: The dreamer indicated that she was trying to avoid thinking about or dealing with her concerns about taking her new job and moving.

3c) Associations:
- **Function - define** the dream *element*s and/or their function (what it is, what it does)

Wall = "a barrier, holds things up"
Rag = "function is to clean off unwanted stuff – in this case the paint"
Waking Life Association: "My panic about moving may be a barrier, holding things up".

- **Define Personality characteristic of known persons –** how are they a) like and b) unlike you and c) how would they approach the unresolved waking situation you find yourself in?

    *ANS: "Jane is a person who goes with the flow." **Same**: "We are both ambitious and fun loving." **Different**: "Jane is more flexible and less hesitant when it comes to trying risky new things". **How would she approach your situation?** "She would go without much hesitation."*

- **Themes:** Are any of the actions or feelings or the general theme of what you are doing in the dream similar to what you are doing and feeling in waking life.

    ANS: "Painting my walls gray = I just did paint the outside walls of my house gray. Feelings = terrified in the dream is like terrified of my move in waking life."

- **Memories:** if a setting or object or maybe a person is something/someone from your past, reflect on it and recall one specific past event that it brings to mind? Relate to your present situation.

    ANS: "Nothing from my past in the dream."

3d) Rewrite the Dream Story and Relate to Your Life Story: *plug the associations into the dream story.:*

ANS: "Jane <u>who goes with the flow and would try new things</u>, is <u>covering up</u> my newly <u>covered up</u> gray walls red and blue <u>to make them look better</u>. <u>I try to avoid thinking about those unwanted feelings by wiping them them awayt</u>. I woke screaming!"

Relate to Life Story: *"Jane would see my new job as an opportunity and go with it but whenever I think about it – I get terrified - so I try not to think about it – I am stuck and haven't even prepared for it. I haven't even tried to sell my house."*

Part 2: Insight - Exploring Underlying Emotions

Note that at this point we only know what waking life situation the dream seems to be related to but not much about what deeper emotional conflict is behind the anxiety and terror that the dreamer is trying to cover up or shield herself from. This is explored using *role-play* (here) and color work (which will continue in Chapter 9).

Step #4 Give the Dream a Voice (Scripted *Role-play* or 6 "magic" questions)

4a) Choose a Dream Image to Explore
We now go deeper by picking something in the dream that might be a visual representation of the emotional conflict or situation the dream is dealing with. Close your eyes and reenter the dream, perhaps at the most emotionally charged point, and look around the dream at all the dream figures and things you see in the dream. Note if one draws your attention or is perhaps strangely curious to you—no matter if it is a lesser *element* or a dominant one.

ANS: "the Rag"

4b) Give the Image a Voice: re-enter the dream and "become" that thing in the dream

Close your eyes again and bring that dream image (X) to your mind's eye. Now take three deep breaths and on each breath bring X closer to you with the goal being that on the third breath you merge with X in the dream and "become" it. Once there look out at the dream from its perspective and feel what it is feeling in the role it is playing in the dream. If you can't "become" that thing, then at least imagine how X might answer the questions. Now (having someone read them to you and record them is best) answer the six to seven questions as if you are that thing (X) in the dream, using first person, present-tense - 'I am...' or 'I feel...' responses. Don't think about the response, just say the first thing that comes to mind.

1) **What are you,** name and **describe** yourself, perhaps how you feel in that role? **(**Alternatively - if it is a dream figure is someone you know, then "become" that person and describe a key personality characteristic that person has related to their role the dream).

"I am a rag, in somebody's hands."

2) As X what is your **purpose or function?**

"My purpose is to be handy and clean things up."

3) What do you **like** most about being X**?**

"What I like is being available, needed, and used."

4) What do you **dislike** about, or what is the downside of, being X?

"What I dislike is getting thrown away after the job is done."

5) As X what do you **fear** the most, what is the worst thing that can happen to you?

"What I fear is getting dirty and being thrown away."

6) As X what do you **desire** the most?

"What I desire is staying clean and continuing to be used."

7) **Dialog** *(Optional):* Now as X look out into the dream where you see the dreamer. Considering what the dreamer is doing or what you desire (first thing that comes to mind) what would you say to the dreamer?"

"You can't just wipe it away, you will just make a mess."

5c) Relate to a Life Situation:
Open your eyes and shake off that thing in the dream and come back to being yourself. Now read the answers, but this time not as if it were X in the dream saying them, but as if it is YOU saying them about YOUR life. Do one or more of the statements seem to describe a situation or feelings in YOUR waking life? Do the "I am" and "My purpose" statements sound like a role you feel you are in? Do the "I like"

versus "I dislike" statements sound like a conflict going on in your mind? Do the "I fear" and "I desire" statements sound like your fears and desires, perhaps keeping you from resolving the conflict? If the dream figure is a person 'X' you know, they likely represent a personality characteristic: perhaps a way you are acting in the waking situation OR more often they represent a solution the dream is testing - ask what would 'X' do in your situation, how would they handle conflict you find yourself in? Finally does the dialog statement sound analogous to something that might resolve your waking life situation?

ANS: "I feel my career is <u>in somebody else's hands</u>. I do consider <u>my purpose</u> on the job <u>is to be handy and clean things up.</u> On my last two jobs, I was hired to do a job, but once that job was done, I was told I was no longer needed and was let go—so, yes, I dislike being '<u>thrown out after the job is done</u>.' I fear that on this next job I might mess up (get dirty) again and be <u>thrown out</u>—but will now have left my friends and family, sold my home, and be clear across country. I want to avoid conflict (stay clean) and continue to have my talents used."

Note: These conflicts and fears created such an extreme *impasse* that she had not even started to sell her house or prepare for the move, and yet she had to be on the new job in two weeks.

Step #5 Color Work *(continued in Chapter 9)*

The emotional conflict that the dreamer was dealing with is revealed in the *role-play* - but what about the colors of the paint in the dream – why were they there and what do they mean? The dream appeared to introduce Jane with the red and blue paint as a possible resolution scenario – something that opposed or *compensated* for the view of the *dream-self (ego)* – red and blue being a possible integration of opposites. At this point we don't know until we do the color work -which will continue at the end of Chapter 9.

CHAPTER 9
WORKING WITH COLOR IN DREAMS

*Every night for a hundred years the angel of dreams came to the town and splashed the
walls with bright colors that stayed until the first light of day – Brian Andreas*

What does it mean to dream in color? It is curious that there has been little research done with color in dreams – not so much whether we dream in color, that is well researched, but what the individual colors represent. A search for the answer to this question led me to over a decade of research into the significance of color in dreams. I found color psychology research and literature (Lüscher, 1971, 1979; Birren, 1961, 1978; Brown, 1974; Ertel, 1973; Goldstein, 1942; Riley, 1995; Sutton & Whelan, 2004) to show that the human brain, limbic and autonomic nervous system responds physiologically and emotionally to various color illuminations – subliminally and in a fairly predictable manner likely due to evolutionary influences. Working in sessions with individual dreamers and personal databases and tools (such as Gestalt role-play) that reveal the emotional associations within a dream image, I was able to demonstrate that the same color to emotional associations appear to carry over into the dream state (Hoss, 1999, 2004, 2005, 2010). A number of the same color to emotional processing centers remain active in waking and REM sleep so this made sense. Working with very large dream databases I was further able to establish physiological and emotional response to influence dream color (Hoss, 2010).

In essence I discovered that dream color is a symbol (or imagery fragment) just like any other symbol, that combines/*condenses* with dream imagery to add additional "meaning" to the composite dream image (Hoss, 1999). That "meaning", although influenced by culture and personal experience, is for the most part emotional and based on our collective human subliminal response to individual colors. Color "paints our dreams with emotion" (quote from Reader's Digest, 2006).

The research also resulted in my development of the Color Questionnaire (tables 9-7 and 9-8) which consolidates much of the common color to emotional human response information, in statements designed to trigger a person's own emotional associations with a color. It is useful for research and dreamwork.

Do We Dream in Color?

One of the surprising facts about dreaming is that most dreams appear to contain color even though we rarely recall the color upon awakening. The myth that dreams are in black and white was perpetuated a decade or so prior to the discovery of REM in the early '50s, after which research methodology changed and dispelled that viewpoint. The myth was fed by a number of speculative factors including the effect of the transition from black and white to color media and even a perception that color was more dominant in the dreams of those with mental illness. The confounding factor at the time was that, prior to the understanding of REM sleep, most reports were largely spontaneous or anecdotal, or collected by survey (well after the fact when color and other imagery fade quickly with memory).

Color recall, just as with any dream content, seems to be a function of memory and our attention to color as we report the dream, both of which seem to diminish rapidly after waking. In a laboratory setting,

however, when subjects are awakened during a REM stage of sleep, color is mentioned spontaneously in as much as 46% of dream reports, and if the subject is asked explicitly about color, the percentage of color recall increased to about 80% to 97.3%. (Schredl, 2008a). For example, in one study Bob Van de Castle (1994) reports that distinct color was reported in 70% of the cases and vague color in another 13%. All of this suggests that dreams naturally contain color just as they do all other fictive senses, and the recall of color is influenced by attention to color, memory and other dream to waking recall factors. This is suggested by the fact that color recall drops to about 11% to 29% in spontaneous dream reports (those remembered upon awaking and written down some time thereafter).

Working with Color in Dreams

Color, like other sensory modalities in dreams, can be treated as any other *element* or symbol in a dream. Color represents associations that combine with the other parts of a dream image in order to complete the full "meaning" of that image. As the studies described in this chapter suggest, color relates to emotion – different colors representing different emotional associations. Therefore, color might combine with a dream image to provide and emotional charge or essence to that image. We learned earlier that dream imagery can be formed as a picture-metaphor representation of the dreamer's feelings, emotional memories, and conceptualizations – the whole image being a condensation of elements that represent fragments of linked associations. Color is one of those fragments, an important one that can provide the emotional information necessary to complete the "meaning" of that dream image. Working on a dream image, without paying attention to the color, would leave out a great deal of important information.

If you don't pay attention the color of your dream imagery when you awaken, or don't record the colors as part of your dream narrative, the recall for color diminishes rapidly. So, as you wake, close your eyes and go back over the dream story and try to pay attention to the colors – particularly any that stand out. Then open your eyes and record the dream and the colors.

Whatever the mechanism for color recall, the lack of ability to recall all of the colors can be somewhat of a blessing when working with color in dreams. It is possible that, as Robert Van de Castle stated, we tend to recall color that contains the more significant emotional content. This is supported in principle by Hartmann's (2011) contention that emotional content increases the intensity of a dream image. If this is the case, then the colors that remain dominant in your dream report might be those that are the most revealing when working on the dream.

So, what about the situation in which you recall a dream, or most of your dreams, in full color? When the whole dream is in color focus on the colors that stood out or choose the color of a dream image where the color can be optional. For example, if you dream of green grass and blue sky, those particular colors may reveal little of importance since those are the colors may simply be due to wake-to-dreaming continuity, colors commonly associated with those images in waking life. Instead pick something like a red car (which could just as easily have been blue), or an object that has unique colors as in the previous "*Change Purse*" dream example (where the object was red on one side and green-brown on the other). If there is a dream image you are curious about and intend to work on, focus on its color if any. That way, you can gain two perspectives on the dream image – metaphoric and *role-play* associations plus color associations.

Early Thought – "Psychological Primaries"

Unfortunately, the specifics of color in dreams is an area that has been given little attention in psychological research or literature. The work of Jung, as well as that of Perls, contained some discussion on color as it related to what were considered the four "psychological primaries," a color grouping of red, yellow, blue

and green. Their notion was that these were the four colors that our mind considered "primary," or distinct from any color combination. Jung (1972, 1973) and Perls (1974) regarded the presence of a balanced pattern of these four colors in a dream as an evolving state of completion within the personality. Jung also referred to a symbolic significance of black and white; with blackness representing the *unconscious* realm, and white or light representing consciousness or new material emerging into consciousness – and the pairing of the two related to integration of *conscious* and *unconscious* material. Although as you will see, the recognition of this four color pattern plus the pairing of black and white, is indeed significant in studying dream color, the assignment Jung in particular gave to the "primaries" in terms of meaning is quite elusive.

Jung associated the "primaries" with what he called the four orienting functions of consciousness: feeling (red), intuition (yellow), thinking (blue) and sensation (green). Although the pairing of black and appeared to hold quite true from an *archetypal* sense as I worked with dreams, the assignments Jung gave to the four "primaries" did not seem to correlate at all with the personal and emotional associations being revealed from dreamwork – in particular his assignment of yellow and blue to intuition and thinking. Jung related blue to water which is a common association in the waking world but the relation to thought is inconsistent because at times he also related water to the *unconscious* and emotion in dreams - which is more aligned with intuition than to thought. In the waking world blue is associated with air as well which Jung assigns to yellow. These may have some alchemical relationship – or perhaps a relationship of convenience to the four personality functions - but do not appear useful for dreamwork.

As did Jung and Perls and Lüscher identified the four-color "primaries" as a basis for his ``four-color personality" theory. But as opposed to Jung and Perls, Lüscher relates to his four fundamental colors to fundamental emotional factors. I have found that these do tend to relate a bit more consistently (as will be discussed later) with a dreamer's associations when exploring the underlying emotional content in a colored dream image:

- Blue = *contentment:* Feeling of belonging, the inner connection and the relationship to one's partner. "How I feel towards a person that is close to me"
- Green = *self-respect:* Inner control of willpower and the capacity to enjoy. "The way I want to be"
- Red = *self-confidence:* Activity, drive and the reaction to challenges. "How I react to challenges"
- Yellow: *development:* Attitude of anticipation, attitude towards future development and towards new encounters. "What I expect for the future"

Color Psychology

The field of color psychology and the research therein has helped us understand the common human emotional response to color. Those studies, although finding some application as a psychological testing tool (Luscher, 1971), perhaps had their greater impact in the field of advertising, packaging, food, clothing, and decorating, when it was discovered how color subliminally influences our moods and appetites (Sutton & Whelan, 2004). While the research was all performed in the waking state, the mechanisms for color to emotional association remain largely active in REM sleep and thus those associations may continue into the dream state. If that is the case the findings can perhaps provide information regarding possible emotional states pictured in dream imagery.

Color Psychology Research

Early studies on the human response to color by researches such as Goldstein (1942), Birren (1961, 1978, 1988), Ertel (1973), Brown (1974), Lüscher (1971, 1979), Riley (1995) and Sutton & Whelan (2004) provided evidence that suggested exposure to color illumination in the waking state results in fairly predictable physiological and emotional responses.

Birren (1961) and Lüscher (1971) both cited studies where color was shown to evoke a physiological response in the autonomic nervous system. Brown (1974) determined that our brain responds directly to color in a similar manner, as does our nervous system. Goldstein (1942) found that red stimulation corresponds with the experience of being disrupted, thrown out, attracted to the outer world, and being incited to activity, aggression, excitation and emotionally determined action. Goldstein concluded that the color green corresponds with withdrawal from the outer world and retreat to one's own center, to a condition of meditation and exact fulfillment of the task. All of this happens below our threshold of awareness.

Henner Ertel (1973) conducted a 3-year study on room color and its effect on learning with children. He found that yellow, yellow-green, orange and light blue increased learning while white, black and brown caused a decrease in learning; and orange improved social behavior.

Boyatzis and Varghese (1994) at the Department of Child Development, California State University studied children's emotional associations with colors. Sixty children (30 girls, 30 boys) from 5 to 6 years old, were shown nine different colors, one at a time and in a random order. For each color, children were asked, "How does (the color) make you feel?" All were able to verbally express an emotional response to each color that demonstrated distinct color-emotion associations. Children had positive reactions to bright colors (e.g., pink, blue, red) and negative emotions for dark colors (e.g., brown, black, gray). Children's emotional reactions to bright colors became increasingly positive with age, and girls in particular showed a preference for brighter colors and a dislike for darker colors. Boys were more likely than girls were to have positive emotional associations with dark colors.

Color response has also been used in the development of some early personality testing tools. The Rorschach test, for example, uses associative scoring based on the various ways that a subject names or projects colors, on color and monochrome test cards. Dr. Max Lüscher, Professor of Psychology at the University of Basel, created the *Color Test* (Lüscher, 1971) referred to earlier. It is a psychological testing tool that associates color with a person's emotional state or response to their environment. The full Lüscher test is based on making 43 choices, from seventy- three different colors, of twenty-five different hues and shades. It was first based on work by Hering, who established a link between responses in the eye-brain system to color contrast. As mentioned above, Lüscher made a distinction between the *objective* (physiological and instinctive) and the *functional* meaning of color (whether we are drawn to it, indifferent toward it or find it distasteful). To Lüscher, a person's choice of color, in a particular circumstance, was based on both psychological preference and physiological need.

While the Lüscher Test is not used that much today, it was widely used in the 1950's and 60's in psychology, and even in industry (where it was often used as a screening tool for job applicants). *Lüscher Color Test* (1971) contains a listing of over 140 clinical investigations and papers supporting the test, primarily across populations on the European continent. As a personality test it may not compare as favorably with others such as the MMPI (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory) but it is not so much a personality test as a test of emotional state, and in that context I find it to compare favorably to the emotional responses from *role-play* when working with dreams.

Might this Extend to Dreams?

All of the research findings, observations, literature searches and discussion above suggests that emotion, along with its physiological correlates, is likely the dominant factor (although not the only factor) associated with dream color. It is generally known that emotion evokes a physiological response and visa-versa in the waking state – but are they linked in the dream state?. A connection between physiological response and emotion in the dream state was made by Hobson and McCarley (1977) who suggested that the emotional intensity of dreams is reflected in the dreamer's respiratory rate, heart rate and skin potential.

Aside from the physiological response there may be a direct neurological linage between centers processing emotion and those processing color in both the waking and dream state. Areas of the brain known as the fusiform and lingual gyri which processes the color sense, along with the angular gyrus which is involved in higher processing of colors (Ramachandran, 2011). The lingual gyri is believed to play an important role in vision, visual attention and dreaming. It was found that if the fusiform and lingual gyri area is destroyed, color disappears from perception in waking life, from dreams and even from memory (Edelman and Tononi 2000; Damasio 1999). This research suggests that this same area of the brain produces color for all states of consciousness, both waking and dreaming. Also, a linkage between lingual gyrus activation and areas involved in emotional processing (the hippocampal regions and amygdala) was observed (Cho, 2012). suggesting a possible linkage between color and emotion both in the waking and dream state. Lingual gyrus activation was observed when subjects were tasked with verbalizing or viewing high-emotion words or images in contrast to neutral-emotion words and images (Kehoe, 2012). That the brain processes color to emotional associations similarly in the dream state as it does in the waking state, is the hypothesis on which much of my research with dream color below is based.

Literature and Dream Database Research

I began an exploration in the late '90s into the significance of various colors and informally published a number of the studies in 1994, 1999, 2004, 2005. In 2010 I published and a more comprehensive study (Hoss, 2010) in the *International Journal of Dream Research* in part using the UCSC dreambank database plus other personal databases and journals (a total of 38,064 dreams). For the Journal I researched five possible hypotheses: 1) recall of specific dream colors reflects our waking visual experience; 2) recall of specific dream colors reflects personal color preference; 3) recall of dream color is influenced by the neurobiology of color perception; 4) recall of specific dream colors is influenced by *archetypal* manifestations; 5) if specific dream colors reflect specific emotional states. Separately, in this book, I also explore cultural influence. I will discuss the findings below, but I concluded, from the observed data, that the specific colors recalled from a dream is not dominated by the waking visual experience nor by personal preferences or beliefs, but rather aligns (as a large sample average) with neurological mechanisms involved in color perception, and individually with the human emotional response to color.

The Dominant Dream Color Pattern

When I compiled the dream colors recalled (6,237 colors) from 15,245 dream reports collected from the UCSC dreambank database (Domhoff, n.d.), a dominant pattern emerged (figure 9-1) surprisingly similar to the pattern based on the psychological primaries discussed by Jung, Perls and Lüscher. The database represents a broad (but primarily US and European) base of dreamers, including various genders, ages and professions as well as the 890 reports representing the Hall and Van de Castle norms. A similar study done on a database of roughly 8,000 dreams from 5 dreamers, collected in a separate database by myself and Curtiss Hoffman, PhD (2004) resulted in an almost identical result (within a few percentage points).

This "dominant pattern" consists of a pairing of black and white (named as colors) appearing with approximately equal frequency, followed by a grouping of the "primary" hues red, yellow, green and blue (with red appearing about 50% more frequently than the others). This grouping is followed by brown which often appears twice as frequently as the lesser colors. Although this pattern appears fairly consistent when averaged across databases and journal samples, a wider variation appeared when looking at the dream records collected for each individual. The results studies on individuals (discussed below) suggest that there may be a common factor influencing dream color creation or recall on average, which is in turn influenced by other emotional or personality factors at an individual level.

Figure 9-1 – Color Recall from 15,000 Dream Reports
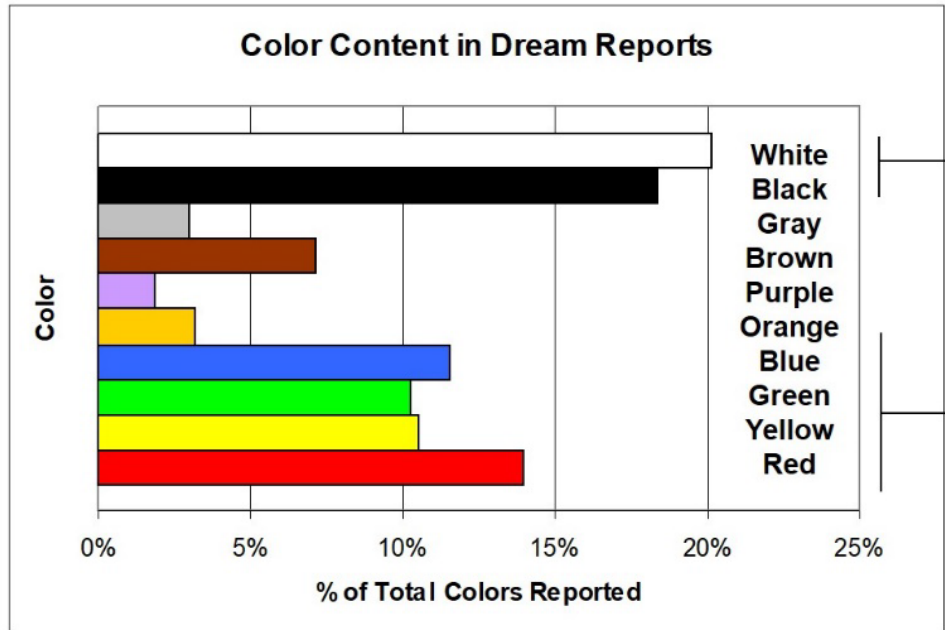
Is there an Archetypal Significance?

The groupings noted by the vertical lines in figure 9-1 also illustrate an interesting relationship to the *archetypal* significance that Jung gave to this pattern. Jung contends that the integration of the *unconscious* and *conscious* is one of the most basic processes taking place in dreams, and that it is often symbolized by a pairing or pattern of black and white. It is interesting that the most dominant colors reported in dreams, by a ratio of two to one, were a balanced occurrence of black and white. The next most dominant colors reported in dreams, by a factor of four or five over lesser colors, were the nearly equivalent grouping of red, yellow, blue and green. As noted earlier, Jung, Perls and Lüscher contended, that this grouping of "primaries" had a symbolic relationship to a balance of the four primary qualities in the personality. If that be true, then one might expect this four-color pattern to be dominant in dream reports when averaged across a large population.

In the dreambank database search, the pairing of black and white appeared in 5.9% of the color counts and the recall of a four-color pattern (or the motif of 3 out of 4 which Jung considered as pending integration) in about 3.1% of the color counts. Although these don't sound like a large percentage, they are about 3 to 5 times greater than reports of flying and falling in dreams for example. Some dreams, but less than 0.5%, contained all four colors. Jung also attributed an important significance to the next most reported color brown (at about 7% occurrence) as it relates to our collective origins "Mother earth" and the wood of the *great tree* which he indicated symbolized the process of *individuation*.

Does Dream Color Mirror Waking Life?

The *continuity hypothesis* (Schredl, 2003) contends at dream imagery (which would include color) is a reflection of waking life experience. Although dream color is indeed observed to reflect the norms of waking perception (grass is typically green and the sky is usually blue, for example), when the color of an image can be anything (color of a hat for example) or when a certain color dominates the dream, it raises a

question. An investigation by Roffwarg et al. (1978), using colored goggles worn during the day, resulted the goggle color being present in the subject's dreams, however the effect dominated only the early sleep stages and "all but disappeared after the third REM stage" suggesting that other factors affect the color reported in dreams.

When the more common color patterns from waking life were investigated I found that they did not match the dominant color pattern in figure 9-1 as reported across a large database of dreams. Various literature searches (Hoss, 2010) resulted in the more general experience or "natural" scene to be a contain a dominance of blue, green and brown to tan tones with variations of gray or backdrops composed of blues, yellows, and grays. So although waking color experience might effect common *element* coloration (grass is usually green) it may have little to do with the dominate colors recalled from a dream. On the other hand, if dream color represents emotion, the continuity hypothesis may indeed hold for waking emotional experiences that carry over into the dream – which are in turn represented by dream color. This will be discussed further below.

Does Dream Color Reflect Your "Favorite Colors"?

Three general population studies on "most favored color" were reviewed (Hurlbert,2007; Hallock, 2007; Cheskin, 2004). All studies indicated blue to be the universal favorite. Hallock found blue chosen 42% of the time followed by green, purple, red and black. Market researchers Cheskin Research, conducted a survey of 13,000 residents of 17 countries that also found people are most likely to choose blue as their favorite color, with blue, purple, green, red and black being at the top in most countries. This pattern of color preference (blue followed by green, purple, red and black) does not compare with the "dominant pattern" of colors recalled from dreams (black and white followed by red, blue, yellow and green).

Is Dream Color Influenced by Color Perception?

The "dominant pattern" aligns with the neurobiology of color perception. Perception of the full color spectrum can be created from only three primary colors, red, green and blue. Our eyes also have three color receptors (3 types of cones) with peak sensitivities near the color wavelengths of yellow-red, green and blue-violet. However, the opponent-process theory of color perception (Schiffman, 1976) contends that the eye-brain system processes this three-color information from the eye in a more complex process of four colors plus black and white, based on hue cancellation between three opponent channels: red versus green, blue versus yellow, and black versus white. This has given rise to the "Natural Color System" (NCS) which describes the organization of the color sensations as perceived at the upper brain level, based on these six elementary colors. Because these six colors match those of the "dominant pattern" from the dream color content analysis, it suggests that the colors in our dreams on average (when averaged across the population) may be influenced at the most basic level by the neurological mechanisms responsible for color perception.

Our Physiological Response to Color

The response of the eye itself may determine much about our instinctive association with color. A study of the physical structure of the eye has led some scientists to believe that blue and yellow color vision evolved first - these colors are sensed at the extremes of the retinal structure near the more primitive receptors (Schiffman, 1976). We exhibit the highest visual acuity for yellow illumination, and the lowest for deep blue (making it difficult for the eye to focus) (Ferree and Rand, 1929). Yellow illumination thus makes activity more possible, whereas blue illumination makes it less so. As a function of our optical receptors alone, the human instinctual association with yellow would lean more toward outward activity, and with blue toward the more passive or limited physical activity.

Furthermore, the human physiological response to color can be tested. Colors have an observed effect on the various parts of the autonomic nervous system, an effect which takes place below our threshold of awareness. Blue has been observed to have a calming effect on the parasympathetic branch that regulates automatic, involuntary functions such as heartbeat, breathing, and digestion (Lüscher, 1971). The color red has been observed to have the affect of exciting the sympathetic branch, and causing certain processes such as heartbeat and breathing to speed up (Lüscher, 1971). The experiments of Barbara Brown (1974), which were designed to understand the associations between color and brain wave activity, supported these findings. She determined that the brain's electrical response to red is one of alerting and arousal, whereas the response to blue is that of relaxation.

Does Dream Color Reflect Emotion?

An noted in the previous section on Color Psychology, early studies on the human response to color by researches provided significant evidence that exposure to color illumination in the waking state results in fairly predictable physiological and emotional responses. An emotional basis to dream color is also suggested by the neurological studies noted above – the linkage between color processing centers (lingual gyrus) and the emotional processing centers (hippocampus and amygdala). The amygdala, as part of an attention mechanism, places an emotional "tag" on every stimulus (which would include color) that we come in contact with and therefore plays a role in creating meaningful associations between color and emotion, associations that would likely be retained in the dream state as well. This would suggest that specific emotions might influence the specific colors assigned to a dream image, and likely the colors most recalled from the dream. Attention to content was found to be a factor in color recall in the Schredl studies, so it is likely that attention to dream content, as influenced by intense emotions in the dream, may be a key factor in which colors are recalled. Murzyn (2008) also found that color dreams were likely to be recalled more than colorless ones, emotional intensity being a possible factor there as well.

I therefore hypothesized that color is a symbol like any other dream image, that *condenses* with other images to provide an emotional identity to that dream image – and furthermore that specific dream colors reflect specific emotions.

My first approach at demonstrating this was to use Gestalt *role-play* to reveal the emotional content (associations) within a dream image, then compare the response to the color to emotional associations found in the color psychology research and literature. One of the principle tools I used in determining color-to-emotional associations was the eight-color version of the Lüscher *Color Test*. It was a tool developed to establish a profile of a person's present emotional state based on preference in selecting colors in sequence (more on this tool will be discussed later). I found the *Color Test* to basically agree with other color research and color psychology literature and it appeared to be the only widely used test tool that related color to the human waking emotional response. It also appeared to be well supported with clinical papers so I decided to proceed with it on the premise that it represents a reasonable characterization of the human waking emotional response to color.

I used the scripted 6 question *role-play* technique that I derived from Gestalt Therapy, which had proven effective in revealing emotional associations pictured by a dream image. This technique was also appropriate because of the standardized scripting. I compared the *role-play* response for a colored image with the 8 color Lüscher *Color Test* associations. The relationship was then confirmed with the dreamer as to how it related to an associated waking life situation.

The result was good agreement between *role-play* statements, the Color Test and the dream-related waking life experiences (Hoss, 1999). I later created a version of the Color Questionnaire to aid that research, listing statements from the Lüscher *Color Test* as expressions which the subject could choose from that best fit how they felt in waking life situation at the time of the dream. For or example when asked to *role-play* a

woman in a red hat the dreamer stated, "I want to go out and have fun." The *Color Test* statement for red (and the one the dreamer said best related to their waking life situation) was, "I want to live life to its fullest." A few more examples from this investigation are given in the following sections.

I then expanded the research to explore whether emotional events in a person's life might be reflected in the colors they more frequently recall in their dreams. The research involved exploring the recall frequency of colors each year from a long-term journal of dreams over a period of eleven (11) years containing 4,791 dream reports containing color. (Hoss & Hoffman, 2004). The results were that two periods of extreme emotional stress (unknown to the researcher but subsequently confirmed by the subject) could be identified from the color profile within the journal. The results of this study are also described later in this chapter.

A third series of tests were performed to determine if the frequency profile of dream color over a long period of time might reflect the dreamer's personality. It would make sense that the emotions that a person most often reacts to in their waking life, their emotional personality, would relate to the colors they most often deal with, pay attention to and thus recall from their dreams. It involved four long-term journaling subjects and over 8,000 dream reports. The results, also described later, suggested that the dream colors a person most often recalls is influenced to a degree by their personality.

Overall these pilot tests support the notion that **color in dreams relates to emotion** – and that the color most frequently called from a person's dreams might relate to emotional situations in the dreamer's life that the dream is dealing with, and over the longer term to the dreamer's personality. More research is needed in order to be conclusive, but all of the studies so far suggest that color indeed relates to emotion and that the color-to-emotional associations in dreams does not change from the waking state to the dream state – the relationship is similar.

Is there also a Cultural Influence?

I did not attempt to do an in-depth study of cultural factors but surveyed the literature to obtain a number of cultural associations in order to determine whether there was a) agreement cross-culturally on associations with color and b) any agreement between those cultural factors and the emotional and physiological associations discussed above.

Objective versus Functional Associations

Lüscher (1971) made a distinction between what he called the *objective* response to color, our physiological and basic instinctive emotional response, and the *functional* associations with color, or our attitudes and personal associations with a color. Our *objective* or instinctive response to a stimulus such as color occurs in a different part of the brain and nervous system than does our learned, personal and cultural associations. Objectively our associations with color may be linked to our evolution (or have an *archetypal* association as Jung contended). Our evolutionary associations with red for example may have been the emotional charge that action and hunting (fire, blood) provide, or the emotional alert that certain things are poisonous. On the other hand blue, related to sky and calm refreshing water, may have evolved as a calming emotion and dark blue perhaps preparatioin for sleep. Our *functional* associations on the other hand are our personal association based on experience and thus attitude. Color can evoke *functional* associations as well; our personal response to emotions or memories that a color brings to mind.

The *functional* associations are influenced by cultural factors. Using red as an example, the energy stimulated by red may be associated with outgoing action or even anger in the West, whereas in China that same energy may be associated with "good luck". The history of a color within a culture, as well as the mythology of that culture, can affect our associations with it. Sutton and Whelan (2004) point out that colors

such as purple and white are commonly associated with wealth, not for any physiological reason, but because these colors during much of our history were so difficult to create or maintain, that only the most wealthy could afford them.

Perhaps the most striking cultural influence lies in the naming of color. Research by Debi Roberson, PhD, of the University of Essex (in Adelson, 2005) found that while humans establish a continuum of color terminology the same way around the world (in keeping with the structure of our visual system), the specific names we call these colors are learned relative to language and culture. Certain cultures name colors and color groups very differently than others. For example, Roberson studied the Himba tribe in northern Namibia in Africa that uses only five terms for colors, whereas the English language uses at least 11 basic color terms, plus many more for shades and mixtures. She found that the Himba use one word "serandu" to describe what English speakers call red, orange and pink. They likewise group dark colors such as dark blue, dark green, dark brown, dark purple, dark red and black into one group, using the word "zoozu." She also found that the link between color memory and color language increases as the cultural names for the colors are learned, strongly suggesting that color names are learned and not innate. This language factor does not necessarily affect our *objective* (instinctive and physiological) response to color, but it definitely would affect our personal or "functional" associations with the names we give colors.

The motif of four color "primaries," spoken of by Jung, does seem to appear in many cultures in relation to primary elements or cardinal direction. The specific colors that each culture adopts as "primaries" as well as the number of "primaries" varies by culture, however. Jewish historian Josephus associates white with earth, purple with water, red with fire and yellow with air. Leonardo da Vinci associated yellow with earth, green with water, red with fire, and blue with air. Birren (1988) indicates that the mythology: in Tibet describes north as yellow, south as blue, east as white and west as red; in China, north is associated with black, south with red, east with green and west with white; and one Navajo Indian fable considered white (day) to be east, yellow (twilight) to be west, black (night) to be north and blue (dawn) to be south. The alchemical process, symbolically related to human transformation by Jung (1971b), is a four-stage metal purification and coloring process involving the colors black, white, yellow and red. In Chinese lore, they recognized five elements, with yellow relating to earth, black to water, red to fire, green to wood and white to metal (Birren, 1988).

Cultural influences tend to be learned and thus a more cognitive function. Learned associations can indeed influence the personal "meaning" of a color appearing in a dream – much as any memory fragment or personal belief can appear metaphorically in a dream. Speech metaphors are culturally derived as well and those that relate to color, such as "green with envy" for example, might also influence the personal color associations in dreams. Therefore, although emotion is the more likely influence, a good practice when doing dreamwork is to explore cultural associations and influence as well.

Literature Search: Objective vs. Functional Associations

Table 9-1 lists a multitude of associations with color found in literature. For the most part, the color categories in the table were based on relatively basic hues. Associations can change as the brightness, or the tint and shade is altered as discussed by Sutton and Whelan (2004). Note that there is little agreement among the *functional* associations (cultural or pop-culture) however fairly common agreement on the *objective* responses (emotional and physiological) - those found in laboratory studies, color psychology research and literature including the Lüscher associations. This suggests that indeed culture can have an influence on our associations with color, but not necessarily a common association, rather one that is more learned and localized. It is the psychological and physiological associations including emotion that have a more common relationship, as might be expected having emerged from a more evolutionary basis.

Table 9-1
Cultural and Psychological Associations with Color

Color	Source	Response and/or Associations
Red	Psychological & Emotional (Lüscher, '71)	An energy expending physiological condition. Desire in all forms including sexual drive as well as intensity of experience and a fullness of life. Represents force of will. Is outwardly focused, active, aggressive, autonomous, competitive, operative. Driven to win and succeed. Its affective aspects are: excitability, domination.
	Emotional response (Goldstein, '42)	Disruption, thrown out and attracted to outer world, activity, aggression, excitation and emotionally determined action.
	Psychological (Sutton, '04)	Power, excitement, speed, joy, danger, passion, attracts attention, feelings of warmth. Crimson and Burgundy reds feel rich, regal, strong, exclusive.
	Physiological (Lüscher'71; Brown'74)	Stimulating effect, increases blood pressure, heartbeat, respiration. Excites sympathetic branch of autonomic nervous system.
	Sensory (Lüscher'71)	Sensory Perception = Appetite
	Jung ('72,'73)	Feeling function of the personality; Affectivity, Passion
	Nature (continuity)	Blood associated with aggression and anger; twilight.
	Cultural (various)	Christian = Charity, Martyrdom, Hell, Blood of Christ; Cabala = strength; Judaism = love and sacrifice, sin and salvation, fire; Lakota = East; Chinese = fire; Cherokee = success, triumph (Birren '88). Chinese = good luck (Sutton '04)
	Chakra	Base (Brennan '87).or Root = principles of survival, earth energy, drives. (Eden, '98)
	Aura (Brennan '87)	Passion, strong feelings, anger.
Orange	Psychological (Sutton, '04)	Friendly and outgoing, energizing, vital, adventurous, appetizing, warm, exotic, creative, enthusiastic, active, playful and maybe a bit irresponsible.
	Physiological (Sutton, '04)	High visibility (use on warning signs); encourages oxygen intake to the brain; stimulates the appetite.
	Learning (Ertel, '73)	Improves social behavior. Increased learning ability with children.
	Nature (continuity)	Sunset. Campfire for social gathering. Fall harvest. Clay pottery.
	Chakra	Sacral (Brennan '87). or reproductive system. Creativity (Eden, '98)
	Aura (Brennan '87)	Red-Orange: Ambition, sexual passion.
Yellow	Psychological & Emotional Lüscher ('71)	Cheerful, happy, stimulating and spontaneous. Directed toward the future, new experiences, the developing. Hope and a desire to escape from existing difficulties. Expectancy and projection of the outcome. Outwardly focused, active, projective, heteronymous, expanding, aspiring, investigative. Its affective aspects: variability, expectancy, originality, exhilaration. Change, a loosening or relaxation, uninhibited expansiveness, spontaneous enjoyment of action.
	Psychological (Sutton, '04)	Joy, optimism, vitality, moving, warmth; most noticeable color (packaging and signs); overexposure can be unsettling; pale hues best for socializing.
	Physiological	Increases blood pressure, respiration rate but in a less stable way than red (Lüscher, '71). Highest visual acuity (Ferree, '29). Alerting and arousal (Brown, '74)
	Learning	Yellow and yellow-green increased learning ability with children (Ertel, '73) Stimulates clear thinking, black font on yellow aids memory retention (Sutton, '04).
	Sensory (Lüscher '71)	Sensory Perception = Piquancy
	Jung ('72)	Intuition function of the Personality (one of four)
	Nature (continuity)	Daytime, sun and daylight, outward activity.
	Cultural	Christian (yellow or gold) = power and glory, gates of heaven; Judaism = air; Chinese = Earth; Lakota = South (Birren, '88). Relates to prosperity and power in some cultures (Sutton, '04).
	Chakra	Solar Plexus, Power (Eden, '98)
	Aura (Brennan '87)	Yellow = Intellect; Gold = connectedness to God, love and service.

Color	Source	Response and/or Associations
Green	Psychological & Emotional Lüscher ('71)	Will in operation. Concentric, autonomous, passive, defensive, retentive, possessive, immutable. Tenacity, firmness, constancy, pride, logic, control, persistence, tension, ambition. It's affective aspects are: persistence, self-assertion, obstinacy, self-esteem. A high value is placed on self and increasing self-value by: self-assertion, holding on to an idealized picture of self, or acknowledgment by others of one's wealth or superiority. Wants one's own opinions to prevail. A need for recognition and prestige. A quest for better conditions such as health.
	Emotional Response (Goldstein, '42)	Withdrawal from the outer world, retreat to one's own center, condition of meditation and exact fulfillment of the task.
	Psychological (Sutton, '04)	If a vibrant green it can relate to nature, life, youthful energy. Darker green relates more to stability, growth, economic status and success. Dependability. Green as a global symbol for safety (GO = green light).
	Sensory (Lüscher '71)	Sensory Perception = Astringency
	Jung ('72)	Sensation. Growth as it may be associated with the natural self.
	Nature (continuity)	Spring, life. The security of food and an alive environment. Dark green as associated with maturity (Sutton, '04).
	Cultural (Birren, '88)	Christian = faith, immortality, eternal life, contemplation; Cabala = victory; Chinese = health & family.
	Chakra	Heart (Brennan '87), Love (Eden, '98)
	Aura (Brennan '87)	Healing, healer, nurturer
Blue	Psychological & Emotional Lüscher ('71)	Complete calm, contentment, fulfillment, depth of feeling, meditative awareness. Unification and a sense of belonging or loyalty. Concentric, passive, incorporative, heteronymous, sensitive, perceptive, unifying. Affective aspects = tranquility, contentment, tenderness, love and affection. Increased emotional sensitivity.
	Psychological (Sutton, '04)	Best liked color, positive and uplifting, peaceful. Navy blue – loyalty, trustworthy, fidelity, integrity. Space appears larger.
	Physiological	Blood pressure, heart rate, breathing reduced. Calming effect on parasympathetic branch of autonomic nervous system (Lüscher '71). Lowest visual acuity, hard for eye to focus in blue illumination (Ferree, '29). Brain response is relaxation (Brown, '74). Productivity increases (Sutton, '04).
	Learning (Ertel, '73)	Light blue environment increased learning ability.
	Sensory	Sensory Perception = Sweetness (Lüscher '71, Sutton,'04)
	Jung ('73)	Thinking function of the personality; "Lapis, the Philosophers stone"
	Nature (various)	Color of sky, realm of the gods to early people, the ethereal, air and thus spirit; Clear water, thus calm and a source of life.
	Cultural	Christian = spirit, love of divine works, piety, hope, sincerity, peace, heaven, the Virgin Mary, serene conscience; Lakota = west; Cabala = mercy; Judaism = the Lord's hue; Cherokee = tribulation & defeat. (Birren, '88). Opulence in some cultures, protection in others (Sutton, '04)
	Chakra	Throat (Brennan '87). Expression and colors of aqua and turquoise (Eden, '98)
	Aura (Brennan '87)	Sensitivity, teacher
Violet	Psychological & Emotional Lüscher ('71)	Identification, mystic union, sensitive intimacy leading to fusion between subject and object. A magical or wish-fulfilling state. A desire to fascinate, charm and delight others. Intimate, erotic, intuitive and sensitive understanding. Unrealistic.
	Psychological (Sutton, '04)	Power, class, passion, sensuality, luxury, higher-ranking. Deeper plum - spiritual, mysterious, magic, noble. Lavender – romantic, nostalgic.
	Learning (Sutton, '04)	Not conducive to performance since it encourages daydreaming.
	Cultural (Birren, '88)	Christian = suffering, endurance & repentance; Cabala = foundation; Judaism = Lord's divine splendor and dignity.
	Chakra	Indigo = Head chakra (Brennan '87). Third eye = *transcendence* (Eden, '98). Violet = Crown chakra (Brennan '87) and unity (Eden, '98)
	Aura (Brennan '87)	Purple = deeper connection with spirit; Lavender = spirit;

Color	Source	Response and/or Associations
Brown	Psychological & Emotional Lüscher ('71)	Sensation related to the body and the senses. Relates to physical ease and sensuous contentment. Physical discomfort and disease. Importance placed on "roots," on home, and the company of one's own kind and security of the family.
	Psychological (Sutton, '04)	Comfort, warm, home, natural. It grounds us. Approachable, reliable, sincere, hardworking. Lacks authority. A rugged *masculine* quality.
	Jung ('73)	A Nature symbol relating to our instinctive origins.
	Learning (Ertel, '73)	Brown room caused decrease in learning ability.
	Nature (various)	Earth and Trees = dwelling place (family) and our physical origin.
Gray	Psychological (Sutton, '04)	Neutral, non-involvement. Dignified and conservative authority, wisdom, maturity. Lacks warmth, solemn, gloomy. Discourage lively conversation. Metallic gray or silver – speed, motion, technical advancement.
	Nature (various)	Color of fog – inability to see, detachment from the environment.
	Cultural (Birren, '88)	Christian-blend divine light of creation + darkness of sin/death; Cabala=wisdom.
Black	Psychological & Emotional Lüscher ('71)	Nothingness, extinction, renunciation, ultimate surrender, relinquishment. Compensation of an extreme nature. A protest against existing conditions. Nothing is as it should be. Revolt against fate.
	Psychological (Sutton, '04)	Authoritative, foreboding, intimidating, aggressive, mysterious, seductive. Conservative, dignified, solemn, formal. Death. Increases perception of weight and depth.
	Learning (Ertel, '73)	Caused decrease in learning.
	Jung ('73)	The *unconscious*; dark primal or *Shadow* self. Death of the *ego*.
	Nature (various)	Dark, night, depths of the earth, fear of the unseen, sleep, death
	Cultural (various)	Christian = death and regeneration; Cabala = understanding; Chinese = water; Cherokee = night, death; Lakota = west (Birren, '88). Symbol of grief (Sutton, '04).
	Aura (Brennan '87)	Absence of light, profound forgetting, thwarted ambition, disease
White	Psychological & Emotion Lüscher ('71)	Virgin page on which the story has yet to be written. A beginning.
	Psychological (Sutton, '04)	Purity, innocence, peace, goodness, truth, simplicity, sterility, safety; cooler associations; a subdued or calming effect in some combinations (Sutton, '04). Bright light and white (often mixed with other colors) appears during periods of heightened self-awareness & psycho-spiritual transformation (Hamilton,'05).
	Jung ('73)	Light – awareness & consciousness. White = God-like & divine.
	Nature (various)	Daytime, ability to see, thus awareness. Ice and snow, thus cool.
	Cultural (Birren, '88 & various)	Christian = chastity, innocence, purity; Cabala = the Crown.; Lakota = North; Judaism = purity, joy and victory; Cherokee = peace and happiness. International call for truce (Sutton '04). Death: India, China and Japan (Sutton, '04)
	Aura (Brennan '87)	Truth
	Chakra	White associates with Crown chakra in some systems.
Pink	Psychological (Sutton, '04)	Arouses the interest and excitement of red but in a softer, quieter way. Romantic, passive, sensitive, nurturing, compassionate, gentle. Promotes affability and discourages aggression. Calms, soothes. *Feminine*.
	Physiological	Aids digestion, tranquilizing, slows heart beat (Sutton, '04)
	Aura (Brennan '87)	Rose color - love
Gold & Silver	Archetypal (Jung, '72, '73)	**Gold**: Associations include the divine, the sun, value, the *masculine*, *conscious*; (may exhibit some of the emotional themes of yellow). **Silver**: Associations include the moon, mercury (quicksilver), the *feminine,* the *unconscious* (may exhibit some of the themes of gray and white).
	Transformation (Hamilton, '05)	**Gold & Silver** = Often appears in dreams as an integration of opposites during psycho-spiritual transformation.

Objective Associations to Color Alignment

Figure 9-2 provides a rough orientation between emotion and color that might be suggested by aligning some of the more *objective* (emotional, psychological and physiological) associations from table 9-1 adjacent to the chromatic and achromatic color spectrums. Note that as we move from the red toward the blue end of the spectrum we move from what we typically associate with the "warmer" emotions to the "cooler" emotions. Also, as we move from black to white, we move from non-awareness and unconsciousness to awareness and renewal, with gray seeming to be the barrier or separation state.

Figure 9-2 – Objective Emotion and Color Alignment
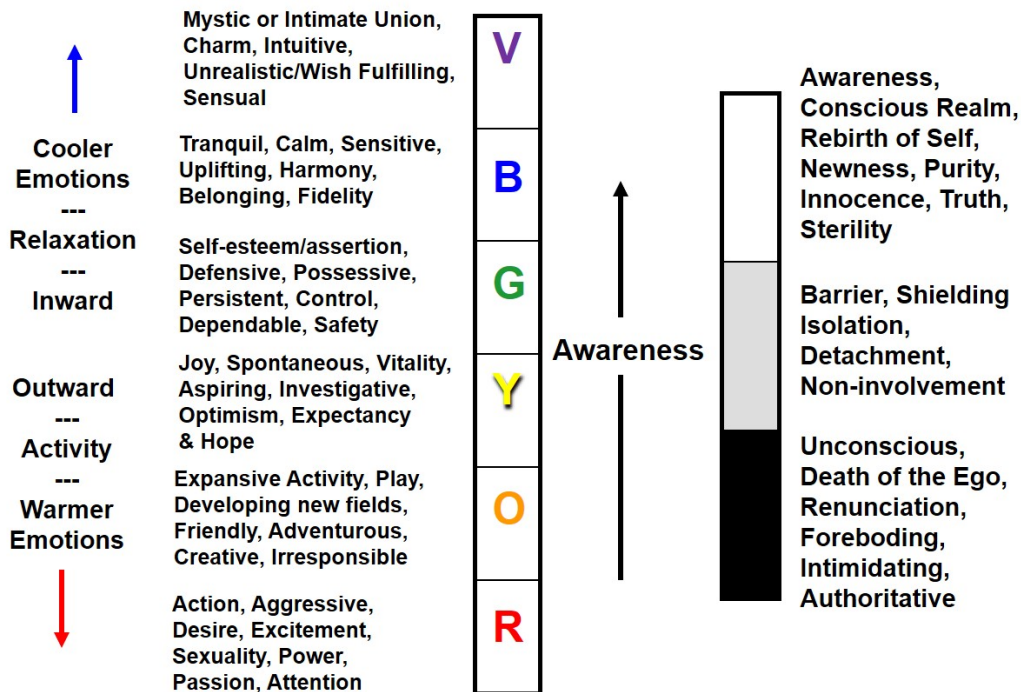
Color Paints Our Dreams with Emotion

How Might Color Combine with Dream Imagery?

When an image in a dream is a certain color, it can be treated as a *condensation* of two symbols, one being the color and the other being the image. For example, a red hat would be more expressive of energy and vibrancy than a colorless hat. In my research I found a good agreement between: a) the emotional expressions of the dreamer when *role-playing* a colored dream image; b) the statements in the *Color Test* and c) the waking life emotional situation reported by the dreamer (Hoss, 1999). A few examples from this investigation are given in the next section. They support the notion that color in dreams relates to emotions contained within the colored dream image and further provides some interesting insight into how colors combine with dream imagery to present a fuller meaning to the composite dream image. I found that the *condensation* of color and imagery appears to occur in at least four primary ways as illustrated in figure 9-3:

Figure 9-3
How Color Combines with Imagery

COLOR "AMPLIFIES" THE IMAGE

Color Red: "I want to live life to its fullest"

Similar

Image ="we are going out to have Fun"

Sinking into the Ground = suppressing part of self

COLOR "COMPLEMENTS" THE IMAGE
(adds meaning)

Image = "I must hold onto this wood with all my strength or I will drown"

FLOOD

Flood of Water = flood of emotion

Brown = "I am concerned about matters of family"

COLOR "COMPENSATES"
(or qualifies)

GRAY = "I want to remain separated, non-involved"

Compensating

"I feel powerful and assertive

GRAY 4 WHEEL DRIVE TRUCK

GROUPING OF COLOR "PRIMARIES"

Image = "I want to rejoin the group of spheres to feel whole again"

Balanced Four = Completion

Red
Yel
Grn
Blue

Blue = "I need rest, peace and a chance to recuperate"

1) Amplifies: Often, the color associations and role-play statements are nearly alike. In this case, the content within the color appears to "amplify" the content within the image. Perhaps the color and the image are stimulated by the similar emotions.

2) Complements: Frequently the color associations add new information to the associations within the dream image. Color completes the story and thus "complements" the content within image. Perhaps the dream color and the dream image are stimulated by separate but associated emotional memories.

3) Compensates: At times, the color associations reveal a hidden meaning within the image that is not revealed in the image work alone. The color might reveal a rejection of something that the dreamer associates with the image. The color may reveal how the dreamer reacts or feels toward the situation represented by the image. Perhaps the image is stimulated by one set of associations, and the color is stimulated by an emotional reaction to those associations. In this case, color may be performing an important *compensating* function in the dream – much like other imagery combinations where the dream image itself contains the *impasse* or *compensating* element.

4) Color as a Symbol: Sometimes colors appear alone, without a specific object attachment. For example, it may appear as the grouping of color "primaries," or as part of the dream setting. Here it may be setting the emotional tone for the dream scene.

Color "Amplifies" the Image

If the color of an image, and the image itself, emerge in the dream from the same emotional stimuli, then their associations should be similar. In this case, the emotional associations from the color tables would match the statements and feelings expressed during *role-play* of the dream image.

Case 1a - "woman in red hat"
(illustrated in the top left panel of figure 9-3)

Dream: *"In the dream I was one of three women and was wearing a red hat. We were going into town, walking along a road, when suddenly we sank into the ground."*

Personal Content within the Dream Image: *Role-play* of the woman in the red hat revealed: *"we're just going out for the evening to have fun,"- "I feel vibrant."* The body language of the dreamer at this point was revealing as well. She became suddenly lively and animated as she "became" the woman wearing the red hat.

Emotional Content within the Color: When the dreamer reviewed the Lüscher associations for red, the one she responded most to was: *"Intense vital and animated, taking delight in action. Desire to live life to the fullest."*

Confirmation - Waking Situation: In this case, both statements supported the same emotional state, that of being animated and going out to have fun and living life to the fullest. Thus, the color and the image appeared to support or "amplify" each other. As the dreamer reviewed these statements, she indicated that this is a way she had not felt for a very long time, as she had suppressed her social life and desires in order to take care of a personal situation. Note that the action in the dream of sinking into the ground, or disappearing below, is a common metaphor or motif for suppression.

Color "Complements" the Image to Reveal the Whole Story

Sometimes the color and the image complement each other and must be understood together to provide a complete understanding of the dream image. The *role-play* imagery work might reveal one set of emotional associations or conflicts, while the color work might reveal a different but related set of associations. A check against the waking life situation usually makes the complementary relationship or correlation obvious. One example is the continuation of the dream in case 1a.

Case 1b - "holding onto brown wood"
(illustrated in the top right panel of figure 9-3)

The Dream in 1a continued: *"Later a flood came by. I tried to save my dog which was in the water, but he would not let go of a piece of wood held tight in his teeth. The only color was the brown wood."*

Personal Content within a Dream Image: *Role-play* of the dog with the wood revealed: *"I must hold on to this wood with all my strength or I will drown."*

Emotional Content within the Color: In this case I used the color association table 9-7. The statement for brown that the dreamer most resonated with was the Jungian contribution: *"Concern about matters of family, home, or one's roots".*

Confirmation - Waking Life Situation: The dreamer revealed that in her situation she was indeed suppressing her own needs, due to trying to support a family member who was in trouble. She feared that if she "let go", had fun and did not "hold on tight" to this family member, that person would leave her and she would "drown in a flood" of emotions. Here the color brown added the missing element, that of the concern for a family member at the core of the conflict. It seems that her dog (her motherly instinct?) was holding on tight to this family member (brown). The fear of letting go and drowning in emotion was contained within the dog, but the object of the struggle, the concern for a family member, was contained within the color.

Case 2a - "brown fish"

Dream: *"I dreamed it had rained so hard that a pond overflowed, and <u>brown</u> fish were floundering on shore. I was trying to get the fish back in the pond."*

Personal Content within the Dream Image: *Role-play* on the brown fish revealed: *"I feel I am out of my element."*

Emotional Content within the Color: The Lüscher statement for brown that the dreamer most resonated with was: *"seeking freedom from problems and a secure state of physical comfort in which to relax and recover."*

Confirmation - Waking Situation: I asked the dreamer about the feelings of "*being out of her element*." She revealed that at work she had mixed feelings about a recent promotion. She felt that she was being asked to do too many things (too much rain) with which she was unfamiliar (out of her element). She felt a need to reestablish a more familiar, comfortable state where she felt secure (similar to her association with brown). The *role-play* identified her fear of being out of her element (a need to put the fish back in the water), and the color further establishes her reaction to that fear, of wanting to reestablish that familiar sense of security where she could relax.

Color "Compensates"

Sometimes, the dreamer's associations with the image and with the color reveal a meaningful contrast. The nature of that contrast can vary. Sometimes, associations with the image and associations with the color reveal a meaningful conflict – the words relate to opposing fears, desires or myths, that in turn relate to a conflict the dreamer is struggling with in waking life. Sometimes the color performs a *compensating* function. In this case, the dreamer's associations with the color can reveals hidden feelings or reactions to the emotional memories within the dream image. The color essentially "paints" the image with the dreamer's emotional response to it. I find this to be particularly true of gray, which is a color of shielding and non-involvement. Gray can often "paint over" a dream image to reveal how the dreamer is shielding themselves from the associations or emotions within.

Case 3 - "gray trucks"
(illustrated in the left lower quadrant of figure 9-3)

This dream illustrates how gray can "paint over" a dream image, to shield the dreamer from a behavioral style within the image that they are afraid to exhibit.

Dream: *"I am looking down on a sandy beach area where there are three gray 4-wheel drive trucks."*

Personal Content within the Image: During *role-play* of the trucks, the dreamer became animated, appeared to enjoy the role, and made statements about feeling powerful and assertive.

Content within the Color: Lüscher relates gray to a barrier or *"wanting to remain shielded or separated from the situation or associated feelings."*

Confirmation with Waking Life: After observing the animated response, I assumed the dreamer really enjoyed expressing the assertive side of herself, but when I asked what she liked about being gray trucks, she surprisingly answered: *"Nothing - I don't like being that way, people wouldn't like me, I would drive them away."* Here was a case where the truck image represented the characteristics of assertiveness and power (that she seemed to enjoy experiencing), but the gray indicated a conflict with behaving in that manner. She felt a need to shield herself from that behavior, for fear it would "drive others away" (also an interesting metaphor for the function of a truck). Here the dream appeared to be "painting over" the dreamer's powerful assertive side with a mood of noninvolvement, in order to avoid expressing that side of herself.

Color as a Symbol in Itself

Color Patterns (Conflict and Integration)

Sometimes color appears by itself, unattached to any other imagery, to set an emotional tone or represent an emotional memory. Color can appear as a color pattern or form (as in the "maze" dream), a color shape (sphere, box, square or such), or as color illumination or background. Two-color patterns or combinations will often appear by themselves, or as part of a dream image, in order to represent an integration or conflict regarding the emotions represented by each color. When working with color combinations, use the statements in table 9-7 for each color to explore whether they represent a personal conflict between two emotional states. Then use table 9-8 to explore as possible path to resolution or integration of the two colors.

Case 4 - "red/blue instrument"

Dream: *"I am looking all over a large facility for a work associate, who had been very uncooperative with me in waking life. I want to find him and convince him to work with me as a team player. I enter a building where I sit down on a pile of some unidentifiable shapes in the corner painted red and blue. I am confronted by four members of a band and am offered the choice of an instrument to play. I finally pick one, but then wake from the dream."*

Emotional Content within the Color – Lüscher: The two colors represented in the background of this dream were red and blue. The initial step was to explore these colors as a possible set of conflicting emotions, using table 9-7. The association for red with which the dreamer connected was: *"desire to win, succeed, achieve."* His association with blue on the other hand was: *"needing a relationship free from contention where he can trust and be trusted; a need for harmony."* The dreamer confirmed that this was a conflict related to a work situation. I then tried table 9-8 for the color pair red and blue (which was derived from the Lüscher test-scoring procedure for color pairs) to determine if it represented a possible integration or path to resolving the two sides of the conflict. The statement the dreamer connected with was: *"I seek harmony and cooperation with my associates for our mutual benefit."*

Confirmation with Waking Life: The dreamer stated the dream seemed to be a replay of the conflict he found himself in the day before. He needed to "succeed and achieve" a management assignment he was responsible for, but this required him to find a way to convince his co-workers - particularly the one that appeared in the dream - to work with him in harmony as a team. He said that the color associations he

picked were exactly how he felt about the situation. The resolution to the conflict indeed was to *"seek harmony and cooperation with my associates for our mutual benefit."* The metaphor of "choosing an instrument," he related to his attempt to choose a means by which he could convince his coworkers to "play in harmony."

The Psychological "Primaries"

As discussed earlier, the grouping of Red, Yellow, Blue and Green (that Jung, Perls and Lüscher called the psychological "primaries") often appears in dreams, representing a pattern for completion, balance, solution and closure. When working with the "primaries," look for the appearance of the four colors (or three out of the four) in some sort of geometric grouping. Generally, there is little work to do with a geometric color grouping, other than to note its presence, unless one of the colors is active or missing. Work on the missing or active color as if it is the key to understanding what is required for closure or balance, or that which is disturbing the balance.

Case 5 - "blue sphere"
(lower right panel of figure 9-3)

In this dream, the four colors appeared in balance at first, but then one of the four colors (blue) becomes activated.

Dream: *"I dreamed of a blue sphere which was part of a group of four spheres colored red, yellow, blue and green that formed the dial on a pay-phone. The blue sphere separated and landed on my finger like a "magic" ring that I perceived would give me the ability to solve all my problems."*

Personal Content within the Dream Image: Although a sphere is a collective image, we attempted the *role-play* anyway. As the blue sphere the dreamer stated: *"I am a blue sphere, part of group of spheres, and I just want to rejoin the group to feel whole again."* As suspected, the sphere expressed a desire for unification, which Jung attributes to this grouping of the four "primaries."

Emotional Content within the Color: The dreamer's association with blue from table 9-7 was: *"I need rest, peace and a chance to recuperate."*

Confirmation with Waking Life: The dream occurred on the first day of a much-needed vacation, and the dreamer stated that he was upset about things in his life and indeed needed rest, peace and a chance to recuperate. Assuming that Jung is correct about the four "primaries," the four colored spheres together would represent a state of stability and balance. Thus, the separation of blue from that grouping would represent what was needed by the dreamer to reestablish balance - the need for rest. Interesting Lüscher (1971) considered the grouping of red, yellow and green the "work group" (the ability to maintain optimum effectiveness over a period of time) - blue on the other hand being associated with peace and contentment. The dreamer's vacation or removing himself from work was indeed the magic ring.

Case 6 - "blue man/red man"

This case, from a group session at the IASD conference in Leiden (Hoss, 1994), illustrates an appearance of only three of the "primaries" in a group, with one color active and one color missing. In this example, I worked on both the most active color and the missing color, to see whether there was a connection. Blue was the most active color and red was missing.

Dream: *"I dreamed that 2 other men and I, all dressed in green and yellow, were being chased by a blue man".*

Emotion within the Image: *Role-play* on the blue man revealed: *"I want to belong"* and *"my purpose is to keep us united."*

Emotional Content within the Color: The statement in table 9-7 with which the dreamer connected was: *"I need a peaceful state of harmony and a sense of belonging."* He related the green and yellow pair, on the other hand (table 9-8), to: *"I want to impress others and be popular and admired"* but also the potential path to resolution: *"I am trying to establish a better relationship with others."*

Confirmation with Waking Life: The dreamer indicated that these statements described feelings which dominated his waking life behavior. He holds back from expressing himself "in order to bridge the gap between himself and others" because he "wants to belong, to be popular and admired." The statement "keeping us united" also seemed to relate to the principle of the "four primaries" which was to bring all parts of self together.

Further Work on the Missing Color: Speculating that "redness" was the element needed for balance, I asked that he *role-play* a man dressed in red. As the red man, he suddenly became more animated, assertive, vital, and expressed a feeling of *"being alive again."* This correlated with the Lüscher associations for red of: *"intense, vital, animated, a desire to live life to the fullest."* These were feelings that he admitted were missing in his life. He was reluctant to express them because he feared rejection, and that he would scare his friends away. As a result of the dreamwork, he recognized the need to let the red man side of self come forth. People in the group, who observed the session, reinforced how much they liked seeing him as the red man. An interesting footnote was that he appeared at the IASD costume dream ball that evening, dressed completely in red, swinging a red wooden sword, definitely "feeling alive" again.

Some Pilot Studies

If the color of a dream image indeed relates to emotion, then it seems that the more dominant colors, or those most recalled from a person's dreams, might relate in some way to the various emotional influences in that person's life: their emotional state due to emotionally impactful waking events and their emotional personality. I therefore performed a couple of studies to determine if there was any indication of this relationship. I used the Luscher Color Test associations to create the color to emotional profiles since it was designed for such an evaluation. Note that although a large population of dream samples were used, the number of subjects was small, the results based on self-scoring and the studies performed without a randomized control group. However the results were promising thus worthy of further research.

Do Life's Events Effect Dream Color?

If the color of a dream image reflects waking life emotions, then it would follow that the dream colors would change as the emotional events in the dreamer's life changes. Dr. Curtiss Hoffman joined me in the an investigation of this theory as he had maintained a long-term journal of his dreams over a period of eleven (11) years in a computer database (which was able to sort on color) containing 4,791 dream reports, that contained color. (Hoss & Hoffman, 2004). In order to understand the emotional state reflected in the dreams at any point in time, I used the Lüscher *Color Test* (8 color version) which derives an emotional profile based on a subject's selection of color in a sequence from highest preference to lowest preference. I used a hypothetical assumption that the dream color profile (highest to lowest frequency of a dream color recalled at a point in time) might relate to the emotional state of the dreamer at that time, as measured by the *Color Test.* I derived a color profile by measuring the relative recall frequency of one color over another then applied the *Color Test* to it as if it were a profile of color preferences.

The Color Test is administered by pairing the colors top to bottom with Lüscher "function" designators (+, x, =, -) as follows: + as desired objectives or behavior; x as the existing situation or behavior; = as characteristics under restraint; and – as rejected or suppressed characteristics or behavior. This generated roughly 12 to 20 statements relating to emotional state. A [bracket] was placed at the end of each statement to place a grade. Curt was then sent the profile and asked to self-grade the statements against what he perceived as his emotional state during the period being tested: [+] = yes it fits, [0] = sometimes or partial fit or fits but not exactly as worded, [-] = does not fit as a statement or theme. The scores were then assigned values (+ = 1, 0 = .5 and - = 0), tallied and normalized to determine relative correlation.

Before doing the scoring, however, Dr. Hoffman had challenged me to find the period of extreme emotional turmoil he had gone through during this 11-year period. He did not say anything more about it. To determine this, I derived a baseline color and emotional profile by applying the color test to the average color profile over the entire 11-year period (figure 9-4). I then derived an emotional profile for each year. See figure 9-5.

Some emotional profiles were close to the baseline (period 3) or gave no indication of stress (period 1). The emotional profile during period 2 however indicated extreme emotional stress, summarized on figure 9-5 as: "exaggerated emotional intensity and opposition, self-esteem and relationship issues." He indicated that (1998) to be the exact year of the related emotional event. When given the 10 statement *Color Test* based profile, he rated it as 80% accurate as worded and 100% if statements are included that were coded to fit as the theme but not entirely as worded.

Figure 9-4 Baseline Color Profile
for Hoffman dream database over 11-year period
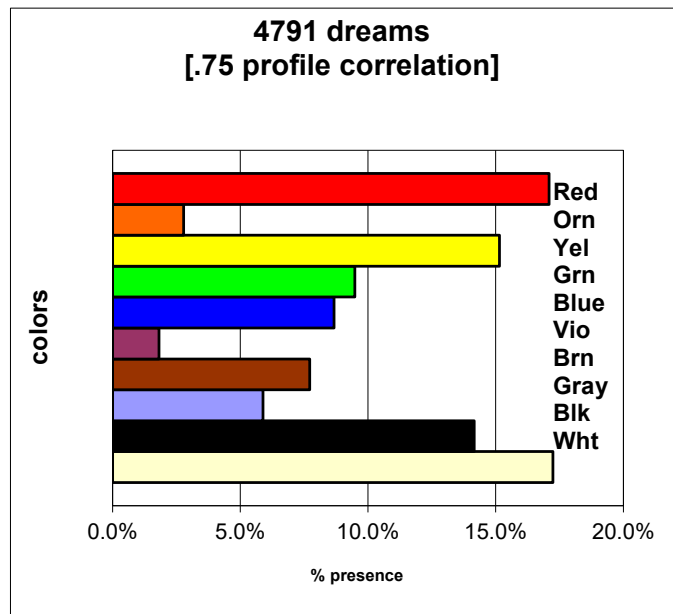
**Figure 9-5 Dream Color and Emotional Profiles
highlighting two emotional events in an 11-year period**
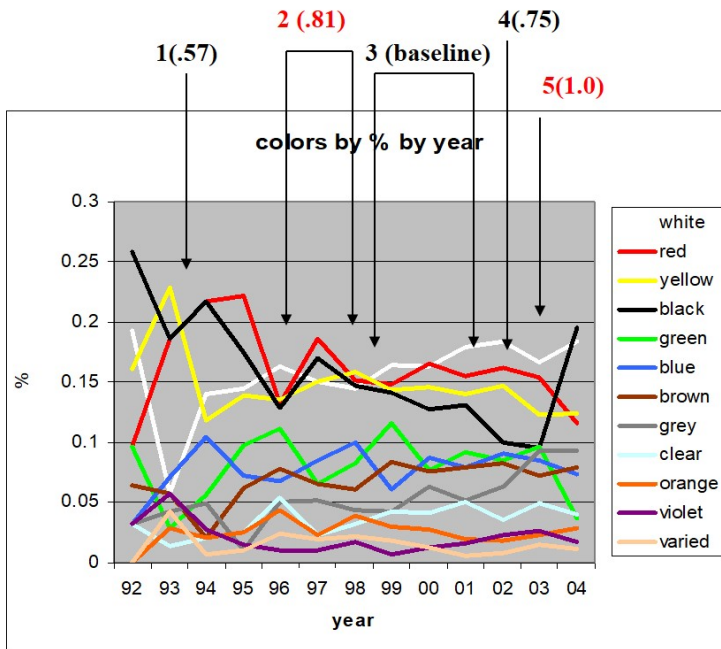
Lüscher Profiles

1 – uneventful period

2 – Crisis period: Profile = exaggerated emotional intensity and opposition (note Red/Blk pair) self-esteem and relationship issues (blue/green reversal)

3 – Profile = same as baseline, an uneventful average period

4 – Profile = worn out emotionally or physically

5 Crisis – disappointment, determination and stressful relationships

The details of the 1998 (period 2) profile statements and scoring of each is as follows; provided to illustrate how different dream color frequency profiles relate to very different emotional profiles:

- 8 Color Profile: +Yel/+Red; xBlack/xBlue; =Green/=Brown; -Grey/ -Violet
- Emotional Profile (score underlined): Critical about the existing conditions [Yes] which you feel are disorganized or not clear cut [Yes]; Seeking a solution to clarify the situation [Yes]; Need for a wider sphere of influence [Yes]; Makes him restless [Yes] and driven by desires and hopes [Yes]; May have spread yourself too thin [Yes]; Needs peace and quiet [Yes]; May need a faithful partner who can provide special consideration and affection [fits but not as worded]; Feels he cannot do much about his existing problems and difficulties and that he must make the best of things as they are [fits but not as worded].

In addition, the *Color Test* had identified a second emotional event (period 5) he had not mentioned happening during the 11 years summarized in the figure as: "disappointment, determination and stressful relationships." He indicated that such an even had just happened over that last year and when provided the detailed profile he rated it as 100% accurate as worded.

The details of the 2003 (period 5) profile statements and scoring of each is as follows:

- 8 Color Profile: +Red/+Yel; xGreen/xBlack; =Grey/=Blue; -Brown/-Violet
- Emotional Profile: Pursues his objectives and his self-interests with stubborn determination [Yes]; Refuses to compromise or make concessions [Yes]; Relationships do not measure up to your expectations [Yes] leading to disappointment [Yes]; Has mental reservations about the situation [Yes] and remains emotionally isolated [Yes]; Stress arises from instability in some set of relationships (colleagues, business, personal) [Yes]; Watchful control over your relationships because you need to know where you stand [Yes]; Strives to align with others who can assist in your growth [Yes]

The other periods were described by the dreamer as "not having a lot going on" the dream color profile was somewhat constant and closely matched (75% on average) the dreamer's baseline profile. That the two crisis periods could be accurately identified by the dream color alone provided a promising indication that the colors we recall from our dreams might indeed be influenced by emotional events in our lives.

Does Dream Color Reflect Personality?

If the color of a dream image relates to emotional content then extending this reasoning further, might the frequency of colors recalled over a lifetime (or long period of time) correlate to key emotional traits in the dreamer's personality?   Dr. Curtiss Hoffman again joined me in the investigation of these questions with his own database. He was also was part of a long-term journaling group from which we could obtain at least three other dreamers' samples of color recall over long periods. In all we collected color frequency samples from roughly 8000 dreams.

For each subject, the recall frequency of each of eight colors was computed over those years. The sum total of all reports for an individual were used to create a baseline personality profile as shown in figures 9-5 and 9-6. Color names from the dream reports were grouped to correlate with the eight colors in the Lüscher *Color Test* we used. Where a color was named as a combination of multiple colors (tan, mauve, blue-green, teal, etc.) it was eliminated from this initial study rather than artificially forcing it into a specific color category.

These were then ranked to create a color profile for that dreamer (most frequent color recalled to least frequent color). A Lüscher emotional profile was then performed on the color profile for each subject using the same methodology as in the prior study. The resulting emotional profile was given back to each subject (including Dr. Hoffman) for self-grading using the same methodology as above, to determine how accurately the resultant profile described their personality (or at least their perception of their personality).

Figure 9-6 Color Profiles for two out of the 4 dreamers
In the 'dream color versus personality' study.
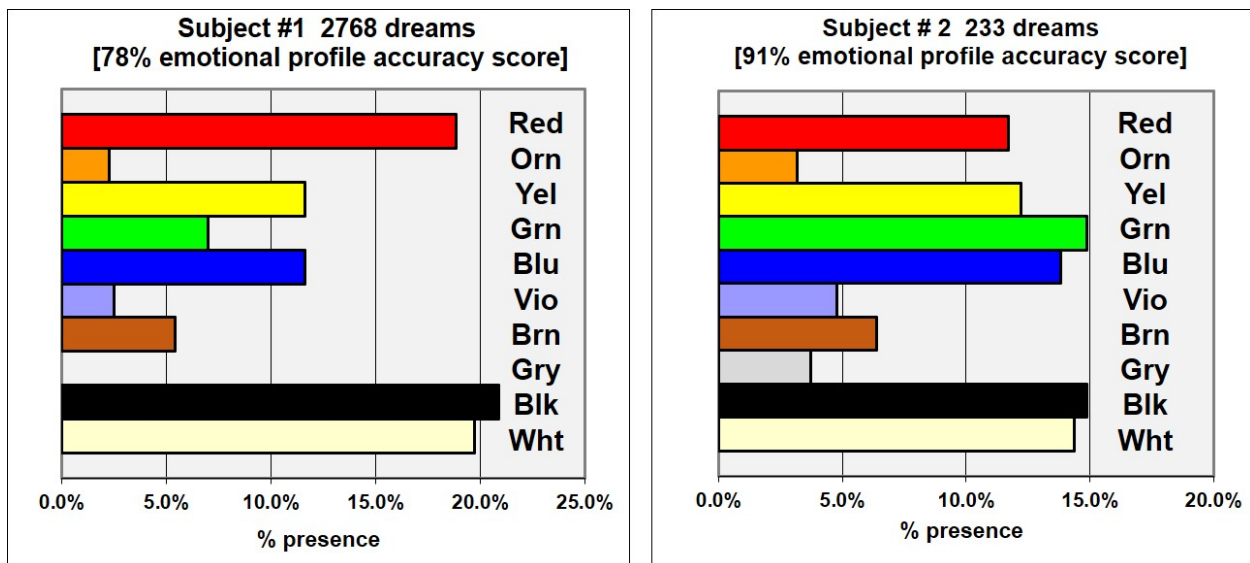
As seen in figures 9-4 (Dr. Hoffman's profile) and figure 9-6 (two of the other three) the color profiles and Lüscher turned out to be very different for each subject which would be expected if color relates to personality and thus personality differences. The Lüscher personality profiles (roughly 10 to 12 statements each) were derived from these color profiles and given to the subjects for rating as to how well they fit the subjects perception of their personality. Dr Hoffman and two of the subjects who completed the study graded their profile results, derived purely from their dream colors, as 75% accurate, 78% accurate and 91% accurate respectively. More research is recommended, but the results suggest that our personality indeed might influence the colors we recall most in our dreams. It would make sense that our personality would influence the emotional conditions which we are most sensitive to, and thus our dream colors would reflect those emotional conditions.

To illustrate how the different colors relate to the personality profile statements that were self-rated as accurate (as the subject perceived their personality), below are the Color Test derived profiles or each of the above subjects:

Figure 9-6a: **2768 dreams from long-term journal, rated as 78% accurate:** +Red/+Blue, xYellow/xGreen, =Brown/=Purple, Orange (-Red/-Yellow). Strives for a life rich in activity and experience and for a close bond offering sexual or emotional fulfillment. Hopes to obtain an improved position and greater prestige, so that I can gain something I desire or more of the things I have had to do without [fits if worded differently]. Egocentric at times and therefore quick to take offense. Able to obtain physical satisfaction from sexual activity but tends to hold aloof emotionally. Eager to make a good impression. I feel the right to anything I might hope for, but helpless or distressed when circumstances go against me. I find the possibility of failure most upsetting. Sometimes I see myself as a victim.

Figure 9-6b: **233 dreams over 4 recent years, rated as 91% accurate:** Green + Blue, Yellow x Red, Black = Brown, Purple – Gray. I want to make a favorable impression on others and to be recognized. I have a need to feel appreciated and admired. At times I can be a bit sensitive or may become hurt if I do not receive adequate acknowledgement. I tend to be active, outgoing and often restless. I may feel frustrated when events develop too slowly along the desired direction. When circumstances are such, I have the capability to compromise and forgo certain pleasures for the time being. At times I may feel that life has more to offer. Regarding relationships, I maintain an attitude of critical appraisal and are not swept off my feet unless the other is shown to be genuine and have integrity. I keep a watchful control over emotional relationships until I know where I stand. I have a concern at times that I might be prevented from achieving the things I want and therefore may strive for others to recognize my right to some of those things.

Conclusions

While self-scoring adds a subjective variable to the study, the results were fairly positive suggesting the possibility that the colors that more frequently populate our dreams, or at least that we most recall from our dreams, may be influenced by the emotional makeup of our personality. Further research is needed to confirm this, including using personality testing tools such as the MMPI to actually determine personality characteristics and the use of a control group with a randomized set of statements that they compare to their dream color profile.

The Color Questionnaire

The relatively positive agreement between *role-play* associations and Lüscher-based color associations, led me to believe that the Lüscher Color Test might provide an interesting tool for research as well as enhancing personal dreamwork. The emotional themes represented by the Lüscher color tables appeared quite useful as triggers for a dreamer's own personal associations. Since they also agreed nicely with other color psychology literature and research, I decided to use the emotional associations in the Lüscher (1971) tables as the basis for creation of emotional expressions in a way that the dreamer might identify with them – being careful not to change the basic information. I augmented those statements in places with research from other color psychology literature cited earlier. The objective was to create personalized statements, which describe emotional themes that have well-researched associations with color; not the "meaning" of color, but rather statements that might trigger the dreamer's own emotional associations. The results are tables 9-7 and 9-8.

Single Colors and Mixtures

Table 9-7 was derived from: the color themes as discussed above but included as notes some of the more basic *archetypal* associations that Jung attributed to colors like black, white and brown. Jung related black and white to *unconscious* and *conscious* material for example, and brown (the beautiful natural wood shades) to our natural "roots" for example. These have an evolutionary basis and I have frequently observed these particular colors in dreams to relate to the dreamer's personal situation much as Jung did. Note that the statements within each color represent an emotional theme that encompasses both the positive and negative aspects – both a sense of being filled with or feeling that emotion as well as needing that feeling or condition. Red, for example, can relate to feeling energetic as well as a need for more energy.

Note that the colors in table 9-7 are more pure hues. So, what of mixed hues such as blue-green or perhaps rust (a reddish-brown) or such? For these try the dual color tables 9-8. Table 9-8 is a result of applying the same approach I used in creating the single-color table 9-7, but principally used Lüscher color pair themes as a reference. It is intended to test for an association when the color in question is a mixture of two hues. I don't feel it is as refined or validated as table 9-6, but it tends to work so well in case after case I included it in the chapter. The use of table 9-8 for a color mixture is discussed below for a greenish-brown color in the "*Change Purse*" example. In the *"Rusty Car"* dream, if we look at rust as a reddish-brown combination one of the statements reads: "I am choosing comfort and security over ambition and prestige at this point" which was exactly what the dreamer had decided to do prior to the dream (to turn down a prestigious teaching position because he felt unsecure and uncomfortable about resurrecting his "rusty" talents).

Pastels

Pastels are a mixing a primary color with white and thus might relate to the influence of whiteness on that emotional state. White can represent the feelings of "newness" and therefore when mixing with another color might represent an emergence or re-emergence of the emotion associated with the color. Hamilton (2005) observed that color combinations with white increased as higher states of self-awareness were achieved during a transformation experience. Sutton and Whelan (2004) discuss the mixture of white with colors as related to a coolness or peacefulness, and associate many of the color combinations with white as a "cooling" of the color (and thus emotion) with which it mixes, making it less intense and more pleasant and friendly.

The "newness" or "rebirth" experience is illustrated in the following dream: *"I dreamed I was dressed in pink."* The dreamer looked through table 9-7 at the emotional themes associated with the color red and

identified with the *"I feel assertive, forceful"* statement – but then indicated that, *"Asserting myself is totally new to me, and emerging feeling and way of acting that I am only beginning to understand how to deal with."* The mixture of newness (white) with the assertiveness (red) related to an emergence or rebirth of what had been a repressed assertive part of self.

Color Pairs - Conflict and Integration

When working with dream images that contain a color pair, I have often found that the pair represents a conflict between the two emotional states associated with the two colors. This was illustrated earlier in Case 4 (the "blue/red instrument"). It is also apparent in the following dream: "*I dreamed of a round gas station sign that was orange, with the number 76 in blue letters*." Although this is a commercial sign, the dreamer related it to a trip to Nepal in 1976 and stated that she was indeed conflicted between a *"desire to do more and expand her interests and activities"* (orange from table 9-7) and her "need for more gas" or *"needing rest, peace and a chance to recuperate"* (blue from table 9-7). Therefore, explore the nature of the conflict using table 9-7.

Similar emotional statements related to the conflict might be revealed when using the dual color table 9-8. On the other hand, the pairing of two opposing images can relate to a path to integration or the desired state of resolution, according to Carl Jung (see Chapters 4 and 7). This might be extended to the pairing of two opposing colors as well. So, when using the color pair table 9-8, look at the statements that you connect with as also possibly relating to a potential path to, or desired state of, resolution (the integration of the two colors or two conflicting emotions). This will be illustrated later as an integration of the red and blue combination, when we continue with the "*Wiping Away the Paint*" dreamwork which began in Chapter 8.

The "*Change Purse*" dream from Chapter 6 illustrates the use of both tables for color pairs and mixtures and the fact that the nature of the emotional conflict can be pictured, and thus revealed, in a dream by the colors alone. "*My associate in the dream was a slightly rounded but rectangular shaped zippered change purse, red on the top-side and a green-brown color on the under-side. I kept flip-flopping it over in my hands, trying to decide which side and color I liked best.*" In this case, the dream presented the two sides as an indecision or conflict between the emotions represented by the red side and the emotions represented by the green-brown mixture on the underside. Using table 9-7, the dreamer connected with the red statement: *"I want to win, succeed and achieve."* When he reviewed the color mixture for greenish-brown in table 9-8, he connected with the statement: *"I want to overcome difficulties and establish myself, even though I am tired and feel too much is being asked of me."* His conflict was between pursuing a goal of "winning," in what he saw as an upcoming "battle" with his colleagues, and the desire to "not to take on too much," which, in this case, would be the result of winning.

Proper Use of the Questionnaire

The statements do NOT represent the "meaning" of a dream color and should not be used as a dictionary of color meaning. It does not work that way. They contain emotional themes reportedly associated with color as found in various studies. The statements are designed to trigger your own personal associations with a situation the dream might be dealing with so **use it as a questionnaire**, as you read the statements ask yourself "does this sound like a way I have felt recently?"

When you use the table, you may find that only one or two statements within a color cell relate to your specific situation, whereas the others do not. This is exactly how it was designed. The statements are variations around an emotional theme found to be associated with that color. The statements are also designed to provide a spectrum of emotions, from being "filled with the emotion," to needing more of that emotional stimulus.

Your own particular situation would naturally be limited to just a few statements and may not be described exactly as worded. You may also find that none of the statements trigger an association. That is possible since the statements were derived from the set of associations, from the research and literature, and are limited to basic color hues. So, don't depend totally on the tables for answers. They are intended only as an aid to trigger your own associations. If the tables do not trigger associations, then you may want to try freely associating, i.e. "what feelings surface as I envision being bathed in that color".

When working with the tables, pick the statement(s) that really stands out, that provides the greatest "aha" or connection with your waking life situation. Then set aside the table and use your own words to describe your situation and relate it to the dream story.

1) **Select the colored dream images to work on:** Work on the color of the image you have been working with and/or the color(s) that you feel most drawn to or that stand out. It is best to work with something that is not a commonly colored object (like green grass), unless it stands out. It is best to work with a colored image that could be any color (such as a red hat, a blue car, an orange dress). Also look for color pairing which might represent a conflict between emotions or an eventual integrated state of emotional resolution. Look for a grouping of the 4 primary colors - red, yellow, blue and green (or if one color seems to be most active in the group of 4 or is obviously missing from the group, work on that color).

2) **Pick the color** in table 7-2 that best matches the color of the dream image, or for a color mixture try table 9-8. Don't worry if there is not a perfect match. The tables are not intended to reveal the "meaning" "of the color. They are only intended to trigger your own associations from the emotional themes represented.
   - **Single Color:** use table 9-7 to select the closest matching color or table 9-8 if it is a color mixture. (example: rust/reddish-brown, blue-green, etc. – first match the dominant hue in the mix with the colors in the rows, then match the secondary color in the columns).
   - **Color Pair:** Explore the possibility that the two colors might represent conflicting emotions by using table 9-7 on each color separately or 9-8 on the pair – or – use 9-8 to explore the possibility that the pairing might represent an integration, a path to or eventual state of resolution. Pick the row with the dominant color, then select the secondary color from the column, and read the statements at the intersection of the two.

3) **Read each statement as a question** (or better yet have someone else read them while you listen) **asking yourself:** "Does this statement relate to a way I have felt recently or describe a situation in my waking life?" For color pairs, read both colors in 9-7 (or try 9-8) to explore whether the two colors might represent two conflicted emotions or see if the statements in 9-8 might represent a possible resolution scenario (integration of colors or conflicted emotions).

4) **Relate to Life:** Pick the one or two statement(s) that create the strongest "aha" response or "connection," that best relate to a waking life situation or conflict. Describe the situation, and the feelings at the time, in your own words. How does this add to your understanding of the situation the dream is dealing with?

Table 9-7 SINGLE COLOR EMOTIONAL THEMES
(Statements are NOT the "meaning" of color but are to trigger Your Own Personal Associations)

COLOR	ASSOCIATED EMOTIONAL THEMES
RED	1) I feel intense, vital or animated. 2) I feel transformed. 3) I feel assertive, forceful. 4) I feel creative. 5) I want to live life to its fullest. 6) I want to win, succeed, achieve. 7) I feel sexy or have strong sexual urges. 8) I have a driving desire. 9) I am feeling anxious; 10) I need something to make me feel alive again. 11) I need to be more assertive and forceful. 12) I need to get out and enjoy myself. *13) If it appears as blood or inflammation - it could metaphorically or literally relate to sickness or injury.*
ORANGE	1) I want to expand my interests and develop new activities. 2) I want a wider sphere of influence. 3) I feel friendly and welcoming. 4) I want more contact with others. 5) I feel enthusiastic, outgoing and adventurous. 6) I am driven by desires and hopes toward the new, undiscovered and satisfying. 7) I feel driven but need to overcome my doubts or fear of failure. 8) I must avoid spreading myself too thin.
YELLOW	1) I feel a sense of joy and optimism. 2) I am seeking a solution that will open up new and better possibilities and allow my hopes to be fulfilled. 3) I feel the new direction I am taking will bring happiness in my future. 4) I am hopeful. 5) I need to find a way out of this circumstance or relationship. 6) I need a change. 7) I may be compensating for something. 8) I am acting compulsively.
GREEN	1) I need to establish myself, my self-esteem, my independence. 2) I want recognition. 3) I need to increase the certainty of my own value and status, through acknowledgment by others of my achievements or my possessions. 4) Hard work and drive will gain me recognition and self esteem. 5) My opinion must prevail. 6) I must hold on to this view in order to maintain my self-esteem. 7) I want what I am due. 8) I must maintain control of the events. 9) Things must not change. 10) Detail and logic are important here. 11) I need to increase my sense of security. 12) I need more money to feel secure. 13) I need healing or better health.
BLUE	1) I feel tranquil, peaceful and content. 2) I feel a sense of harmony. 3) I feel a meditative awareness or unity. 4) I feel a sense of belonging. 5) I need rest, peace or a chance to recuperate. 6) I need a relationship free from contention where I can trust and be trusted. 7) I need a peaceful state of harmony offering contentment and a sense of belonging.
VIOLET	1) I like to win others over with my charm. 2) I feel an identification, an almost "mystic" union. 3) I have a deep intuitive understanding of the situation. 4) I feel a sense of intimacy. 5) The feeling is erotic. 6) I seek a magical state where wishes are fulfilled. 7) I yearn for a "magical" relationship of romance and tenderness. 8) I seek to identify with something or someone. 9) I need intimacy. 10) I engage in fantasy a bit to compensate for my feelings of insecurity.

Table 9-7 SINGLE COLOR EMOTIONAL THEMES
(continued)

COLOR	ASSOCIATED EMOTIONAL THEMES
BROWN	1) I seek a secure state where I can be physically comfortable and relax or recover. 2) I am uneasy and insecure in the existing situation. 3) I need a more affectionate environment. 4) I need a situation imposing less physical strain. 5) I want to satisfy the physical senses (food, luxury, sex). *6) Natural wood brown (Jung):* a) I am concerned about matters of family, home, or my "roots". b) I am concerned with a son or daughter. c) I'm searching for my true self or natural state of being. *7) Dirty Brown a physical problem or illness?*
GRAY (free of color)	1) I want to shield myself from those feelings. 2) I feel emotionally distant, only an observer. 3) It is as if I am standing aside, watching myself mechanically go through the motions. 4) I want to remain uncommitted, non- involved, shielded or separated from the situation. 5) I do not want to make a decision that will require my emotional involvement. 6) I have put up with too much and now wish to avoid any further emotional stimulation. 7) I am trying to escape an anxious situation. 8) I am compensating for something.
BLACK (negation of color)	1) I am anxious and don't know why. 2) I am fearful of or intimidated by the situation. 3) I have been dealt an unacceptable blow. 4) Nothing is as it should be. 5) I refuse to allow it/them to influence my point of view. 6) I can't accept the situation and don't wish to be convinced otherwise. 7) I feel the need for extreme action, perhaps in revolt against or to compensate for the situation. *Jung:* The *unconscious* realm. Moving into darkness = giving in or going within (initial phase of transformation); suppression? Beautiful shiny black = a positive view of the *unconscious* from which a new self emerges.
WHITE	1) This is a new experience. 2) I'm aware of new feelings. 3) I'm experiencing a new beginning, a reawakening, a transformation. 4) I have a new outlook, a new awareness. 5) I feel pure and/or innocent. 6) I feel open and accepting. 7) I feel unprepared. 8) I feel alone, isolated. 9) It feels cold or sterile.
PASTEL (color + white)	White transforms the emotion associated with the color it mixes with. It can represent a newness, unfamiliarity with, innocence regarding, or renewal of that emotion; or a subdued coolness, calming and pacification of the emotion. White mixed with red (pink) for example might transform passion into romance or pacify the "red" emotions into nurturing and the discouraging of aggression.
PINK	1) I feel romantic or loving toward someone or something; 2) I am feeling very sensitive about something; 3) I feel nurturing and /or gentle and soothing; 4) I am feeling compassionate; 5) I am avoiding aggression or want to calm my aggressive feelings; 6) I need romance; 7) I need nurturing; 8) I need something to calm me down; 9) dealing with this feeling of assertiveness is new to me; 10) the driving energy I feel is new to me.
COLOR GROUPS (Jung)	**Red/Yel/Blu/Grn** – A grouping of the 4 "primaries" can represent a state of completion or balance. An active or missing color may be associated with an emotional element missing from the dreamer's life that is needed for closure. **Black & White** (patterns) - Forces of unification, an integration of *conscious* (white) and *unconscious* (black) from which a greater self emerges; a unity of opposites; an internal change may be taking place. **Gold & Silver -** Integration of *masculine* & *feminine* attributes or *conscious* & *unconscious* forces respectively.

Table 9-8 COLOR PAIR - EMOTIONAL THEMES
(Statements are designed only to Trigger Personal Associations)

Color	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue
Red	I feel Intense, full of energy. I want to win and succeed. I feel driven by desire. I want to live life to its fullest. I want my will to prevail. I feel sexy or sexual urges.	I feel enthusiastic, outgoing and active. I want contact with others. I want to expand my interests and develop new activities. I want to overcome my doubts.	I am purposeful and controlling in pursuing my goals. I don't allow myself to be deflected. I want to overcome obstacles & achieve recognition from success.	I feel emotionally fulfilled. I want a relationship that provides emotional and/or sexual fulfillment. If I follow this course of action, I will achieve harmony.
Yellow	I want a wider sphere of influence. I am driven by desire and hope for something new and satisfying. I like the new and undiscovered. I am seeking new fields of interest.	I need a change that will give me some relief. I am hopeful in my search for a solution that will bring happiness. I am interested in things that are new and developing.	I am ambitious. I want to prove myself and gain appreciation and recognition. I stay alert to opportunities that would allow greater freedom and bring recognition.	I feel emotionally dependent. I need affection and understanding. I am helping the group in hopes that I might be treated with warmth and understanding.
Green	I want to succeed to a position of authority and prestige. I want to overcome opposition and to make my own decisions. I don't want to depend on others. I want to be in control.	I am ambitious. I want appreciation and recognition. I want to impress others and be popular and admired. I am trying to establish a better relationship with others.	I need to establish myself, my self-esteem or my independence. I want recognition. I need security. I want my opinion to prevail. I need to control the events. Logic, detail & order are important.	I want to make a favorable impression and be admired and appreciated. I can be easily hurt if I am not noticed. I want to be proven right. I am a bit precise and can be bossy at times.
Blue	I seek harmony and cooperation with associates for our mutual benefit. I need emotional fulfillment. I seek an affectionate, intimate relationship of mutual trust.	I am emotionally dependent. I am enthusiastic. I seek a happy, affectionate, fulfilling relationship. I am helpful and willing to adapt in order to gain affection.	I need peace and freedom from stress and conflict. I'm proceeding cautiously so as to control the situation. I am sensitive and exacting and can be fussy.	I need peace, harmony, and a sense of belonging. I need to rest, relax and recuperate. I am sensitive and have deep feelings. I feel content.
Violet	I can get preoccupied with exciting, erotic, stimulating things. want to be seen as exciting. I want to have a charming, impressive influence on others.	I thirst for adventure. My future must be exciting, stimulating and interesting. I want to be well liked and charming. I am over-imaginative and given to fantasy and daydreaming.	I use charm and clever tactics to influence or gain recognition, but I don't want to accept the responsibility of a close relationship. I want to be considered someone special.	Aesthetic or erotic things attract me. I seek a sympathetic relationship and a situation of ideal harmony. I feel a need to identify with something in an idealized way.

Table 9-8 COLOR PAIR - EMOTIONAL THEMES
(continued)

Color	Violet	Brown	Gray	Black
Red	I need stimulation. I desire fascinating and stimulating things. I like erotic or aesthetic things. I am acting so as to fascinate and charm others.	I am taking it easy and being a bit self-indulgent, gratifying my senses. I am choosing comfort and security over ambition and prestige at this point.	I am acting impulsively with little concern for the consequences. I don't want anything to get in the way of my having fun, which I hope will shield me from my problems.	I am living intensely to make up for what I have missed, and to escape from my burdens. My desires are exaggerated and I tend to over- dramatize.
Yellow	I love fantasy. I want a fantasy adventure. I express my hopes through my imagination and fantasies. I want to be admired for my charm. I find myself often daydreaming.	I want security and comfort. I seek a solution that will bring physical comfort and free me from fear and insecurity. I need relief from despair and a chance to recover.	I am stuck in indecision and lack of resolution. I want to commit to a solution but can't determine what to commit to. I escape the problem through vague illusionary hopes.	I am in crisis. I made a decision and I am sticking to it. There is no middle ground so I find myself making abrupt decisions and changes in order to find a solution.
Green	I am using clever tactics and a pleasant manner to win over others, but in a way that avoids commitment and responsibility. I keep a close watch on how others react in order to maintain control and measure my success.	I need physical comfort, security, recognition and fewer problems. I want to overcome difficulties and establish myself, even though I'm tired and feel I'm being asked to do too much.	I am defending my self-esteem, prestige or status. I want to impress others. I want to establish myself and make an impact despite unfavorable circumstances or a lack of appreciation.	I am closed to attempts by others to influence me. I want to prove that I am strong, superior and above all that, that it doesn't affect me. I can be a bit obstinate or self-righteous.
Blue	Beauty and taste is important in this situation. I consider peace and fulfillment to be achievable through beauty, aesthetic pursuits, or an ideal relationship.	I need to overcome my physical condition and to be treated with a lot of special care, in a conflict-free environment. I fear separation and the resulting emptiness and solitude.	I need a release from stress and a period of peace and tranquility which will give me a chance to recuperate.	I have an urgent need for peace and a chance to rest. I need to be lovingly understood. I feel I am treated with a lack of consideration. I want others to comply with my requests.
Violet	I want to identify or form a "mystic union" with something or someone. I want an intimate, romantic relationship - a magical wish-fulfilling state. I try to charm others to gain their support.	I am stimulated by sensual pleasures and luxurious surroundings.	I am sensitive to my environment, and want to protect it against any disturbing influence. I want to be understood with sensitivity and compassion. I need to protect myself against conflict and stress.	I have a compelling desire to unite or blend with something / someone I identify with. I want the bond to be sensually fulfilling but not to conflict with my convictions.

Table 9-8 COLOR PAIR EMOTIONAL THEMES
(continued)

Color	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue
Brown	I am being a bit self-indulgent. I need to satisfy my sensual desires or physical appetites.	I need total security. At this point I prefer physical relief over achievement of future goals. I am settling for a less active, problem-free existence with minimal demands.	I need physical relief & comfort. I am trying to maintain self-control so as to handle existing difficulties. I need a relaxed environment in order to recover and feel secure.	I desire a state of physical comfort with no conflict. I need to feel secure and fear loneliness and separation. I need to be handled gently.
Gray	I may seem cautious but I demand a lot out of life and want to impress others. I hide my intentions so that I won't be involved in, or committed to, the consequences of my actions.	I am looking for a way out of this intolerable situation, but feel there may be no solution. I can't even decide what to hope for, out of fear that a decision would mean commitment to a course of action.	I am in a hostile situation and am being cautious in order to protect my interests. I avoid getting too close with others who might undermine me. I hide my intentions so as not to stir opposition.	I am exhausted by conflict and need protection from it and time to recover in a peaceful environment. I will find peace if I can remain uncommitted. .
Black	I have exaggerated desires. My extreme dramatic behavior is driven by desire or revolt. Pent up emotions threaten to release in a passionate and impulsive way.	I need to escape from this crisis which may require extreme action and desperate measures. I am behaving recklessly and making abrupt headstrong decisions.	I defy restrictions or opposition. I refuse to be swayed from my point of view. I must not waiver if I am to prove myself righteous or independent.	I am in revolt against some situation which has devastated me, and I just want to be left in peace.

Color	Violet	Brown	Gray	Black
Brown	I feel sensuous. I want to be surrounded by luxury, and physical comforts - things which give bodily pleasure.	I want a secure and problem free situation in which to physically relax and recover. I want physical comfort. I want relief from a physical problem.	I am exhausted and my body is in need of rest, protection from distress, and a chance to recover. I desire to be secure and problem free.	I feel purposeless. I experienced a bitter disappointment and am rejecting all except physical pleasure. I need to forget/recover in a problem free state.
Gray	I am fascinated with something and want to identify with it but not openly. I am exploring it tentatively and cautiously so that I wont be discovered or overly committed.	I am exhausted. I need to shield myself from anything exhausting or tiring. I want physical comfort, security and freedom from disturbances.	I have put up with too much & am shielding myself from further feelings, stimulation or involvement. I remain uncommitted and uninvolved.	I want to remain separated and totally uninvolved. I feel betrayed and treated in an undeserving manner. I am in revolt against a situation that is disrespectful to me.
Black	I have a compelling desire to identify or blend with something / someone but I want the bond to be a perfect fit, without concession or compromise.	I set an idealistic goal that resulted in bitter disappointment and am revolting against it in self-disgust. I want to forget it all and recover in a problem free environment.	I want to remain totally isolated and non-involved. The situation is offensive or hopeless and I want nothing to do with it. I want to shield myself from the influence or irritation.	It feels mysterious, frightening, oppressive. This situation is over-demanding & offensive. Nothing is as it should be. I refuse to allow anything to influence my point of view.

Dream Example

(*"Wiping Away the Paint"* continued from Chapter 8)

Step #5 – *Exploring Emotion in Color* (continued from Chapter 8)

To recap the "*Wiping away the Paint*" example we were working on in Chapter 8, the *role-play* revealed that the dreamer sees herself as feeling like her future is in somebody else's hands. Her conflict is wanting to take the new job because she likes to be needed and used, but afraid of being let go (fired) after the job is done. The motivations (fears and desires) that have her stuck in the conflict is the desire to fully use her talents (which she would do on this job) versus the fear of messing up again and being "thrown out" (once again fired but now having moved across country). The conflict and fears created such an extreme *impasse* that she had not even started to sell her house or prepare for the move, and yet she had to be on the new job in two weeks.

The emotional conflict that the dreamer was dealing with is revealed in the *role-play* work, but what about the colors, gray, blue and red? The dream introduced Jane who painted over the dreamer's gray walls with blue and red paint. This may be a resolution scenario since it opposes the aims of the dream-*ego* (who was alarmed having painted the walls gray) and there appears to be opposites involve – blue and red being at opposite ends of the color (and emotional) spectrum.

5a - Select colored dream images to work on: *Also color pairings which might represent a conflict between emotions:*

> *ANS: Gray walls, Blue and Red paint*

5b - Pick the closest color in the Color Questionnaire (tables 9-7 and 9-8): *If a **Single Color** use table 9-7 to select the closest match or table 9-8 if it is a color mixture. (for example blue-green). If a **Color Pair**: explore the possibility that the two colors might represent conflicting emotions by using table 9-8 or better yet 9-7 on each color separately – or - explore the possibility that the pairing/integration in table 9-8 might represent a path to resolution. To use table 9-8 pick the row with the dominant color, then select the secondary color from the column, and read the statements at the intersection of the two.*

> **Color Questionnaire Table 9-7:** *Gray walls, Blue and Red paint*
> **Dual Color Table 9-8:** *Blue and Red combination – blue dominated*

5c - Read each statement for that color as a question: *ask yourself: "Does this statement sound like a way I have felt recently of describe a situation in my waking life?" For color pairs, read both colors to explore whether the two colors might represent two conflicted emotions. Also, for a color pair try table 9-8 to explore statements that might represent a possible resolution scenario (integration of colors or conflicted emotions).*

> **Color Questionnaire Table 9-7:**
>
> > **Gray:** "*I want to remain uncommitted, non-involved, shielded, or separated from the situation*" and "*I do not want to make a decision that will require my emotional involvement.*"
> >
> > **Red**: *I want to win, succeed, achieve*"
> > **Blue**: "*I need a relationship free from contention in which I can trust and be trusted.*"

> **Dual Color Table 9-8 (Integrated Colors):** determine which color seemed to dominate in order to use the table.

> *ANS: Blue + Red combination: "I seek harmony and cooperation with associates for our mutual benefit" – "an affectionate, intimate relationship of mutual trust".*
> [Note: The integration of two colors as represented in this table might symbolically relate to the *integration* of the two sides of a conflict or a possible resolution state (as Jung put it). So, I asked, "does this statement, *"seek harmony and cooperation with associates for our mutual benefit"* sound like a focus for trying to resolve the conflict going forth?"]

5d - Reflect on the Waking Life Situation Pick the one or two statement(s) that create the strongest "aha" response or "connection," that best relate to a waking life situation or conflict. Describe the situation, and the feelings at the time, in your own words What new perspective does the color add?

> *ANS: "The statement for Gray: 'I want to remain uncommitted, non-involved, shielded, or separated from the situation' and 'I do not want to make a decision that will require my emotional involvement' is how I feel about having to decide to move".* [note: Gray is an emotional "wall" or barrier, shielding her from making a decision so as to remain uncommitted, to the point where she had not even begun to prepare for the move or taking steps to sell her house, two weeks before she was to be on the new job]. "*I do want to take the job to again 'succeed and achieve' in my career, but I also need a relationship with my new boss 'free from contention' where I 'can trust and be trusted,' which I fear might not happen.*

Step #6 - Summarize – Putting it All Together

The final step in Part #2 is to summarize your situation and the primary issue you and your dream is dealing with, in preparation for Part #3 Action or Dream Guidance and Closure - in order to place the situation in context before exploring how the dreaming mind (the *unconscious*) was trying to resolve the problem – so as to suggest waking life actions that might lead to closure. To do this summarize what was learned in both Parts #1 and #2 (steps #3 through #5) using those statements that were the most "meaningful" or impactful - in a way that describes your waking life situation and the underlying emotional issues. You can try inserting the new information into the dream story if it helps. At this point it is good to explore not only the emotional conflict but past decisions that were made at the time of any traumatic situation that may lie at the core of the conflict. All this is in preparation for Part #3 Action or Dream Guidance and Closure, in order to place the situation in context before exploring how the dreaming mind (the *unconscious*) was trying to resolve the problem – so as to suggest waking life actions that might lead to closure.

> *ANS: I am trying to avoid thinking about my move – it seems to be a wonderful opportunity since I may eventually own the company, but for some reason it terrifies me. I want to be handy but feel my career is in somebody else's hands. I dislike being 'thrown out after the job is done' as I was on my last two jobs. I want to succeed, achieve and feel needed and used by taking on this new job - but – I also need a relationship free from contention in which I can trust and be trusted* [Red and Blue]. *I fear that I might mess up again and get thrown out but will now have left my friends and family, sold my home, and be clear across country. So, I have up to this point remained emotionally uncommitted, non-involved, and shielded from the situation* [Gray]. *I do not want to make a decision that will require my emotional involvement.*

CHAPTER 10
WORKING WITH GUIDANCE IN DREAMS

To suffer one's own death and to be reborn again is not easy – Fritz Perls

The first step in trying to understand what your dream is attempting to do and how it is attempting to do it, is to **orient yourself to the dream**. The process begins with observing the structure of the dream or dream series (Chapter 5) along with the *unconscious archetypal* imagery (Chapter 7) which aids in organizing the dream and guiding the *dream-self* toward an eventual resolution. Thirdly there are four clues, related to the planned resolution and guiding action of the dream, to look for that will be discussed in this chapter.

What Might the Dream be Trying to Achieve?

In Chapter 2 we learned that there is a multiplicity of dreams, from "normal" or common dreams to to nightmares, creative problem-solving dreams, lucid dreams, *somatic* dreams and extraordinary dreams containing extrasensory information. The most common dreams, which make up about 80% or our dreams, however, tend to have a "purposeful" aim (as Jung termed it) to maintain mental or even physical wellbeing. Even that aim, however, can take on many forms in attempting to achieve the more urgent needs of the dreamer and their situation – from simply restoring balance to the more ambitious aim of personality growth or *individuation*. When working with a dream it is helpful orient yourself to what the dream might be attempting to do. In Chapter 1 and 5, those possibilities were organized into three basic aims:

- *Restoring - our Psychological Balance***:** Dreams attempt to fit a recent adverse experience into our inner model of experience in order to accommodate it in some way, re-establish psychological balance and/or maintain a "sense of self". The dream may therefore be seen to compare emotional representations of the present situation with past memories, along with integration imagery (two sides of self being combined in some way as in the *"Merging with Herself"* and the "*Crushed*" dreams in Chapter 5).

- *Adapting – to Life's Adversities:* This type of dream metaphorically pictures an adverse event in waking life and introduces and tests various problem solving or resolution scenarios in order to learn how better to deal with that life situation and future situations like it. This seems to be the most common problem resolution dream. Observing the resolution scenarios can provide valuable insight or clues as to how the dreamer might proceed in waking life. This is particularly true when the scenario or outcome in the dream is emotionally reinforced (rewarded with a positive ending).

- *Transforming – our Personality:* This type of dream is much like the adaptive learning dream, however the aim goes beyond just trying to adapt to a type of adverse situation. It may be triggered by a recent conflict, but the inner issues tend to be deeper and the focus is on personality growth and evolution, a significant change in our inner-model or *existing myth*. Jung called it *individuation*, becoming the whole person you were meant to be. This type of dream (often called a big dream) seems: a) at times visionary; b) to have a clear and purposeful structure and c) is populated with *archetypal* imagery. As the dream or dream series begins to achieve its goal and end positively there is generally bright and colorful renewal/rebirth or emergence imagery present.

Does the Dream Have a Structure?

Chapter 5 discussed how dream, or a series of dreams or dream segments, might have a "purposeful" structure in attempting to restore, adapt, or transform. If so one or more of the four following stages might be apparent: *Encounter, Scenario Introduction, Testing & Mediation* and *Resolution/Reinforcement.* Don't spend a lot of time trying to fit the dream into this formula (dreams are not that linear) but if you can spot one or more of these activities in might help you orient yourself to the direction of the dream. Refer to Chapters 5 and 7 for more details. Some hints as to what to look for in each phase are given below:

- ***Encounter:*** The opening scene of a dream often metaphorically pictures the situation or conflict that the dream is dealing with or as Jung put it - the *unconscious* emotional aspect of the conscious experience. You may find yourself on a journey, lost, going within, descending into darkness and encounter your conflicts, your fears and *Shadow* material. Sometimes the dream or a dream segment ends here – simply providing insight, mirroring your approach to the situation and presenting some of the *unconscious* aspects that were triggered. It may then be followed by another segment, that tends to use the material from the first in order to progressively attempt a resolution.

- ***Scenario Introduction****:* This phase is most easily recognized when the dream introduces an apparent solution, or a new direction, viewpoint or guidance, usually an alternative to (*compensation* for) the way your *dream-self* was approaching the situation. Sometimes it is a question or decision that the dream-self is asked to make. It may come as a moment of surprise or literal guidance (spoken or written words, perhaps from a guiding figure or sometimes even something your *dream-self* says at a moment of insight or in answer to a question.

- ***Testing & Mediation***: Here the dream story begins to test the scenario in some way, guiding you through it, perhaps to experience and learn from the alternate direction or viewpoint. You may experience a mix of associated experiences, memories and persons from your past – comparing the present to past in order to accommodate the experience or creatively develop new strategies. It often takes on the nature of a search, journey, being lost or a frustrating problem to be resolved. *Archetypal* imagery may appear in order to represent the resolution and organizational processes taking place. Ultimately you may find yourself reversing your old viewpoint or direction and adopting the alternative solution.

- ***Resolution & Reinforcement****:* Ultimately the dream may: a) end at that point and another sequence initiated to further incorporate ant test other associated aspects of the situation as noted above; b) leave the dream inconclusive or negatively reinforce it if the direction that you (the *dream-self*) is taking is not leading in a successful direction or is dangerous; or c) positively reinforce the scenario, or the action of your *dream-self*, if it is leading to or leads to a successful resolution. (a good dream ending).

Does the Dream Have a Message?

The answer is yes and no. As noted in Chapter 8 it is very important to realize that an apparent "message" in your dream is most always presented in the language of metaphor or contained within the "parable" like nature of the dream story. Taking it literally can generally be problematic. Even when a verbal or written message is given, the message may have a literal relationship to the dream story, but the relationship with your waking life story is generally as analogy or metaphor. The "message" if you are looking for one, can be usually found in following the *compensating* scenario or alternative solution that the dream has planned and attempts to guide the *dream-self* through. The "message" might be found in the metaphors presented at a moment of surprise, guidance or insight – but only becomes clear if you can find an obvious analogy between those metaphors and your waking situation. Some clues for doing this is the subject of this chapter.

4 Clues to Recognizing the Guidance

From a practical sense it is often quite difficult to recognize and track all these actions in any one dream or a dream series. In the *Transformative Dreamwork* protocol I have therefore reduced the task to looking for four revealing activities: **guidance, surprise, acceptance or reversal** and a **positive ending**.

Guidance

Did you experience a guiding event or activity (advice, action, discovery, insight, written/verbal message) intended to redirect the action or thinking of the dreamer? Guidance is generally the introduction of a *compensating* scenario where the event or activity contradicts or attempts to reverse the viewpoint or actions of the *dream-self* in the dream.

It can be direct, as was the case of the guiding companion in the "*Rusty Car*" dream, or indirect as finding a path out of a disturbing situation in the dream – for example the appearance of the door in the "*Ice Cave*" dream. It also can come in the form of a discovery such as finding a room in a house you didn't know was there – thus guidance and surprise (below) are similar in that way. It can come as a moment of insight as in the "*Clever Dog*" dream where the dreamer saw the dog being left alone when it "rolled over" (the dream being illuminated with light at that moment). It can also take the form of a "knowing" figure suggesting or directing the dreamer as the *wise old man* did in the "*Book of Truth*" example.

It often comes in the form of words, spoken or written as in the case of the booming voice in the "*Evil Entity*" dream or the words *"eat more fish"* on the side of the boat in my *somatic* dream. In the case of words, although these examples were somewhat literal it is best to consider the words to be metaphors that paired with the activity in the dream – relate as an analogy to one's waking life situation. For example, in the "*End of the World*" dream a voice said to the dreamer; *'the water is just your unconscious, jump in and you will be fine'.*" The action of jumping in is certainly not literal, but rather a metaphor for embracing the rising *unconscious* material – and before it can even be understood it had to be related as an analogy to the rising fears in the dreamer's life.

The guidance can come as a decision to be made by, or question to be answered by, the *dream-self* – the eventual answer often becoming the guidance. This was the case in the "*Cleaning the Latrines*" dream in Chapter 7 where the dreamer, who was cleaning smelly latrines on a cruise was asked by a voice, *'do you dislike the job?'* The *dream-self* pondered the question and finally said, *'I don't mind, it's for my family.'*"

Finally, the guidance can come as an illustration or action or the parable like plot of the dream story. Such was the case in the "*Crushed*" dream where the dreamer saw and experienced a strong part of herself digging the part of her that had given up out of the rubble.

Surprise

As noted earlier, Pavlovian research (Rescorla & Wagner,1972) has shown the learning comes at a moment of surprise. Surprise is a form of guidance but comes with an emotional charge, an experience of suddenly becoming aware that something is not quite what you thought it was – something unexpected by the *dream-self*. As discussed earlier the moment of surprise is a moment of learning. It adds an emotional charge to the event, which influences the memory process. It is the moment of connection, insight and *compensation*. Surprise captures the attention of the *dream-self* and pictures the misconception in a new context in an attempt to correct it.

In the "*Ice Cave*" dream the surprise was also a form of guidance that came with the lighted door suddenly appearing. In the "*Latin Priest*" dream it was seeing the priest with the gun threatening the dreamer with death if he returned to the plane. In the "*Father's Face*" dream the surprise (and juxtaposed *compensating* view) was presented in the odd imagery combination of her father's face on her husband's body. In the "*Rusty Car*" dream the surprise combined with the reinforcement when the man and car came to life.

Humor can also be a form of surprise where an opposing view to that expected is revealed and the *ego* or dream accepts it in a burst of laughter. It can appear as an actual joke created within the dream story, a silly or unexpected way of portraying yourself or another in the dream, or a silly mixture of imagery. Such was the case of the '*Willy Pissedoff*' dream.

In order to observe the clue of surprise, review your dream and ask yourself – was there a moment of surprise in the dream? It may have been: an action or situation opposite to expectations; an unexpected twist in the dream plot; a sudden discovery or insight; or an odd blend of imagery. To relate it to waking life verbally express how it differed from your expectation or provide a different point of view within dream? Then relate that difference in expectation or view as an analogy to your waking life situation.

Acceptance and/or Reversal

Acceptance is when the *dream-self* is challenged with the guidance or *compensating* event – the direction the dream seems to want the *dream-self* to take – finally accepts it and acts accordingly. Reversal is that acceptance and reversal of viewpoint, or change in behavior of the *dream-self*.

Reversal can be a change of viewpoint, belief or "position" such as the *dream-self* finally giving in and reluctantly "shaking the driver" as in the "*Rusty Car*" dream or finally walking out the door, instead of feeling the need to stay in the boat, in the "*Ice Cave*" dream. It can be a reversal in decision such as in the "warm fuzzy puppy" or "cleaning the toilet" dream in Chapter 7. It can also be a literal reversal or altering the path or direction of the *dream-self*, or something representing the dreamer's *ego*. In the "*Truth Lies Within*" dream, once the *wise old man* pointed toward the wooden spiral into the earth, the dreamer altered his the direction of his walking, which had been in a south to north direction, and turned right to follow the spiral into the earth.

If you observe an acceptance reversal in your dream define it in terms of a change in viewpoint – what was the belief/view/position of the *dream-self* before the reversal or acceptance – and what was it afterwards? Relate that as an analogy to your waking life views or beliefs. Determine what in the dream brought about the acceptance and reversal? Relate that as an analogy to what you might do in your waking life to bring about a change.

Positive Ending or Emotional Reinforcement

As noted above the dream may conclude as unresolved, or perhaps with a negative or positive reinforcement depending on the actions of the *dream-self*. Positive reinforcement, when the dream ends with an emotionally rewarding ending, is often accompanied by beautiful nature imagery of growth, rebirth and renewal, or with color, light and music. Such was the case in the "*Rusty Car*" and "*Ice Cave*" dreams. At times the scenario itself is reinforced without the *dream-self* having taken action, as in the "*Crushed*" dream where the outcome was simply insight for the dreamer that they had the strength within themselves to pull themselves out of their situation and go on.

Note that most dreams do not end positively or simply don't conclude, often ending in frustration, but not necessarily a specific negatively reinforcing event. That is common and may simply reflect our unresolved

life's journey at the moment. The most we might do after working such a dream is to ask what the dream-*ego* was doing or attempting to do that simply isn't working. Nightmares are an extreme case of negative dreams but come from a multitude of causes – often extreme stress or trauma – and do not necessarily reflect the orderly compensatory process discussed here. Negative reinforcement (as discussed here) is more of a warning dream, as specific and clear warning event at the end, that comoes when the *dream-self* (and thus waking *ego*) is engaged in something requiring correction. As Jung stated *compensating* for deficiencies in our personality to bring our awareness back to reality "warning of the dangers of our present course." Such was the case of the "*Evil Entity*" dream warning the dreamer to *"stop, you are only making it worse."*

As yourself, did the dream end positively or with a potentially positive direction to it? If so what specifically happened that brought it about? Relate that analogously to something you can do in your waking life to help bring about a resolution. If the dream ended negatively or with a warning, ask what your *dream-self* was doing that appeared counterproductive.

Finishing the Dream

Note that because the above clues appear as metaphor, it is often difficult to understand fully what the dream is trying to do. Even if the clue is clearly present, its metaphoric relationship to waking life may be non-obvious. The dream may also end badly or contain no closure or concluding direction. When faced with this situation, the dream can still be used as a platform to create a possible new metaphor for closure. You can use a form of what Jung called *Active Imagination* or dream reentry and spontaneous visualization to complete the dream. It is also in some ways a simple form of imagery rehearsal treatment (IRT) (Krakow & Zadra., 2006), which is often used in working with nightmare sufferers.

The dreamer is asked to reenter the dream at the end. Once there, they are to review how they got there, what they were trying to achieve or desire at this point, and what they are feeling at that moment – then dwell on the feelings for a moment. Then spontaneously, without thinking about it, just letting the images flow, they finish the dream with an ending that works out positively for them (and generally for everyone in the dream). What typically occurs is an ending that is again a metaphor that must be related as an analogy in the context of the waking life situation. In my experience this new ending is often relatively understandable and provides a useful and fun way to find closure.

Action and Closure

One of the most important steps in dreamwork is to use the insight gained to help you make better decisions about how to manage or move forward with the situation the dream was dealing with – using the depth and breadth of your *unconscious* wisdom to help you in ways that the cognitive rational mind has not been able to. This involves creating a tangible solution statement from the metaphoric guidance and insight from the dream that might be analogous to a workable solution in waking life. Then, because at that point the analogy becomes a cognitive creation it must be checked out as to whether it is healthy and practical before putting it in place.

Defining the Solution

Sometimes the analogies are apparent but sometimes not. Because the apparent dream guidance or resolution, as well as your imagined ending to the dream, speak in metaphor, they have to be translated into analogies that do relate to your life. The metaphors often logically relate to the dream story but maybe not directly address your life story. Treat them just as you would a new dream segment, using the association,

role-play and color tools to understand what the *elements* relate to if need be. The translated metaphor must then be defined as a specific solution in waking life terms.

Checking it Out

As you are working with metaphors, it is easy for the cognitive mind and *ego* biases, to influence and misinterpret the resolution the dream was attempting. Also, the dream or dream segment may not be focused on overall resolution, most often they tend to deal with one aspect of your situation (perhaps one memory or a contributing belief) so it may be inappropriate and unhealthy to try to force out a solution that applies to your entire situation. So, before proceeding with something that could create a further problem, you **MUST** check the proposed solution out.

Ask yourself if the solution is: practical (you can actually do it); appropriate; healthy (improves your life); and doesn't get you stuck in another conflicted situation. If it checks out positively then it is likely worth trying out. If it checks out as an unhealthy or inappropriate solution, then **do not proceed** with it. You might re-examine the metaphors again – and see if they point to a more appropriate ending. Go no further if any solution you come up with does not work out in all of these tests.

Next Steps

The most important part of transformative insight is acting on it and experiencing it. Insight along is not sufficient. To actualize a solution, it must be put into practice or it may simply fade. The first step in this process is to envision the specific "next step(s) " you can take to bring the solution about. Think back and imagine being in the situation again, and this time define at least the first step you can take to bring the solution about or how you would do it differently this time. Turn that into specific written "next steps" that you can actually try out. It is taking that first step that will make the difference.

Reminder Image

Another fun and effective exercise, that helps to maintain the solution in waking life, is to bring a "remember image" out of the dream or dreamwork that reminds you of the solution each time you encounter a similar situation again. It might be the first image that comes to mind that brought about the solutioin in the dream or an image of the solution or what brought it about from the Active Imagination exercise.

Dream Example
("Wiping Away the Paint" continued from Chapter 8 and 9)

Recap from chapter 9, step #6:
"I am trying to avoid thinking about my move – it seems to be a wonderful opportunity since I may eventually own the company, but for some reason it terrifies me. I want to be handy but feel my career is in somebody else's hands. I dislike being 'thrown out after the job is done' as I was on my last two jobs. I want to succeed, achieve and feel needed and used by taking on this new job - but – I also need a relationship free from contention in which I can trust and be trusted [Red and Blue]. *I fear that I might mess up again and get thrown out but will now have left my friends and family, sold my home, and be clear across country. So, I have up to this point remained emotionally uncommitted, non-involved, and shielded from the situation* [Gray]. *I do not want to make a decision that will require my emotional involvement'."*

Part #3: Action - Dream Guidance and Resolution

Step 7 – Dream Guidance

7a) Re-orienting: Did the dream metaphorically picture the waking life problem the dream is dealing with? Did it introduce a solution scenario (an opposing or compensating one), guidance, a surprise, insight or discovery? Was there any archetypal organizing imagery present? How did the dream end?

ANS: The only thing that related to my life is that I did paint the outside walls to my house gray. The moment of surprise or opposition was when Jane entered and painted over my walls and I tried to wipe off the paint. The dream ended with me trying to rub the paint off with a rag and I wake screaming." [Note: although quite obscure, the dream did metaphorically picture her situation of having constructed "gray" emotional barriers to isolate and protect her from the conflict. The dream then introduces a solution scenario in the form of a surprise and opposing event – the entry of her friend Jane (representing every time she thinks about just "going with the flow") which unfortunately exposes the conflict that has to be addressed (red vs. blue) and overwhelms her protective barrier (gray walls)].

7b -Guidance Did you experience a guiding event (guiding figure, activity, written/verbal message) or alternative/opposing solution, approach or viewpoint (discovery, insight)? In what ways was it trying to alter your actions or thinking in the dream?

ANS: 'There was no obvious guidance."

7c - Surprise
Did something surprise you in the dream (action/situation opposite to expectations; unexpected twist; sudden discovery or insight; odd imagery blend)? How did it differ from expectation, provide a different point of view? How did you respond?

ANS: Yes. I was surprised that it was Jane painting my walls. She is my friend and would never do something to hurt me.

7d - Acceptance or Reversal: Did your dream-self (or something representing you or your viewpoint) at some point accept the apparent guidance or reverse its thinking, viewpoint or action in the dream? What brought this about?

ANS: "No, I tried to wipe the red and blue paint off.

7e - Positive Ending? Did the dream end positively or with a potentially positive direction to it? If so, describe that ending and what specific action or sequence of events brought it about. Alternatively, did it end negatively and if so what brought that about and was there guidance such as a warning?

ANS: It ended negatively with me waking screaming. I was trying the wipe off the paint but there was no guidance or warning given.

7f - Compare to Life: Can you see any analogies between how the implied solution (change in viewpoint, attitude or direction) in the dream might be helpful as a solution to the situation in your waking life?

ANS: The moment of surprise is when Jane enters and paints my walls. Perhaps the Jane part of me

(that wants to "go with the flow" and leave) is doing something I don't like – when I want to leave it reveals my terrifying conflict (the Red/Blue conflict - a desire to succeed vs. the fear of getting thrown out again). I want to wipe away that fear and back to Gray (covering up my emotion and avoiding the decision).

Next: If there was a resolution Go to Step #9; if not try Step #8, Active Imagination below.

Step 8 Finish the Dream (Active Imagination)

When the dream does not conclude or when Step 7 doesn't result in clear guidance or the answers are not easily understood, the dream can still be used as a platform to help guide our thinking in how best to move forward.

8a - *Active Imagination:* Close your eyes; take a deep breath and place yourself back at the end of the dream. Review what you were trying to do in the dream and specifically what happened that brought you to this point. Think about what you are feeling at this point. Now without thinking about it, just let the images flow; imagine finishing the dream from that point with a new ending that works out for you and those you are involved with in the dream.

ANS: "I let my Jane finish painting the room Blue and Red...it looks GREAT!"

Note: the dreamer went so deeply into envisioning the ending she surprised herself with her enthusiastic answer.

8b - *Compare to Life:* Can you see an analogy to a solution in your waking life situation, conflict, attitudes or beliefs?

ANS: Yes, the sense is that if I do as Jane does it will be great, so 'go with the flow'.

Note: I asked if this might also something to do as well with the *integration* of red and blue, *I seek harmony and cooperation with associates for our mutual benefit* – as a focus for her solution.

Step #9 – Action: Resolution and Next Steps

Once the dreamer can relate the insight from Steps 8 and 9 to their waking life situation, the Action step is recommended. To do so the insight, which the dream presents as metaphor, must be defined as a concrete solution. It must then be checked to make sure the metaphor was not interpreted in a manner that will leave the dreamer stuck again. Think through it to make sure it is healthy, practical, and appropriate. If not best to rethink the assumption or stop there. If it checks out, then the first step(s) toward putting it into action should be determined. Picking a solution-related image from the dream can also help as a reminder if the dreamer gets stuck in a similar situation in the future.

9a - *Define an Apparent Solution:* Based on the insight from the exercises in steps 7 and 8 define what you learned in terms of a specific solution that will allow you to move ahead in your waking life situation.

ANS: Rather than fighting the conflict, I face my fears and (as Jane would) go with what is happening! But (based on the integrated color work) with a focus on attempting to maintain a cooperative harmony in my relation to my boss and co-workers. [Note: although there was no obvious solution

apparent within the dream, there had been a hint in the color work in step #5 when we explored the dual color table 9-8 for an integrated blue and red. The statement that resonated was: "*Seek harmony and cooperation with associates for our mutual benefit.*" This provides a potential approach or mind-set to embracing the conflict and finding a resolution going forth?]

9b - *Check it out:* Is it a healthy, practical, appropriate resolution that allows you to progress in a positive direction - or - does it go too far to be achievable or perhaps leave you stuck again?

ANS: "Yes, it is a helpful solution that allows me to move forward."

9c - *Next steps:* If the solution checks out positively, then what specific next step(s) can you take to bring it about? Imagine the next time you might be in that situation again and define specifically what you would now do.

ANS: "I can put my house on the market and leave for my new job."

9d - *Token reminder image:* It is often helpful to pick an image from the positive dream ending as a reminder of your solution, in the event you find yourself confronted with a similar situation in the future.

ANS: "Jane (who goes with the flow)"

Follow-up note: after the session the dreamer put her house on the market, packed and, with the help of her friends (Jane included), moved to her new job.

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CHAPTER 11
DREAMWORK – GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL

Dreams are no longer the exclusive province of the shaman, the priest, or the psycho-analyst. Dreamtime and its products properly belong to the dreamer – S. Krippner

D**reamwork**, or working with your dreams, can take on many forms. Many popular approaches aim at simply understanding the "meaning" of a dream in relation to some situation in your waking life. Other approaches focus on experiencing the dream in various ways without the need for interpretation, including: dance, body work, artistic expression, drawing the dream, or journaling. Integrated approaches, as well as those aimed at therapy, use the dream to explore waking life situation and conflicts, and underlying emotional issues, that the dream is dealing with – then use the insight gained, to help work through the dreamer's situation and/or conflicts that have left them stuck.

In this chapter I discuss both Individual and Group dreamwork in general and provide sample approaches for each. The first approach (for Individual dreamwork – working on your own dreams or that of another person) is the *Transformative Dreamwork* approach. It is the featured approach in this book and combines Jungian and Gestalt methods along with color work in a 3-part process of exploration, insight and action. It is summarized as a guide in the first pages of this book and developed in detail in Chapters 8, 9 and 10. In this chapter the protocol is divided into action modules (highlighted by borders) so that modules might be used separately or as one protocol – as appropriate to the work being done.

The Effectiveness of Dreamwork

Various studies, cited in Chapter 1, have found dreamwork to be helpful for gaining insight in both professional and non-professional dreamworking activity. We learned that when therapists who used dreamwork were asked "Has working on dreams contributed to therapy success?" they found 88.7% answered positively with 61% much to very much (Schredl, 2000). A comparable study by Fox in 2001 resulted in about 90% reporting dreamwork to be slightly effective to very effective. A study by Malinowski and Pinto (2017) found that exploration-insight scores to be higher for session with dream discussion than sessions with only event discussion.

In Chapter 1, I also described the *Cognitive-Experiential Model* (CEM) as therapeutic dreamworking approach that perhaps has had more research conducted on it than any other. A feature that makes it effective is that it is an integration of various approaches (behavioral, client-centered, Gestalt, Jungian, phenomenological, and psychoanalytic) and goes beyond simply understanding dream meaning to working with the dream in 3 important stages: ***exploration, insight*** and ***action.*** In 12 studies by Clara Hill of clients who rated the quality of a particular Cognitive-Experiential Model (CEM) the clients rated their sessions significantly higher than data published for regular therapy sessions. This integration of Jungian, Gestalt and other methods, within a structure of *exploration, insight* and *action*, is the model followed by the *Transformational Dreamworking* approach I feature in this book.

The effect of dreamwork can depend on the approach being used. A therapeutic model with an action stage, such as that of CEM for example, is designed to help individuals make adaptive changes to their lives, whereas Montague Ullman's 'Method' (also below) or "dream appreciation" model, although found to be highly effective for gaining insight, is designed primarily to make insightful connections between waking experience and dream. Therefore, one can expect contrasting outcomes depending on the approach used. Some of the research demonstrated that a model with an action stage (such as CEM or the Transformative Dreamwork model in this book), might offer more insights relating to future action, intentions and solutions, than say a purely insight-oriented model. For example, Edwards (2013) found Ullman 'Method' scores for exploration-insight to be were very high (mean of 8.17 our of 10) but action gains to be much lower (mean of 5.78 out of 10).

Ethical Dreamwork Practices

It is always best to approach dreamwork in a way that honors the dream and the dreamer. This means that the dreamer is considered the ultimate authority regarding what the dream means to them. It requires that the group, dream worker, or therapist avoid imposing his or her own personal projections or connections with the dream in a manner that implies that those projections are the only true meaning of the dream.

I refer all readers to the ethics statement from the International Association for the Study of Dreams (IASD), as an excellent guide to proper dreamwork. Refer to **www.asdreams.org** for the complete statement. It states in part: *IASD celebrates the many benefits of dreamwork yet recognizes that there are potential risks. IASD supports an approach to dreamwork and dream sharing that respects the dreamer's dignity and integrity, and which recognizes the dreamer as the decision-maker regarding the significance of the dream. Systems of dreamwork that assign authority or knowledge of the dream's meanings to someone other than the dreamer can be misleading, incorrect, and harmful. Ethical dreamwork helps the dreamer work with his/her own dream images, feelings, and associations, and guides the dreamer to more fully experience, appreciate, and understand the dream. Every dream may have multiple meanings, and different techniques may be reasonably employed to touch these multiple layers of significance.*

In order to honor the dream and the dreamer, avoid approaches which imply that someone in authority has the ability to fully understand and analyze the dream for the dreamer. Skilled practitioners and experienced dream workers may, indeed, have a greater understanding of dreams and dreamwork than the dreamer, but the practitioner should never treat the dream as if they understand its meaning for the dreamer. As you learned from the exercise with the image of the door in prior Chapters, images contain personal associations that differ for each of us, and thus only the dreamer holds the key to the correct associations or meaning within a dream or dream image.

Individual vs. Group Dreamwork

Individual dreamwork or work with your own dreams and/or the dreams of another individual other individuals is different in many ways to **Group Dreamwork** where the dream is discussed and worked in a group, the group providing support to the dreamer and ideas about possible metaphors and connections the members see in the dream. One principle is the same however, the associations and eventual "meaning" must all come from the dreamer.

Individual

Individual dreamwork is focused on understanding and work with your own dreams or helping another understand and work with theirs. A number of the personal dreamwork tools can be effectively used for

Group Dreamwork as well – assuming protocols are followed to ensure a safe, minimally intrusive environment. Some Individual Dreamwork approaches are totally unique; some are created based on ideas from some of the historical contributors to dream psychology; and some integrate multiple approaches into one consolidated protocol - *Transformative Dreamwork* is one such integrated protocol.

The Cognitive Experiential Model (CEM) mentioned above is one that contains the three important stages which end in closure or action: (1) *exploration*, helping the dreamer explore several individual images and associations with the dreamer's life; (2) *insight,* gaining insight into the whole dream and the dreamer's underlying emotional issues in relation to their life; (3) *action,* deciding about making changes in waking life based on the exploration and insight.

In this approach, the therapist or dreamworker is only an expert in the <u>process</u> (i.e., he or she knows how to apply the steps of the model), but he or she is not an expert in the personal "meaning" of the dream. Rather, it is the dreamer who arrives at the "meaning" of the dream based on the insight gained from the exploration, and makes the decisions about action, with the support, encouragement, and collaboration of the therapist or dreamworker. Dream dictionaries or standard interpretations are not used. The goal is to teach the dreamer a method for working with their dreams.

I developed *Transformative Dreamwork* as an approach which contains those three basic stages *exploration, emotional insight* and *action* or closure. It is designed to work with the dream as the dreaming brain appears to do. It acknowledges that the dream is not only detecting and presenting our unfinished business in its own metaphoric language, but that the dream can be problem-solving (restorative, adaptive or transformative). The dream may be dealing with the underlying emotional issues by simulating solutions and learning. The protocol contains the Jungian *objective* and *subjective* approaches to dreamwork: *amplification* to explore the dreamer's own associations; *archetypal* work to explore the *unconscious* guidance an *transformative* processes taking place; *active imagination* to continue an unresolved dream; as well as "translating" the dream language by inserting the associations back into the dream narrative and re-reading it. It also contains a simplified scripted version of Perl's Gestalt *role-play* as well as a research-based Color Questionnaire. The full protocol will be discussed in detail in the "Individual Dreamwork" section of this chapter, after Group Dreamwork.

Group

In Group Dreamwork is much of the benefit comes from the social interaction with the group and sharing of the multitude of group-member personal insights on metaphors they see within the dream story and connections between various associations the dreamer made between the dream and their life. The group process is often based on what Monte Ullman called "The Method" (which will be described later). The group process generally uses a process called *projection* where each member of the group takes the dream on **as if it is their own dream** and projects their own associations on it as if it was about their own life – the dreamer listens and may gain insight about their dream from observing the projections. But this has to be done with great care since the danger of *projective* work comes when group members (rather than using the dream to relate to their own life) attempt to "interpret" the dream for the dreamer, based on their own *projected* stuff. Monte build a lot of safety factors into the "Method" which must be adhered to and managed by a group leader trained in the process so as not to drift into intrusive and unethical areas.

Individual one-on-one dreamwork can fall into the same dangerous ground if the dream leader or practitioner projects their own stuff onto the dream as an "interpretation". In any case avoid *projecting* your own stuff on a dream as an "interpretation" but simply ask questions that will guide the dreamer toward their own insight. The associations and insights should come from the dreamer – only the dreamer can validate the personal meaning of the dream for themselves.

INDIVIDUAL DREAMWORK
The *Transformative Dreamwork* Protocol

The *Transformative Dreamwork* procedure is placed at the front of this book for easy access. It is also the dreamworking approach introduced with its underpinnings and an ongoing example in Chapters 7 through 10.   Worksheets can also be downloaded from my website at <u>www.dreamscience.org</u>. The full *Transformative Dreamwork* procedure is designed around the learning structure from Chapter 5 (*encounter, scenario introduction, testing & mediation*, and *emotional reinforcement*) that focusses on dreams of a problem-solving nature; *restorative, adaptive* and *transformative.* These are dreams that attempt to move the dreamer from where they are mentally and emotionally, to a new state or viewpoint by resolving the issues that have the dreamer stuck.

As Chapter 2 illustrated, not all dreams are of an emotional problem-solving nature although most will provide insight by, at a minimum, picturing the dreamer's' situation metaphorically. Therefore, I have divided the *Transformative Dreamwork* protocol into "modules" (borders containing a specific step) so that you ca use the steps in any order that is most applicable to the dream, following where the dream takes you. No need to use the entire procedure on any one dream if it does not fit - omit some and use others as the dream requires. The protocol contains three stages – *Exploration, Insight* and *Action* illustrated in figure 11-1. The primary guidance is to at least explore all 3 phases (including Parts # 3) that fit the dream and not to jump to conclusions too early in Part #1. The common mistake is thinking that the dreamwork is complete after an "aha" which generally only makes a dream to life connection. At that point the dreamwork has only begun – the dream itself is working at a much deeper level and has so much more to offer.

Figure 11-1
Transformative Dreamwork

Part #1
Exploration - the Dream Story
- Step 1 – Record the Dream
- Step 2 – Record the Life Situation
- Step 3 – Dream to Life Associations

Part #2
Insight - Explore Underlying Emotions
- Step 4 – Role-Play
- Step 5 – Color Questionnaire
- Step 6 – Re-writing the Dream Story

Waking Life
Next Steps and Actualization

Part #3
Action - Dream Guidance & Closure
- Step 7 – Dream Guidance
- Step 8 – Active Imagination
- Step 9 – Resolution & Next Steps

- *Part #1 – Exploration - Association and Metaphor:* This phase begins with recording the **dream**, and what is happening in your **life** at the time that is emotionally important. The dream story is then explored using several tools to reveal how the dream story relates to your life story. These tools explore the picture-metaphor, associations and memories represented in the dream imagery. Understanding the dream at this level generally only reveals what life situation the dream is dealing with but not how the dreamer might deal with it – there is much more dreamwork to pursue – so don't stop here.

- *Part #2 – Insight - Underlying Emotions:* This phase uses two Image Activation approaches for revealing the emotional content within a dream *element* or image. A scripted *role-play* technique (introduced in Chapter 8), and the Color Questionnaire (introduced in Chapter 9).

- *Part#3 – Action - Dream Guidance and Resolution*: This phase explores how the dream (and the *unconscious*) it attempting to resolve the situation and how the dreamer might apply that insight as waking life action. The dream structure is reviewed and four clues to revealing the guidance in the dream are explored. The resultant insight is tested and turned into action steps.

Below is a detailed description and guidelines for using the protocol – the same one as the *Transformative Dreamwork* guide posted at the very beginning of the book and which was developed in Chapters 8 through 10. The text boxes, which are extracts from that guide, are followed by hints and tips for using the steps in the protocol. Feel free to copy the guide from the front of the book or download it from www.dreamscience.org for your use.

Part #1
Exploration - Association and Metaphor

Steps #1 & 2 - Record the Dream Story and Life Story

How you tell the dream and record it are important for effective dreamwork. It is important to not only record the dream properly, but to also record the emotional situations happening in your life at the time while it is still fresh. This is very important, particularly if you are keeping a journal, to record both so that you can look for dream patterns that relate to waking life patterns.

Steps #1 Recording the Dream

1a) Recall the Dream by closing your eyes before writing anything down, going back into the dream and trying to capture as much of it as you can before writing it down or recording it.

1b) Record it as if you are Reexperiencing it: it in the first person as if you are re-experiencing it (using "I am.." or "I see.." or "I feel.."). Keep any slips-of-the-tongue and spelling or phrasing mistakes – they might be important metaphors. Consider all the *Elements*: dream figures, objects, emotions, color, other descriptors etc.

1c) Separate the Segments: Look at scene shifts as separate segments each dealing with the same issue but from a different perspective, bringing in new associations or memories and introducing different resolution scenarios, perhaps learning something from the segment before. Worked on them later as separate but associated dreams.

1d) Give it a Title and Date it – an imaginative one that captures its essence, just a few words.

1e) Sketch the Dream – as if looking at a map from above. Optional but permits you to see relationships between dream figures and patterns and directions that provide important clues as to *archetypal* processes taking place. Sketch any odd imagery or imagery combinations.

Step#2 Record what is Happening in your Life at the Time:

Emotional situations the day before which created some emotional discomfort/annoyance, or that you did not want to deal with at the time; also any positive emotionally impactful events.

Step #3 – Dream to Life Comparisons

The next step is to explore your personal associations with the various *elements* and imagery in the dream in order to relate the dream story to your waking life story. Although some persons or events from waking life may appear in the dream, the actual event that stimulated the dream rarely appears as it was experienced in waking life (as discussed in Chapter 3). Instead the dream captures and pictures the emotional impact or personal "meaning" of the waking life event in relation to your past experiences and inner model or self and reality – "the unconscious aspect of the conscious event" as Jung put it.

Step #3 - Dream to Life Comparison

3a Dream Orientation: At the onset does the dream *metaphorically* picture some emotional situation in your waking life? Does it symbolically picture (figuratively or *archetypally*) the thing that is to be dealt with in order to resolve that situation (*Shadow* issue; past event, trauma, associated factor or aspect). Does the dream then introduce an impactful or guiding event or resolution, that alters the view or actions of your dream-self?

3b Metaphors in the Dream Story - Look for phrases, word-play and action themes in the dream story that sound like they also might describe something going on in your life at the time. Look for the initial scene of the dream to metaphorically picture an emotional situation in your life at the time.

3c Associations and Memories:

- **Define the Dream *Elements* and their Purpose or Function:** what it is and what it does (as if you were explaining what the dream *element* is to someone who never heard of it before).

- **Define Personality Characteristics of Known Persons:** Dreams borrow persons you know to represent personality characteristics. It may be a characteristic you are displaying or more often one you need to help you through the situation. Define "how are they like you and in what ways are they unlike you" and ask "how would they approach that situation the dream is dealing with differently than you have?" The dream may have introduced that personality as a possible resolution to test in the situation it is dealing with.

- **Similar Themes (dream to life)**: Are any of the actions or feelings or the general theme of what you are doing in the dream similar to what you are doing and feeling in waking life.

- **Memories:** Do any feelings, setting, or *elements* recall something from your past? Recall one specific past event that comes to mind? Relate to your present situation.

3d Rewrite the Dream Story and Relate to Your Life Story: Place the above associations into the dream narrative (in the margins perhaps) and read the new story. How it might relate in various ways to the events in your waking life?

Part #2
Insight – Exploring Underlying Emotion

This section contains a procedural summary of the two approaches for exploring the underlying emotions pictured by the dream imagery: 1) *role-play*; 2) and color work. As the primary approach to working with dreams, I recommend applying both *role-play* with color work to one or more key dream *elements.*

Step #4 – Role-Play (6 "Magic" Questions)

One of the most effective approaches to exploring the underlying emotional issues, conflicts and motivations, that the dream is dealing with, is to "give the dream a voice." This is a scripted *role-play* approach derived from Gestalt Therapy and developed previously in Chapter 8. My students lovingly termed it the "6 magic questions" since it seems to rapidly reveal underlying unexpressed emotions or emotional conflicts that are at the core of the situation the dream is dealing with.

Each *element* in the dream is a meaningful creation associated in some way with your life. You can choose to work on many, or just one or two which may be all you need to reveal the underlying emotional feelings or conflict the dream is dealing with.

- **Let the Image Come to You:** The best approach is to select images that curiously draw your attention. Work with as many as you wish to understand, but often just one may be all you need to reveal the underlying emotional conflict the dream is dealing with. Ernest Hartmann called it Central of Contextualizing image which contains the emotional state of the dreamer. Re-enter the dream at perhaps the most emotional scene and look around the dream scene. Of all the thing in that scene look for the image that seems to curiously draw your attention. It could but doesn't have to be the imposing image, and sometimes the little inorganic ones in the background can contain the most information (as the "sweet potato" did in the example in Chapter 8, and figure 8-1). Perl's indicated that the more alienated *fragments* of the personality might appear as the least human imagery.

- **Archetypes**: *Archetypes* can appear as unknown dream figures, or as nature *elements*. Because they originate in the *unconscious*, attempting to *role-play* them might not reveal something you are consciously aware of, but can often result in a deep emotional experience or statements that simply define the essence of the *archetype*. Some archetypes (such as a pair of equal images, or something in the center of a circle) can point to the issue at the center of a conflict needing attention.

- **Collective Clues:** Recognizing collective patterns can provide clues to images that contain important information for example: twin images or pairs might identify conflict, the active or missing *element* in a group of four; or something in the middle of a circle may be a focus on the matter that needs resolution. Refer to Chapters 6 and 7 for more details.

Step #4 - Role-Play (6 "Magic" Questions)

4a Pick a Dream Image or *element* that curiously draw your attention. To do this re-enter the dream at perhaps the most emotional part and look around the dream scene and pick an image (inanimate or animate thing or figure) that draws you to it – it doesn't have to be the dominant image. You might pick a few and work on each one of them using this scripted *role-play* procedure.

4b Give the Image a Voice (the 6 "magic" questions): Close your eyes, go back into the dream and bring the dream image or figure into view. Now take 3 deep breaths and with each breath move into and "become" the image. Feel what it feels like in that role. Then speak as if you are the image in the first person, present tense, answering these 6 to 7 questions (best if someone asks and records the answers so you can stay in character):

1a) Who or **what are you**, and how do you feel in that role: "I am_____"
1b) Alternatively, if the dream image is a person you know from waking life, then become that person and state:
  * "my most notable characteristics are_____"
  * "The ways I am most like the dreamer are____"
  * "The ways I am different than the dreamer are_____"
2) As the image, what is your **purpose or function**: My purpose is to_____"
3) What do you **like** about what you are and what you do? "I like_____"
4) What do you **dislike** about what you are and what you do? "I dislike____"
5) As the image, what do you **fear** the most, what is the worst thing that can happen to you? "I fear _____".
6) As the image what do you **desire the** most? "What I desire most is to_____"
7) Dialog (optional): Spot the dreamer in the dream think about what you need and/or what they are doing, what would you tell them (first thing that comes to mind)?

4c Relate these Statements to Waking Life: Read the statements back to yourself – but this time not as if they are that dream image speaking but now as if they are you saying them about a situation or way you feel in your life. Do any of the statements describe a situation or feeling in your waking life? Focus on one specific situation when you felt that way and define your feelings at the time. Then review the above statements:
  * Do the **"I am"** and **"My purpose"** statements sound like a role you feel you are playing in waking life?
  * Do the **"I like"** versus **"I dislike"** statements sound similar to conflicting feelings, or an argument going on inside you, regarding a waking life situation?
  * Do the **"I fear"** and **"I desire"** statements sound like fears and desires you have regarding that situation, perhaps fears and desires that feed the conflict?
  * Does the statement from the **dialog** sound like it might be practical guidance?

If the dream figure is a **known person,** focus on their personality characteristics and ask yourself, "Am I acting in some way like this person?" or better yet "How would they approach the situation I am dealing with?" (this may be an approach the dream is testing). If the person is acting abnormally or opposite to what they would in waking life, they could be representing a surprise or *compensating* element to be explored (seeing that personality characteristic from a different perspective).

Step #5 – Exploring Emotion in Dream Color

If the dream image you are working on contains color, or if the dream has some key colors that seem important, then use the instructions below in conjunction with the tables 9-7 and 9-8. The color tables list common human subliminal associations between color and emotion (based on research and color psychology literature).

The statements in those tables are not the "meaning" of color but rather are intended to trigger your own emotional associations between the dream and your waking life feelings. In lieu of the tables, you can use association by asking yourself what feelings surface when you imagine yourself illuminated with the color. However, the tables will likely trigger some surprisingly deeper associations. Once the color-based emotional connections are made, compare them with the imagery work above to understand the complete content of a colored dream image.

Step #5 – Color Questionnaire

1) Select the colored dream images to work on: the image you have been working with, or those colors you feel most drawn to or that stand out. It is best to work with something that is not a commonly colored object (like green grass), unless it stands out. Work with a colored image on which the color is optional (such as a red hat, a blue car, an orange dress). Also look for color pairing which might represent a conflict between emotions. Look for a grouping of the 4 primary colors - red, yellow, blue and green (if one color seems to be most active in the group of 4 or is obviously missing from the group, work on that color).

2) Pick the color or color combinations in the tables that best match. **Single Color:** use table 9-7 to select the closest matching color or use table 9-8 if it is a color mixture. (ex: blue-green). **Color Pair:** Explore the possibility that the two colors might represent conflicting emotions by using table 9-7 on each color separately or table 9-8 for the pair - or - explore the possibility that the pairing/integration in table 9-8 might represent a path to or state of resolution (first match the dominant hue with the row, then the secondary color with the column).

3) Read each statement as a question (or better yet have someone else read them while you listen) **asking yourself:** "Does this statement relate to a way I have felt recently or describe a situation in my waking life?" For color pairs, read both colors using 9-7 and 9-8 to explore whether the two colors might represent two conflicted emotions or try table 9-8 to explore statements that might represent a possible resolution scenario (integration of colors or conflicted emotions).

4) Relate to Waking Life: Pick the one or two statement(s) that create the strongest "aha" response or "connection," that best relate to a waking life situation or conflict. Describe the situation, and the feelings at the time, in your own words. How does the color work add to your understanding of the dream as well as to your self-understanding?

Step #6 – Situation Summary

At this point you should have: explored the personal content within the dream imagery/*element*s; mae various connections between the dream and your waking life situation; and will have identified some of the emotional issues or conflicts involved. The next phase of the dreamwork will be to determine how the dream was attempting to resolve the situation that stimulated the dream (those emotional issues and conflicts) so that you can use that insight and guidance to help you move forward. In order to understand how the dream is trying to solve a problem, the nature of the problem needs to be defined or summarized from what was revealed in the first two parts of the procedure. Some hints for doing so:

Step #6 - Summarize – Reflecting on the Insight

Before looking for how the dream is attempting to find a resolution (in Part#3), it is helpful to summarize or define more specifically what the problem or inner conflict is based on the insight that you may have received from the above work. Some hints below you might try:

- *Finish Re-writing the dream story*: If it helps again modify the dream story by inserting the role-play and color information from Part 2 into the dream story in a way that further aligns it with your life story.

- *Try Creating a Core Conflict Statement*: A number of emotional conflicts may have been revealed Part #2. Identify the more impactful statements in the role-play and color exercise and try to define what appears to be the core issue in a sentence something like this: "I need or desire____because_____but if I_____then I fear_____will happen".

- *Reflect on Your Past, the Originating Decision*: It may be helpful to explore your past (traumatic event, childhood beliefs/teachings, source of a phobia, etc.) for the originating decision that created the present conflict – particularly if events and things from the past were evident in the dream. Reflect on the conflict defined above and your feelings. Go back to one specific situation earlier in life, which brings to mind similar feelings. What happened, who was involved and how did you feel? What decision did you make at the time and how does it relate to your situation today?

Part #3
Action – Dream Guidance and Resolution

At this point, you likely have a deeper understanding of how the dream story relates to your life story. You may also have become aware of some uncomfortable or painful emotions, fears and conflicts that are contributing to the situation. These are issues that you have been unable to consciously resolve – but which your *unconscious* and you dream is now dealing with. So, the next step is to understand how the dream (along with the vast wisdom and experience of the *unconscious*) is trying to resolve the situation.

A word of caution. At this point, if issues have surfaced that seem severe or highly emotionally charged and appear beyond the scope of a simple self-help technique, then it is best not to proceed. The following procedure should **not** to be considered a substitute for therapy or professional help.

Step #7 – Exploring the Dream Guidance

With the information from the prior steps in mind, again (as in Step #3a but in a bit more depth) explore the flow or structure of the dream story to understand how the dream may have been trying to resolve the problem. As noted previously not all dreams are of a problem-solving nature but those that are (either *Restorative, Adaptive* or *Transformative*) appear to roughly follow a structure that attempts to move the dreamer from where they are mentally and emotionally, to a new state by resolving the issues that have the dreamer stuck where they are. This step basically follows the problem-resolution and learning structure discussed previously but provides some simple hints to help understand what is taking place.

Step #7 - Clues to Dream Guidance and Resolution

7a) Re-orienting: Re-enter the dream and briefly mentally review the story. With the information from the prior steps in mind, explore the flow or structure of the dream story to understand whether and how the dream might be trying to resolve the problem. Did the dream metaphorically picture the waking life problem the dream is dealing with? Did it seem to introduce a solution scenario (may be an opposing or *compensating* one), a decision point, guidance, a surprise, insight or discovery? Was there any *archetypal* imagery present that pictured the *unconscious* organizing or *integrating* processes taking place (see Section 5)? Importantly, how did the dream end?

7b) Guidance: Did you experience a guiding event (guiding figure, activity, written/verbal message) or alternative/opposing solution, approach or viewpoint (discovery, insight)? Describe how it changed your behavior or thinking in the dream, before and after the event.

7c) Surprise: Did something surprise you <u>in the dream</u> (action, situation or figure in a role opposite to expectations; unexpected twist; unexpected discovery; odd imagery blend)? How did it differ from expectation, provide a different point of view, and how did you respond?

7d) Acceptance or Reversal: Did your *dream-self* (or something representing you or your viewpoint) at some point accept the apparent guidance or reverse its thinking, viewpoint or action in the dream? What brought this about?

7e) Positive Ending: Did the dream end positively or with a potentially positive direction to it? If so what specifically happened that brought it about and how might that be an analogy to a waking life solution? If it ended negatively or with a warning, what was your *dream-self* doing that appeared counterproductive?

7f) Compare to Life: Can you see any analogies between how the implied solution (change in viewpoint, attitude or direction) in the dream might be helpful as a solution to the situation in your waking life?

Next: If this was revealing, Go to Step #9 for the Action steps. If not try Step #8, Active Imagination below.

Step #8 – Active Imagination (finish the dream)

Not all dreams have an obvious resolution scenario or guiding and *compensating* "message." Most dreams don't end positively which may be an indication that the dream did not resolve the problem but only made some attempts or tested one or more scenarios. Therefore, if the explorations in step 7 are nonobvious or if the dream does not seem to conclude, it can still be used as a platform to help create a resolution metaphor to guide thinking in how best to move forward.

In order that the *unconscious* is involved as much as possible in creating the new ending it is best get into a calm state and divert the attention of the rational mind. A technique that works well is to take a few deep breaths and visualize yourself at the end of the dream. Focus on your feelings as the dream ends. Think back through the dream as to how you got to this point. Staying in touch with your feelings, what if anything are you wanting or trying to do at the end. Hold the feelings and image for a bit and now, without thinking about it, just letting the images flow, finish the dream with a new imagined ending that works out positively for you and perhaps all involved. When you create that new dream ending write it down but also describe all the details of what happened, or what you did, to bring it about. Could those actions be analogous to actions you might take in waking life to bring about a resolution?

Step #8 - Active Imagination (Finish the Dream)

8a) Review how the dream ends: Take a few deep breaths and re-enter and visualize yourself at the end of the dream and focus on your feelings at that point. Think back through the dream as to how you got to this point. Staying in touch with your feelings, what if anything are you wanting or trying to do at the end.

8b) New Ending: Continue to focus on your feeling as you visualize the ending of the dream. Now, without thinking about it, just letting the images flow, finish the dream with a new imagined ending that works out positively for you and perhaps those you are involved with in the dream.

8c) Waking Life Analogy: Once you have the new ending it is typically another metaphor as was the rest of the dream, but one hopefully related to a resolution. If there is a lot of missing detail as to how you got there, continue to let the imagery spontaneously form to fill in any specific actions or events must have occurred to bring it about. Think in general about ways that new metaphoric ending might be analogous to something that could be done in your waking life to resolve the situation or conflict the dream appears to be dealing with?

Step #9 – Action: Resolution and Next Steps

One of the most important steps in dreamwork is to use the insight gained to help you make better decisions about how to manage or move forward with the situation the dream was dealing with – using the depth and breadth of your unconscious wisdom to help you in ways that the cognitive rational mind has not been able to. This involves creating a tangible solution statement from the metaphoric guidance and insight from the dream that might be analogous to a workable solution in waking life. Sometimes the analogies are apparent but sometimes not. Because the dream resolutions (step #7), as well as your imagined ending to the dream (step #8) speak in metaphors, these metaphors may logically relate to the dream story but may not directly reflect your life story, they may have to be translated into analogous terms that do relate to your life. The tough part is setting the ego biases aside which may influence and misinterpret the resolution the dream

was attempting. Because, at that point the analogy becomes a cognitive creation it must be checked out as to whether it is healthy and practical before putting it in place.

Just as importantly, the dream or dream segment you are working on may not be focused on resolution – it may simply be an encounter dream or one that is simply dealing with testing a counter-myth or minor aspect of your overall situation. So if this final action step appears to be leading nowhere, it would be inappropriate and unhealthy to try to force out a solution. This is even more of a reason to **Check Out** any proposed solution you come up with to make sure it is healthy, appropriate, practical and doesn't leave you stuck in another situation.

Step #9 – Action: Resolution and Next steps

9a) Define an Apparent Solution: If solid resolution metaphors appear to be present in steps #7 and #8, then define (in specific terms) how they might represent a practical solution to your waking-life situation. Because these are usually metaphors, the may logically relate to the dream story but maybe not your life story - they may have to be translated as you would any dream *element*, using association, *role-play* and color tools (steps #3 to #5) to understand what the *elements* relate to. Once a general solution emerges, then define a specific solution that you can actually act on, that the dream appears to be suggesting.

9b) Check It Out: Do an appropriateness check. Is it a healthy, practical, appropriate resolution that allows you to progress in a positive direction - or - does it go too far to be achievable or perhaps leave you stuck again? If it is not healthy or appropriate, do not pursue it

9c) Next Steps: If positive, then what specific next step(s) can you take to bring it about? Imagine/picture yourself in the situation again and describe what you would do differently this time. Turn that into specific written "next steps" that you can actually try out.

9d) Reminder Image: It can be helpful to take away some simple visual reminder of the new solution in the event a similar situation is experienced in the future. From the resolved or positive ending (actual or visualized), select a "resolution" image to remind you of your new solution.

EXAMPLES

Examples for using this *Transformative Dreamwork* protocol have been provided in parts throughout the book. The "Rusty Car" dream was one that concluded with most every element in Part #3: **Guidance** (the unknown companion who states "the driver is just asleep, wake the man"); **Acceptance and Reversal** (when the dreamer accepted the guidance and shook the driver); Surprise (when the driver came back to life) and **Positive Ending** (when the car came back to life as a new car). In this case the learning occurred within the dream and the solution or action was taken by the dreamer without having reflected on the dream.

The compete protocol was included in the example of the "*Wiping Away the Paint*" dream at the ends of chapters 8, 9 and 10, working with Personal Content, Color and Guidance. This *"Birds or Bats"* example will demonstrate how one might use the protocol to work with a dream that only includes one scene and perhaps only the *encounter* stage with a minimally obvious *scenario introduction* – one that only metaphorically pictures the life situation leaving the dreamer with a focus on the problem to be resolved but no obvious guidance.

<div style="text-align: center">

"Birds or Bats"

Part #1 Exploring – Association and Metaphor

</div>

Step #1 - Record the Dream Story

- **Record the dream** as if you are re-experiencing it (use first person, present tense).
  "I am in the home I shared with my ex, looking out over trees that contain black things. My mother is there, and we are trying to decide whether they are birds or bats. I wake very upset."
- **Give it a Title:** *"Birds or Bats"*
- **Sketch** it from above and any unusual imagery
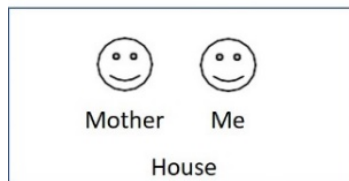
Step #2 - Life Story at the Time: Record emotional situations in your life at the time, especially things that happened the day before, maybe that you did not deal with at the time.

"My boyfriend has to go in for a medical procedure, but when I think about having to be there for him during the procedure, I grow so anxious that I plan to leave him – and may tell him today."

Step #3 - Dream to Life Comparison:

3a) Dream Orientation: At the onset does the dream metaphorically picture some emotional situation in your waking life? Does it introduce an impactful, surprising or guiding event, decision point or resolution, that alters the view or actions of your dream-self?

ANS: "No, other than in the dream and in life I felt anxious. In the dream I was at a decision point (birds or bats) and in life I am at a decision point whether to stay with my boyfriend."

3b) Metaphors in the Dream Story: phrases, word-play and action themes that sound like they also might describe feeling or something going on in your life at the time.

ANS: "None are obvious."

3c) Associations and Memories:

- **Define** the Dream *Elements* and their **Purpose or Function:**
  - *House = "house my ex and I were building together"*
  - *Birds = "can fly away anywhere they want to go"*
  - *Bats = "stay around the cave"*

- **Define Personality Characteristics of Known Persons:** "*Mother = nurturing*".

- **Similar Themes (dream to life)**: "*trying to decide something and feeling anxious*".

- **Memories: "***the terrible divorce I went through with my ex.*"

3d) *Rewrite the Dream Story*: Substitute the Associations in the Narrative

"I am in the 'place' I was before our terrible divorce, looking out over trees that contain black things. My nurturing side is there, and we are trying to decide whether to fly away or stay around." [Note: At this point it appeared to relate to anxiety over nurturing her boyfriend – to stay with him or not. The anxiety was so great she was thinking of leaving him (right after this session actually)].

Part #2 Insight – Exploring Underlying Emotion

Step #4 - Role-Play (6 "Magic" Questions)

4a) *Pick a Dream Image:* re-enter and pick an image that curiously draw your attention:

ANS: "A lone bird's nest" [Note: when she re-entered the dream she saw this as something she had not originally recorded that drew her attention, more than even the birds, bats or tree]

4b) *Give the Dream a Voice:* "Become" and speak as the dream image; record the answers.
Answer as you imagine the dream image (*bird's nest*) might, in the first-person present tense.

1) **What are you**, name and describe yourself, perhaps how you feel in that role?
   "I am a lone bird's nest, warm and enveloping."

2) As the *bird's nest*, what is your **purpose or function**?
   "My purpose is to provide a safe landing spot."

3) What do you **like** most about being the *bird's nest*?
   "I like that I am soft and warm."

4) What do you **dislike** about, or what is the downside of, being the *bird's nest*?
   "I dislike getting crapped on!"

5) As the *bird's nest* what do you **fear** most; the worst thing that can happen to you?"
   "Getting blown out of the tree!"

6) As the *bird's nest* what do you **desire** the most?
   "What I desire most is to be there and be strong when needed."

4c) *Relate to a Life Situation:*
- Do the **"I am"** or **"purpose"** statements above sound like a role you are playing?
  "Yes, I feel my purpose is to be a safe landing spot (nurturing) but I feel all alone."
- Do the **"I like vs. I dislike"** statements sound like an inner conflict?
  "I dislike getting "crapped on" when I try to be soft and warm."
- Do the **"I fear"** and **"I desire"** statements sound like waking life desires or fears?
  "I fear getting "blown out of the tree"…. as in my divorce."

  ]Note: She wanted to play a nurturing role (warm and enveloping) and "provide a safe landing spot" and "be there and be strong" for her boyfriend during his procedure. But in the past, when she put herself in that position of trying to nurture her "ex," she was "crapped on" or taken for granted and then finally "blown out of the nest" with the divorce.]

Step #5 - Explore the Emotion in Color

5a) Select the Color Imagery to work on: the color of the above image, or colors or color pairs that stand out or are unique (as opposed to the common color for that object).

> *ANS: "Black of the birds"*

5b) Pick the closest color(s) in the Questionnaire: tables 9-7 (single or pair of singles) or 9-8 (color mixtures or color pairs).

> *ANS: "Black"*

5c) Read each expression for that color in the table and pick statements that describe a recent situation or feeling in your waking life?

> *Black (table 9-7) = "I am feeling anxious and don't know why; I have been dealt an unacceptable blow, and I feel the need for extreme action."*

5d) Life Situation:

> *"I do feel anxious and don't know why. My past divorce situation has 'dealt me an unacceptable blow'."*

Step # 6 - Summarize – Putting it All Together

- **Summary:** *"The statement "getting crapped on" recalls the moment I decided to divorce my ex. I had gone all out to help him, and he showed up two hours late and began yelling at me for not having done enough. I guess I "feel the need for extreme action"—breaking off the relationship with my new boyfriend—because I fear it will happen again if I try to nurture him (provide a soft landing spot)."*
- **Conflict?**: "*I desire* to be there and be strong *because* my purpose is to nurture *but if I do* I will get crapped on and blown out of the tree again."
- **Originating Decision – old myth?** *"I will never become vulnerable like that again" [decision at the moment of trauma as she decided to divorce]*

Part #3 Action – Dream Guidance & Resolution

Step #7 - Dream Guidance

7a) Re-orienting: Did the dream metaphorically picture the waking life problem the dream is dealing with? Did it introduce a solution scenario, decision point, guidance, surprise, insight or discovery? Any archetypal organizing imagery present? How did the dream end?

> *ANS: "there was no guidance but there was a decision point at the end: "I was trying to decide whether the black things in the tree were birds or bats." [Note: the decision birds or bats, based on her definition of their function in step 3, is an indication that the decision is to "fly away" versus "stay" – likely associated with her decision about her boyfriend and anxiety driven by her past trauma. Also, archetypally the symbolic 'tree of life' appeared which might relate the decision to a deeper core issue invoving her growth and individuation].*

7b) Guidance or Insight: Did you experience a guiding event, discovery or insight?
> *ANS: "No"*

7c) Surprise: Did something surprise you <u>in the dream</u>. How did it differ from expectation or provide a different point of view?

ANS: "I was surprised that I couldn't determine if they were birds or bats."

7d) Acceptance or Reversal: Did your dream-self accept the guidance or reverse its thinking, viewpoint or action?

ANS: "No"

7e) Positive Ending: Did the dream end positively? What brought it about and how might that be an analogy to a waking life solution?

ANS: "No it just ended with me feeling anxious."

7f) Compare to Life: How might the guidance, change in viewpoint, attitude or direction in the dream be helpful as a solution in waking life?

Note: The dreamer was placed in a scene related to her emotional conflict – surrounded by the traumatic memories of her divorce (in the home she shared with her ex.) yet wanting to nurture her boyfriend (mother's image). The resolution scenario was presented as a decision, the need to decide birds or bats ('fly away' vs. 'stay around') but no other guidance. The "great tree" image suggested that her decision was important at a deeper level of transcendence and growth. To create a solution metaphor therefore we used active imagination to finish the dream.

Step #8 - Active Imagination – Finish the Dream

8a) Finish the Dream: Place yourself at the end of the dream, focus on your feelings, then spontaneously (don't think just let the images flow) finish the dream with a new imagined ending that works out positively for you (and the others in the dream).

ANS: "I fly away with the Bats."

8b) Life Analogy: the new ending is a metaphor just as is the rest of the dream so it needs to be translated to understand the associations just as in parts 1 and 2 of this protocol.

Most of us may associate bats as a negative but this dreamer was a bird expert. Her association was: "Bats like birds are free, but unlike birds are helpful and come home to the cave at night."

Step #9 - Resolution and Next Steps

9a) Define a Solution: Review the waking life analogies in steps #7 and #8 and define a specific solution to your waking life situation that the dream might be suggesting.

"I can be like the bat, be there, be helpful, and still be me (free)!"

9b) Check it Out: is it a healthy, appropriate, practical solution or leave you stuck again?

"Yes it is healthy, appropriate, practical solution and does not leave me stuck."

9c) Next Steps: If positive, then what specific next step(s) can you take to bring it about?

"I will tell my boyfriend today that I have decided to stay in the relationship." [Note: Her boyfriend happened to walk into the room at that moment - and they embraced].

9d) Reminder Image:

"The Bat"

GROUP DREAMWORK

It is prudent to follow a proven set of guidelines if you are contemplating group dreamwork. There are perhaps many ways to conduct a dream group. One of the most popular and effective approaches, however, is based on an approach developed by Monty Ullman which he called "dream appreciation" as opposed to interpretation. Adaptions of his method have also been termed "Group Projective Dreamwork" and have been popularized by Jeremy Taylor and many others. One adaption I will describe below is that of Haden Institute (Haden, n.d.), a dream leader training institute for therapists, clergy and individuals who wish to lead dream groups or enhance their therapeutic skills (see the Resources appendix for details).

The Ullman Method - "Dream Appreciation"
("if this were my dream")

Montague Ullman (affectionately called Monte) was a psychoanalyst who was trained to use a traditional hierarchical approach (therapist is the interpreter and considered the expert) but he began to realize that it is the dreamer holds the key to the dream's meaning. He developed his own "Method", which gave the dreamer full authority over the dream's meaning (Ullman, 1985). We know it today by the phrase "if it were my dream" used as the group members work with a dream. This method of dreamwork that can be facilitated by anyone given proper training on the associated safety and ethics procedures. Ullman rejected the term "dream interpretation," which is used in hierarchical approaches, and believed that the term "dream appreciation" is closer to what dreamwork is about. Ullman also recognized that the more the dreamer receives input from several people, the better the individual will understand his dream. For this reason, the Ullman Method is most often used in small groups – the optimum size being about eight people to allows enough input but not overwhelm – and the session time typically 90 minutes to 2 hours.

The basic assumptions or "rules": 1) to recognize that dreams are personal and private, thus the issue of confidentiality is utmost; 2) the dreamer must also feel safe and in control; 3) avoidance of interpretation, i.e. the group members and the dreamer all recognize that each group member has taken on the dream and is *projecting* on it as if it is their dream about something in their life, and in no way is interpreting the dream for the dreamer. Thus the phrase to be used by each group member "if it were my dream" before talking about their own associations with it (their *projections*).

The safety factor has 3 parts as well: 1) the dreamer decides whether to present a dream to the group; 2) the dreamer is not pressured to reveal anything that causes emotional discomfort about waking life; 3) the dreamer is in control and can stop the process at any time.

There are four stages to the Ullman method. Three occur in the initial session with the fourth follow-up stage, which occurs in a subsequent session (the following was summarized from Lewis in Hoss, Valli, Gongloff, 2019):

Stage #1 – Telling the Dream
- **Introducing the process**: A group leader guides the group members through the process begins by discussing the safety rules and confidentiality (members are not to discuss the dreamer and the dream outside of the dream group); then asks if anyone has a dream to share. If there is more than one the group decides who will go first.
- **Dream sharing**: The dreamer re-enters the dream speaks in the first-person present tense as if they are re-experiencing it, giving as much detail as possible. They presents the dream slowly to allow group members enough time to write it down (alternatively they can pass out written copies)."

- **Group members**: listen and take notes (without interrupting, other than to clarify something they didn't hear or understand). They listen in a manner so as to take on the dream as if it is their own dream.
- **Questions of clarification**: After the dreamer has finished, the group leader encourages questions from the group but only questions aimed at either helping the dreamer remember more details about the dream (perhaps about the color of something, how the dreamer felt, or such) or so that the group member can better take on the dream as their own – reminding the group they are not to ask questions about the dreamers waking life, only about the dream. This is to avoid group members from developing any preconceived notions about the dream's meaning since they are to work with the dream as if it were their own dream during the next step. The exception might be whether an element or figure is something the dreamer knows from waking life.

Stage #2 – Group Projection
- **Giving the dream to the group**: The leader asks the dreamer whether they are ready to "give the dream to the group" and asks the members to work among themselves and not look at the dreamer during this part – so as not to pick up emotional cues (sometimes the dreamer turns around). The group members work with the dream as if it were their own dream related to a situation in their own life – preferencing their "projections" by stating "**if this were my dream**" (note Jeremy Taylor suggests a more present tense phrase "In my dream …"). This is a constant reminder to the group member that they are to genuinely make the dream their own and not try to interpret or guess what the dream means for the dreamer. Group members can communicate among themselves but not engage the dreamer - the dreamer is an observer at this point.
- **Projections**:
  o **Feelings:** Group members begin by exploring feelings that are awakened in themselves as they imagine themselves having the dream and make the dream as their own by referring to it in the first person. For example: *"I feel angry when I …"* as opposed to, "*You must have felt angry when you …."*
  o **Then metaphors:** Once feelings have been explored the leader widens the discussion to examining both feelings and metaphors. (The reason feelings are worked with first is because Ullman found that group members are naturally drawn to working with metaphors because they are simpler and fun to explore – detracting from the important exploration of feelings).
- **The dreamer listens** to the group's discussion and associations without interrupting (unless they didn't hear or understand or need to clarify something). The dreamer listens for statements that resonate with experiences or concerns in their waking life, taking notes on those associations or "aha" moments.

Stage #3 – Sharing and Connecting
1) **Returning the dream to the dreamer**: The leader asks the group if they are ready to return the dream to the dreamer. The leader makes sure the dreamer understands nothing has to be shared about their personal life and informs the group that the dreamer has the floor and to hold back on questions at this time, unless something is unheard or not understood.
2) **Dreamer shares:** The dreamer then responds to what they resonated with and any thoughts a. bout what they now understand the dream to mean for them – taking the time they need. Group members don't interrupt but can take notes on what is shared.
3) **Group and Dreamer dialog**: The leader then invites the group to engage in dialogue by asking *open-ended* questions to the dreamer that help the dreamer to make connections from dream to waking. *Open ended* questions are those that do not direct the dreamer toward a certain viewpoint and avoid asking about people or situations in the dreamer's waking life that have not been brought up or shared by the dreamer. C*lose-ended* questions tend to reflect a foregone interpretation by a group member or pursue a point in a way that can be invasive to the dreamer. For example, if the

dreamer mentions a friend, it is appropriate to ask, "Can you say more about your friend" but inappropriate to ask, "Is your friend domineering?" With an *open end* question the dreamer can then share whatever information they wish about the friend, their relation, integrations and history for example. In a *closed end* question the answer might be a simple yes or no. It is also inappropriate for a group member who knows the dreamer's situation to ask some detail they know about the situation that the dreamer did not mention or choose to mention – such can invade the privacy of the dreamer and integrity of the process. The dreamer only shares what feels comfortable and can stop the process at any time.

4) **Reading back the dream:** The leader asks for a volunteer to read the dream to the dreamer, "with as much feeling as possible". After each scene the dreamer is asked whether anything else arises in the dreamer regarding their waking life - allowing the dreamer to step back and observe the dream objectively.

5) **Group/dreamer dialog continues**: *Open-ended* questioning by the group continues, exploring any dream images that have not been fully developed or previously discovered**.** The dreamer csn open up more about waking matters but again has the right to set boundaries when sharing information about their waking life and can stop the process at any time.

6) **Group member suggestions:** Finally, the group members take what they now know based on what has been shared and offer their ideas on the dream in an attempt to help the dreamer make even more connections between the dream and their life. Group members are no longer working with the dream as if their own, but never go beyond what has been shared by the dreamer. Although this might involve interpretation, views are not to be presented with an air of authority but only offered as an inquiry, such as "does this make sense to you?" implying that it is up to the dreamer to decide. The dreamer can respond when and as they wish.

7) **Ending:** The dream group leader thanks the dreamer for presenting the dream.

Stage 4 (follow-up):

- **Dreamer insights:** At the next session, the dreamer shares any additional insights, new behaviors, or additional dreams that relate to the previously presented dream.
- **Group insights:** Group members can also share their insights.

The Haden Approach to Group Projective Dreamwork

There are many adaptions of the Ullman method in practice today, as groups augment it to work in their particular environments. One adaption, used by the Haden Institute, (Haden, n.d.) is of particular note because it places the focus primarily the group experience. It retains much of the authentic Ullman method, with the same strong emphasis on safety measures in relation to both personal projection as well as nonintrusive measures. The difference is that it is directed more toward the group experience, or each group member getting something out of working on the dream being shared, than necessarily returning in the final Ullman step to re-focus the effort on the dreamer's understanding of the dream.

The group projection procedure used by the Haden Institute continues from step 10 in the General Structural Guidelines above as follows:

1) The leader asks for a volunteer to share his or her dream for group work.
2) The person shares the dream with any pertinent information (not their interpretation).
3) The group asks questions of clarification (not leading "interpretative" questions) in this case so that the group members can better take it on as their own dream.
4) The leader now asks the dreamer whether they are ready to give the dream to the group.
5) The group is now given the opportunity to talk with each other about the dream. They are not to look at the dreamer in order that they do not pick up facial clues or that the dreamer needs to

respond. Some find it helpful for the dreamer to sit outside the circle. As the dreamer listens. The group now *projects* onto the dream using the words "if it were my dream" or "in my dream." As with the Ullman Method, it is critical that the members of the group understand that they are imagining this as their dream about something in their lives and not be tempted to interpret the dream for the dreamer. This personal *projection* on the dream is adequate to verbalize possible metaphors and trigger the dreamer's own associations.

6) After a sufficient round(s) or *projection*, the leader asks the group if they are ready to give the dream back to the dreamer for comments. The dreamer can then say anything the wish about their insights from the group work as well as how it relates to their own life – or say nothing and just thank the group.

7) The dreamer is thanked for sharing and told that it is important to track their dreams in the next few days because future dreams will repeat what the dreamer did not catch. This also reminds the group that they don't have to milk every "aha" out of every dream.

8) In the end, the group members are reminded that they were projecting onto the dream. So, they might be given an opportunity to discuss any connections they may have had between the dream and their own lives. In this unique group focused method it also takes the spotlight off the dreamer and back onto the group.

Introducing Individual Work into Group Work

In my own dream groups, I introduce various individual or personal dreamworking approaches if the dreamer wishes to go further with the dream than the projective work has taken them. This is not unlike the final step in stage 3 of the Ullman Method, but I use a few gentle and fun parts of my *Transformative Dreamwork* protocol and engage the group in the process - in particular the scripted *role-play* ("6 Magic Questions) and Color Questionnaire and at times part #3, exploring the guidance within the dream, if it is appropriate. The approach goes something like this:

After the dream is given back to the dreamer and they have been given a chance to say what they wish about their insights from the *projection* phase (stage 3 Ullman or step 6 in the Haden method above) the leader asks whether they would like to go further or are still curious about something in their dream. If they say yes the leader then clearly states that the process is now moving from Group *projective* work to Personal Work where everything from this point comes from the dreamer.

Role-play – the "6 Magic Questions"

- At this point the leader introduces the group to the *role-play* or "6 Magic Questions" procedure (passing out a sheet that lists the 6 or 7 questions) and assigns each member of the group one question that they are to ask the dreamer, and write down what the dreamer says.
- The dreamer is then asked what they are most curious about in the dream, and to focus on the image related to that, or if a more general exploration to re-enter the dream perhaps at the most emotional point and pick an image that curiously draws their attention.
- The dreamer is asked to re-enter the dream, bring the image to their mind's eye, take 3 deep breaths and, on the third breath, imagine him or herself as the dream image.
- The group members then ask the dreamer (in the role of that thing in the dream) the 6 to 7 questions, and write down what the dreamer says.
- The dreamer is then asked to listen to the statements as if they describe a situation or feelings in their own life. Each group member then reads the statements back to the dreamer.
- The dreamer then has the option of whether or not to share the connections with the group and whether they wish to go on with further work.

The Color Questionnaire

- If there is a colored image that stands out (or if the one they worked on above was in color), the dreamer is asked to pick the closest color or color pair on the color questionnaire table which is passed out to the group. The dreamer is not to read the statements, onlyh to pick the colors.
- The group then divides the statements up by number, and each person in the group speaks one statement for that color out loud, maintaining a pause between each one.
- The dreamer dwells on the statement(s), noting the statement(s) that seem to "connect" to a waking life situation or feeling.
- The dreamer then has the option of sharing their "connections" and/or how the color work relates to feeling or situations in their life and to the rest of the dream and dreamwork. Again a "feeling check" should be done by the leader at this point to make sure the dreamer is ok.

Exploring the Guidance in the Dream

- If in the group discussion that follows the dreamer senses and wishes to explore whether there is any guiding or resolution insight within the dream that might be helpful to them – then the group may cautiously proceed with the Action stage of the *Transformative Dreamwork* protocol. Since this is to be non-authoritative group work, pursuing the *Archetypal* structure in that stage is not recommended unless there is someone professionally trained in that work present who can point out some possibilities. Group work with the stage is mainly helping the dreamer whether any of the 4 guiding clues (Guidance; Surprise; Acceptance/Reversal and Positive Ending) are obvious and how they might relate to their life situation.
- Using the *Transformative Dreamwork* worksheet (front of this book or described in the next section) the leader would bring forth each of the "4 clues" by reading the description of each, giving time to the dreamer and the group members to spot something in the dream that matches the description.
- The dreamer is then given an opportunity to determine how that resolution action in the dream might relate to a way of dealing with the situation in their life – which they can share or not.
- The leader must warn the dreamer that any potential solution they derive from the dream must be checked out before trying it out – is it healthy, appropriate, something that is practical to do or does it leave them stuck in another conflict? Following these final steps in the protocol are necessary before the dreamer should assume that they have figured out the guidance within the dream.

CHAPTER 12
DREAM MAPPING

The only correct interpretation of a dream…is one that gives the dreamer a joyful "aha"
experience of insight and moves them to change their life… Ann Faraday

Working with the whole dream is usually more involved than is necessary to gain self-understanding and a resolution that can be carried forth into waking life. I offer this example, however, to give you an idea of how you might apply the tools ("modules") in Chapter 11 where and when they seem applicable, to each of the seemingly important images in a dream. It also reveals how much amazing content there is in a dream, when each *element* is explored. It is interesting to see how the dream introduces and deals with so many associated *myths*, conflicts and personality *fragments*; how it rehearses or tests a particular strategy and *compensates* for the misconceptions of the *ego* in order to bring about closure.

Creating the Map

I call the approach Dream Mapping because it begins with drawing the "map" of the dream from above, then using the tools in the *Transformative Dreamwork* protocol as you deem appropriate, to reveal your personal associations with each image. I suggest extending the dream sketch to a full page, so that you can place your dreamwork associations with each image next to that image on the map (see the example). The final result is a map of the interrelated associations between the content within each dream image.

When you draw the dream, pay attention to the orientation of dream *elements* and direction of movement as it appeared from your vantage point in the dream (see step #2, and the "Consider all the Dream *Elements*" box in Chapter 11). Also, note numbers, colors, geometric shapes and patterns such as circles, squares, spirals, crosses, circular movement and groupings of 3 or 4 objects or colors. Note *elements* that are a barrier to progress, including physical barriers such as walls, bridges, and people or things in your path. If the dream scene is a busy one, leave room to place notes in the margins so that you can point to the imagery. If there is some strange dream image that stands out, you might want to draw that separately at the bottom.

A Slightly Different Protocol

Note that the procedure or protocol for Mapping is a bit different than that in Chapter 11 in that first two of the three parts are focused on slightly different activities: Part #1 is simply recording the dream and creating the map. Part #2 is to more freely use all the various tools - association, memory, *role-play*, dialog and color - to reveal and identify the personal content within each image you consider important. Part #3 then, as before, sorts out how the dream was attempting to resolve the problem, relating that to the waking life situation and what the next steps might be.

Part #1 Creating the Dream Map

In order to demonstrate the Dream Mapping process, I will use a dream example. This dream is again one of mine, which makes it convenient in that I can provide all the detail necessary to illustrate the process – perhaps much more than anyone really needs in practice – but it makes for a thorough example.

This *"Foreign Invaders"* dream occurred as an initial dream in a short sequence of dreams (Journey) that ended with the "*Ice Cave*" dream which I have discussed throughout the book. It came a month or so before that dream, as the new chairman of the company brought in outside executives and consultants to completely restructure, downsize or outsource every organization in the company. No one was spared. At the time of the dream I headed what had previously been considered a highly valued organization and so I had a sense that I was ok, but with the massive restructuring was uncertain how I or my organization would end up. Nonetheless, I had no desire to leave the company and was prepared to stick it out.

Step #1 Record the Dream

- ***Record the dream*** as if you are re-experiencing it (use first person, present tense).

  I am living in a small village. Some <u>foreigners have invaded and taken over the government</u> (feeling is of helpless Vietnam villagers). I am with my fellow villagers inside of a meeting place, like a dining lodge, at a camp. The invaders are gathering us up and the leader, in order to <u>identify and separate the group</u>, states: "everyone that lives beyond four, tense up." A large group is tensing up and the others are moving away to the right near some brown wooden tables. <u>I am confused, not knowing what the command means or what I should do</u>, since I don't know if I live within or "beyond four." I tense my fists. Someone behind me says, "No, you're OK." I relax and know that I can now move to the right, feeling I am one of the lucky ones allowed to stay in the village. I ask the leader what will happen to the others. He states that they will be led out (to the left) and dealt with in some (undetermined) fashion. I look out the window to the right at the beautiful blue lake with a boat sitting on it, with <u>a feeling of growing contentment that I might simply be left alone with my friends and my boat.</u>

- ***Give it a Title:*** *Foreign Invaders*

- ***Sketch the Dream from above as a Map*** including all the "important" imagery and *elements*, color, placement, direction of movement, emotions, etc. **See Dream Map below.**

Step #2 - Life Story

Record emotional situations in your life at the time, especially things that happened the day before that you did not deal with at the time. *There has been a total company restructuring and management take-over and my organization reports to a new senior executive from the outside who does not know my group, nor values my knowledge or leadership capability. He was brought in simply to downsize, with a role of determining who in the company will stay and who will be eliminated, based on some unknown set of criteria. For the first time in my career, I feel out of control of my situation and unappreciated. Nonetheless I fear leaving and think about just giving up on my career goals, staying in whatever role I end up in and focus more on enjoying my friends and spending more time pursuing my other interests.*

Dream Map

INVADERS
New Management
take-over

LODGE
[rectangle = imbalanced
conscious conception]
*I must be careful, one
false move and I may
burn my bridges, and
destroy my career,
forever. I need to
carefully wait it out, for
this too will pass.*

VILLAGERS
tensing Up
[fragments not
within "four"]
*I was once proud &
valued but now I am
helpless and of no
value. Old Myth = I need
a leadership position -
or- I will be seen as of
little value*

VILLAGERS
that can stay
[moving Right =
counter-myth moving
into consciousness]
Giving up on
leadership and career
goals being content as
devalued but allowed
to stay, content to
relax with friends..

Entry of Invaders
[From Unconscious:
Events & fears trigger
old "leader" myth] =
My value based on my
leadership position &
how my leaders value me

Right
= Conscious Accept

**Exit of the "not ok"
parts "beyond 4"**
[Into the Unconscious:
suppressed fragments of
the *old leader myth* in
favor of counter-myth]

ME [Ego]
I don't know
where I stand

VOICE
[Compensation]
"No, your OK"

Brown Table
*I seek freedom from
problems and a secure
state in which to relax
and recover.*

Windows
[Light = conscious focus]
*Ability to see out (to the
evolving myth) while
remaining safely inside*

LEADER
[Conflict & Impasse Image]
*"everyone that lives beyond four,
tense up."* [four = new solution
scenario/state of completion]

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*Impasse: I don't know where I
stand. I depend on my
management for my sense of
value – but – at this point they
have not revealed what they think
and I don't think they value me. I
am tense and can't move without
them clarifying things.*

----

*Fear: I must do as they say even
if I don't like it – or – I will be
eliminated*

BOAT [old myth]
*I need to move on to become
valued but I can't do it myself. I
rely on someone who values me,
and if that doesn't work I'm sunk*

BLUE LAKE [evolving counter-myth; & associated conflict]
BLUE = *desires peaceful state and sense of belonging
I want to relax and focus on the other joys in life – BUT - if I do, I fear I
will no longer be of value to those who look up to me, I will be
abandoned, not used for all I can be, and my career will dry up.*

Dream Language   247

Part #2 - Map the Imagery Associations

Step #3 Metaphors in the Dream Story

As with the standard protocol, exploring phases that sound like they also describe a situation in you waking life (underlined in the dream story) is a good way to relate the dream, at the most basic level, to a situation in your waking life.

- _Some foreigners have invaded and taken over the government_ = we just had a top management take-over and I now have a new boss from the outside, foreign to our organization.
- _identify and separate the group_ = the new management was charged with identifying and separating employees as to who would stay and who would go.
- _I am confused, not knowing what the command means or what I should do_ = up until now I was highly valued by management and I had control over my group and my career. Now I am confused, not knowing what the new management wants or what I should do, since I don't know where I stand.
- _a feeling of growing contentment that I might be left alone with my friends and my boat_ – I have a sense I might be ok (able to stay) but feeling less concerned about the importance of my career or position and more content with simply being left alone with my friends and my boat (my source of relaxation at the time).

Step #4 Structure

Because you will be looking at the dream now as a visual map, understanding the structure and pattern can be helpful. Once done place the ones that seems most meaningful to you, that contains the most insight in relation to your situation, on the Dream Map. There is no wrong way and you can (if you use a pencil) always erase, modify, rearrange the information later. You can place the statements in the margins with arrows pointing to the associated imagery (see diagram above).

- *Orientation:* Did the dream appear to: a) picture the problem/conflict to be resolved; b) introduce a guiding event, a resolution scenario or an alternative/*compensating* viewpoint or *counter-myth* that impacted or eventually altered (reversed) the view or actions of the *dream-self*; c) emotionally reinforcement of the resolution scenario or the action of the *dream-self*?
  a) **Problem focus**: *conflicted whether I am ok or not 'beyond the four' causing me to tense up.*
  b) **Alternative viewpoint**: *Voice, "No, you are OK"*
  c) **Reversal**: *Dream-self went from 'tensing up' to 'moving to the right' after hearing the voice.*
  d) **Reinforcement**: *at the end looking out the window at the lake and boat with growing contentment.*

- *Archetypal/Collective elements*: Note the collective clues (see Chapter 7).

From the notes below it appears as if the waking situation has triggered a *Shadow* myth which is offset by the inner *Self* - assuring me that I am "OK." But then the dream appears to test a new viewpoint or *counter-myth* in order to find an alternative solution or balance, which is never achieved – and in the process it has fragmented the personality (abandoning things that don't fit that new view). *Take note* as you read through this, it is possible that the dream is the beginning of a **transformative journey**, beginning with a 'death of the ego' motif (encountering and abandoning the old Shadow myth, a fragmentation of the ego and departure) - a scenario aimed at eventually testing and integrating the Shadow myth with an evolving counter-myth - although it is never achieved in this particular dream. Integration is however completed in the "Ice Cave" dream that followed a month or so later – where a new scenario integrates the old Shadow myth (dependence on others for a sense

of value or being OK) with a new-myth (a sense of inner value, control and wholeness) – that is then tested, followed and rewarded.

- **Conscious** *elements* or focus (light, right, man-made): *Lodge, table, boat*
- **Unconscious Material** (*Shadow*, dark, left, behind, unknown, frightening): *although the new invading foreign leader is a metaphor for the new executive brought in, it may at a deeper collective lever also represent Shadow material (entering from the left). These are perhaps old unconscious fears, an old-myth of dependency on "leadership" for my sense of value. The voice behind me was perhaps the greater Self introducing of an alternative or compensating view – no need to tense up you are ok.*
- **Acceptance or New Awareness** (movement to the right, illumination): *The entrance of the leader (old leadership myth) appears to be fragmenting my personality which was once whole ('within four'). The material (villagers) which is being accepted or allowed to remain, is part of a new personality state or viewpoint (a new counter-myth that is being tested) and thus moves to the right.*
- **Fragmentation and Suppression** (movement to the left or into the darkness): *The material (villagers) outside of "the four" that are abandoned are taken out (to the left) and dealt with in some unknown fashion. This is the abandonment or suppression of that material that doesn't fit the new viewpoint or counter-myth (such as my career and leadership goals).*
- **Conflict**: *the inability to decide whether I am ok or not; the point of tension.*
- **Impasse Imagery** (something impeding progress): *The invading leader that is now in control creates the impasse - the "tensing up" and not knowing where I stand.*
- **Compensating Forces** (guidance, alternative scenario, discovery, surprise, voice or words): *Voice of an unseen entity from behind "No, you're OK". It is typical for the inner Self to refer to dreamer as being "whole" (and thus "OK") at a deeper integrated lever; no need to tense up up simply due to meeting the Shadow self. Here an alternative scenario is also introduced (a counter myth) that my dream-self eventually follows – but one that fragments the personality.*
- **Patterns** (geometric patterns of integration, completion, *wholeness*):
  The "Four" motif *is a balanced state of "wholeness" a completion or solution – a state where those parts of the personality that are "beyond four" or out of balance due to fear, would create anxiety and thus tense up. Being told by the inner voice that I am "OK" provides a sense that at some level I am in balance or this scenario is aimed to eventually achieve balance.*
  Fragmentation pattern *– in following the scenario part of my personality is fragmented and suppressed (moves to the left into the unconscious) and other parts or viewpoints accepted by the ego moves into consciousness (to the right).*
  Integration pattern *– in following the counter-myth there does not appear to be an integration taking place, only an exploration of that counter-myth: there is no union of opposites; the objects to the right are all imbalanced rectangles (lodge, tables, windows). The only possible unconscious/conscious union (natural lake and man-made boat) is never achieved but only seen from the windows as a distant future possibility.*
- **Man Made** (conscious conception) vs **Natural** (*unconscious*): *Man Made = the boat, the tables the lodge and windows. Natural = the lake.*

Step #5 - Map the Associations to the Imagery

At this point we begin using the various dreamworking tools in steps 3 through 5 of the standard protocol (definition, memory, theme, *role-play*, color) to identify the personal associations within each dream image or *element*. It is not important what order or what imagery you choose to apply the tools to – just pick those that you are curious about, think might be important, or that you want more information on.

This exercise may provide more information than you can place on the dream map, or perhaps even comprehend, so just focus on the material that seems to stand out and relate to your waking life situation or the meaningful metaphors and structure you mapped above.

- ### *Define the Function of Key Elements*
  - *Invader* = *takes over by strength, not by popular acclaim*
  - *Leader* = *manages and maintains control, the one the group looks to for direction.*
  - *Villagers* = *people who live as a group or community*
  - *Lodge* = *a structure that protects those within it*
  - *Tables* = *holds sustenance for those sitting at it*
  - *Window* = *permits one to see outside, while remaining safely inside*
  - *Lake* = *a natural place for relaxation and recreation*
  - *Boat* =*a vehicle for joy and recreation with friends on the water*

- ### *Define Personality characteristic of known persons*: *No known persons present.*

- ### *Similar Themes (dream to life):* *Being "invaded" by new foreign leader that does not know us or value us. He is charged with identifying and separating those they want to stay and those they no longer want. I don't know where I stand or what will happen.*

- ### *Memories* (dream *elements* from your past or that remind you of some past event): What one specific past event comes to mind? Relate to your present situation.
  Vietnam village = *recalls the Vietnam war situation and documentary in which the people were regarded as having no value, or as the enemy, regardless of their true nature. Much like the situation at work.*

- ### *Role-play - Dream Re-entry*
  Re-enter the dream scene, perhaps at the most emotionally charged point, and re-visualize being there just as you dreamed it. While in the scene look around at the *elements* in the scene (dream figures, things, activity) and pick a few that attract your attention, that seem important to the story or that you as the dreamer are interacting with. Give each one a voice (using part or all of the 6-question script) so as to understand the various perspectives or conflicts going on within you regarding the situation:

  - *Villager:*
    1) I am *a villager. I was once a proud and valuable individual, but now I am helpless and of no known value in the eyes of the new government.*
    2) My purpose is to *be an important part of the village structure.*
    3) What I like is *to be a valued member of the village.*
    4) What I dislike is *that even with all my capability, I am seen as worthless.*
    5) What I fear is *to be devalued and considered just one of the expendable villagers.*
    6) What I desire most is *to rid myself of the influence of these invaders and be free and proud once again.*
    Compare to Life: *The management take-over left me with a new boss who does not acknowledge my value. I feel helpless, no longer valued, and fear I will lose the respect of my peers and staff.*
    Restate as a conflict: *I need to find a solution that will keep me in a valued leadership position – or - I will no longer be respected. (this seems to feed the old Shadow myth)*

- *Invading Leader:*
  1) I am *the leader assigned by the new government to manage this village.*
  2) My purpose is to *separate those who will stay from those who must go.*
  3) What I like is *I am in control and have a role in the new government.*
  4) What I dislike is *I must do what the new government wants, even if I don't like it.*
  5) What I fear is *that if I fail, I too will be eliminated.*
  6) What I desire most is *to have this sad situation go quickly and smoothly.*
  Life Situation *The new leader came in to separate those who will stay in the new organization from those that will be eliminated.* **Restate as a myth**: *I must do as they say even if I don't like it – or – I will be eliminated.*

- *Lodge:*
  1) I am *a grand old lodge that has been here for years. I've seen many of these crises, and "this too will pass."*
  2) My purpose is to *be a protective environment where people come together for food and relaxation.*
  3) What I like is *the villagers are like my family. I like it when I am the center and they come to me for important events.*
  4) What I dislike is *that I am just here and have no control over the events.*
  5) What I fear is *that all it takes is one fool, and I can be burned down forever.*
  6) What I desire most is *to have things back the way they were before the invasion.*
  Compare to Life: *All this is how I feel as the leader of my organization – like a family that I protect. I have been here many years and "this too will pass" is a perspective I try to adopt in order to block out the fear.*

- *Blue Lake:*
  1) I am *beautiful and calm. I will take you away from it all.*
  2) My purpose is to *be a place where people can relax and enjoy life.*
  3) What I like is *everyone likes me.*
  4) What I dislike is *I feel I am wasted at times, since no one uses me for all I can be.*
  5) What I fear is *that I will be abandoned and dry up.*
  6) What I desire is *to be attractive to all who look at me.*

  Restate as a conflict: *I would rather focus on relaxing and enjoying life and other interests (like boating) - BUT –I want to be appreciated and fear that I will not be used for all that I can be, will be abandoned and my career will dry up.*

- *Boat:*
  1) I am *a boat. I can take you wherever you want to go under your control.*
  2) I Like *being able to move around wherever I want on my own.*
  3) I Dislike *being confined to a small pond. I rely on someone else to move me to a bigger pond.*
  4) I Fear *I will sink if I am not properly taken care of.*
  5) I Desire *to be moved to a larger pond where I'm able to move where I want to go.*
  Life Situation: *I desperately want to find a way to feel in control of my destiny again. I fear my group will be diminished and I will be trapped (small pond) but feel that I am totally dependent on someone else or my management to move me to where I can be all I know I can be. I rely on someone who values me (old Shadow myth) and if that does not work, I am sunk.*

• *Dialog with the Impasse Image*

- **Pick the Impasse Image:** that thing which prevents you from progressing or obtaining your goal in the dream*: The leader of the invaders.*

- **Role-play and Dialog:**
  - *As the dreamer speak to the impasse image:*
    Why are you making me tense up? Am I "within the four" or not?
  - *As the impasse image, speak to the dreamer:*
    You are tensing up because you don't know where you stand. My advice to you is that you must decide where you stand. You can't depend on me for that.

- **Compare to Life:** *I depend on my management for my sense of value (Shadow myth) – but – at this point they have not revealed what they think, and I don't think they value me.* Note: This is a true *impasse* as the dreamer has nowhere to turn, since he has placed his total support system with his management's perception. The advice of the *impasse* image may be the key – the dreamer must decide whether he is OK or not, whether he values himself.

• *Exploring the Emotions in the Color*

- **Brown** (table 9-7): *I seek freedom from problems and a secure state in which to relax and recover. Related: This seems to relate to a counter-myth of just relaxing and enjoying my friends and other interests and giving up on a part of self that feels the need to be in charge.*

- **Blue lake** (table 9-7): *I desire a tranquil, peaceful state of harmony offering contentment and a sense of belonging. Related: This fits a counter-myth of letting go of career aspirations and being left in peace with my friends and other interests – as does the role-play below: "I am beautiful and calm, I will take you away from it all."*

Step #6 - Putting it All Together

At this point, note the number and depth of the various conflicts and personal *myths* and *counter-myths* that are revealed. It is surprising to note just how many different conflicts can be present and interact within and complicate/confuse the situation the dream is dealing with.

• *Completing and Reflecting on the Map*

Continue sorting through all of the statements, picking and placing the ones on the map that seem to relate best to your waking life feelings, situation and conflicted emotions:

a) Associations: Map the associations (in plain text) in the margins with arrows pointing to the images – the associated feelings, conflicts, fears, desires and memories contained in each image.

See the text inserted on the map diagram.

b) Conflict(s): try to focus on the primary conflict (the one surrounding the *impasse*) and any other conflicts (usually found in the *role-play* statements) that appear to confuse the resolution.

The primary conflict or impasse is noted as the Leader stating "those beyond four tense up" the resultant tensing up due to the conflict of not knowing where I stood – and depending on the leader for that information – as opposed to the inner voice that states "no you are OK".

c) Resolution Process: placing the process/structural or *archetypal elements* on the map [in brackets] – the *conscious/unconscious* movements; *old or existing myth*; *counter myth*; the compensating actions of the *unconscious* and the resultant actions of the *dream-self* (or *ego*).

- **Encounter:** *Invading Leader from the left, an old Shadow myth, is now in control (the myth being that my value depends on my leadership position and how my leaders value me).*
- **Compensating element**: *the voice "No, you are Ok," If from the Self it usually indicates the dreamer at some level is "whole" (within 'four'). It appears to initiate a transformative journey, a "death of the ego" perhaps aimed at testing a counter-myth or new viewpoint that reduces tension. Nonetheless with the "leadership" Shadow myth in control the result is fragmentation: the* **dream-self** *moving to the right toward an evolving* **counter-myth** *and fragments that don't belong to that counter-myth being suppressed and moving to the left.*
- **Testing:** *The dream appears to test and support an evolving counter-myth – that of suppressing career desires (moving to the left) and focusing on friends and other things (shown as moving to the right into consciousness). With the exception of the lake everything to the right is conscious conceptions (man-made) and appears from the map statements to contain conflicted emotions. There is no integration or closure imagery: no attempt to integrate old myth and counter-myth, only continued fragmentation and imbalance (squarish objects are rectangles). Although there is emotional reinforcement of the evolving counter-myth (as growing feeling of contentment) here was no real closure – the dream ends with looking out the window from the safe confines of my conscious perceptions (the lodge) toward a possibility of focusing on relaxation and recreation, but even that brings back the same conflict (see the role-play of the boat). It appears that the dream is simply testing the counter-myth, learning from it, but failing to integrate it or close.*

• *Relate to the Waking Life Story*

In your own words summarize what you have learned in terms of the conflicts, *myths*, feelings and actions in your waking life situation.

In waking life, the entire corporation has been taken over by new management and in my case a leader from the outside. They are selecting who to retain and who to let go without much vetting – reducing everyone to persons of little value. I don't know where I stand since I don't know if they understand my contributions or value to the corporation. I know that I will be required to downsize my organization and have a sense that "I am ok" - but am not entirely sure – I find myself for the first time with little control over my career and at the mercy of others.

The Shadow (old leadership myth) seems be in charge of me and the dream – a view of my value as dependent on others and my position – rather my true inner worth. This is not only dysfunctional but not even logical since I was highly regarded in the community at large. When the unconscious guiding voice says, "No, you are Ok" my dream-ego does not fully comprehend, again allowing the Shadow to influence the decision, feeling fortunate to be able to stay even as a de-valued "villager." In relation to waking life it relates to deciding my best option is to abandon career and leadership goals (suppress them – to the left) and pursue an evolving counter-myth (to the right), that of simply being content to stay with the company (wherever I end up valued or not) and just focus on being content with relaxing with friends and outside interests. The problem is that view does not eliminate (or integrate with) the old leadership myth – nor my sense of obligation as a leader to protect my employees (this came out in the role-play of the boat). So, the dream remains unresolved.

Part #3 Action – Dream Guidance & Closure

Step #7 - Dream Guidance

- **Scenario Introduction?** Looking over the dream map, as to how the problem the dream is dealing with was pictured, was something then introduced that impacted

or changed the viewpoint or actions of your dream-self (an alternative scenario, surprise, guidance, discovery, insight)? Was there any archetypal imagery present that pictured the unconscious organizing/integrating/ transformative processes taking place (see Chapter 7 and figure 7-4)?

The resolution scenario appears to be the invisible voice behind me (archetypally the Self) stating: "No, You Are OK" likely in terms of being "whole" (can rely on my own inner value as opposed to reacting to the Shadow). But the dream-ego move to the right (toward a counter-myth) feeling that this leads to resolution or closure (within the "four").

- **How did the Dream End?** Re-enter the dream and briefly mentally review the story - how did it end and what brought that ending about?

I was looking out the window at the beautiful lake with a growing contentment toward just relaxing with my friends and the boat.

- **Guidance or Insight:** Did you experience a guiding event, discovery or insight? How did it change the actions or viewpoint of the *dream-self* from before to after?

I was frozen in tension because I did not know whether the Leader would let me stay or not (whether I was within or beyond the 'four'). Then a voice from an invisible source behind me said "You are OK." Rather than considering this as being ok within myself, I take this literally that I am accepted by the new management – which leads to my following a counter-myth (being content to relax and remain as one of the villagers) by suppressing of the old myth (abandoning leadership and career goals).

- **Surprise:** Did something surprise you <u>in the dream</u>. How did it differ from expectation or provide a different point of view?

Surprised when I was tensed up not knowing what "being within four" meant or whether I was within or beyond the 'four' – then being told "no, you are Ok." This breaks the tension.

- **Acceptance or Reversal:** Did your *dream-self* accept the guidance or reverse its thinking, viewpoint or action?

I took the words literally meaning I could relax and moved to the right and follow and test the counter-myth (being allowed to stay and thinking about relaxing and just enjoying being with my friends instead of pursuing leadership and career goals).

- **Positive Ending:** Did the dream end positively? What brought it about and how might that be an analogy to a waking life solution?

It ended with a feeling of resignation but contentment as I viewed a future possibility of staying as one of the villagers, just enjoying friends, the lake and the boat. This is a strengthening of the counter-myth. The dream, however, only projected but did not realize that goal – I stayed inside the safety of the lodge with the villagers - only peering out at that possibility. Therefore, no actual closure.

- **Compare to Life:** How might the guidance, change in viewpoint, attitude or direction in the dream be helpful as a solution in waking life?

In the dream as in life I consider the only option to fragment myself – abandon/suppress career and leadership goals and settle for being satisfied to stay as a de-valued employee. But the dream does not show the counter-myth to be a balanced 'four' since everything to the right is out of balance [rectangular geometries]. It leads to a sense of contentment but hidden within the boat image is a return of the old conflicts - getting stuck again in that unresolved conflict as suppressed unresolved stuff inevitably surfaces later (the role-play of the boat indicated it is still there). It never actually gets to the point where the dream-self experiences a final resolution. So, to resolve this I tried the Active Imagination approach.

Step #8 Active Imagination – Finish the Dream

- *Finish the Dream:* Place yourself at the end of the dream, focus on your feelings, then spontaneously (don't think just let the images flow) finish the dream with a new imagined ending that works out positively for you (and the others in the dream).

  I sense an inner value (that I really am Ok) not content to be de-valued by the new leadership and walk out the door toward the lake, take a few friends with me and get in my boat and drive off (the lake appears endless in this vision).

- *Life Analogy:* the new ending is a picture-metaphor which needs to be translated just as all other parts of the dream, in order to understand the associations.

  This would be analogous be unwilling to put up with the anxious, conflicted and de-valuing situation in the company but feeling strong and valued enough within myself to take charge, walk out the door and drive off elsewhere to a better job if it came to that.

Step #9 Resolution and Next Steps

- *Define a Solution*: Review the waking life analogies in steps #7 and #8 and define a specific solution to your waking life situation that the dream might be suggesting.

  Realize my true value, my capability, expertise and reputation in the larger community, and calm down. take control an prepare myself to leave for another job if things go badly.

- *Check it Out:* is it a healthy, appropriate, practical solution or leave you stuck again?

  Yes, it is healthy, appropriate, and practical solution. If I continue with the vision of driving off I am ok. But if I try to remain content without my career goals, it leaves me stuck again in conflict of having abandoned my career and failed to protect my employees.

- *Next Steps:* If positive, then what specific next step(s) can you take to bring it about?

  Make some phone calls and prepare myself to leave for another job if necessary.

- *Reminder Image:* *Taking charge of the boat and driving it off.*

Follow-up: As noted this dream came before the "*Ice Cave*" dream where afterwards I actually did "walk out the door" and by the way took my friends (some of my employees) with me on the "boat ride". After

this dream I kept a focus on the *counter-myth* (value = friends, relaxation and quality of life) but remained conflicted by the *old myth* as well (my value being that of a recognized leader) – keeping the two in an interactive tension as Jung would put it. But then as matters got worse with the corporate downsizing, I began seeking a new position in the company and lost track of walking out the door and driving the boat. Luckily, I then had the "*Ice Cave*" dream in which I began as a passenger in the boat looking for a position in the windows. But this second dream provided the final alternative resolution scenario, taking charge and realizing my inner value - "you CAN walk out the door". The result was an equivalent position in an even better company and a situation that allowed me to retire early and switch my career interests to full time dream studies and dreamwork.

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APPENDIX
RESOURCES

The Dream Science Foundation
(Author's Website)
www.dreamscience.org

Visit the author's website at the above URL for:
- Free PDF downloads of this book with periodic updates
- Free Downloads of Dreamworking Worksheets and Color Questionnaire
- Downloadable courses and lectures based on this material
- Articles and the latest facts and research findings on dreams and dreamwork
- More books by this author
- Upcoming events, courses and workshops
- Grant opportunities for dream researchers
- Links to other dream related resources

The International Association For The Study Of Dreams (IASD)
www.asdreams.org

The IASD is a nonprofit, international, multidisciplinary organization dedicated to the pure and

applied investigation of dreams and dreaming. Its purpose is to promote an awareness and appreciation of dreams in both professional and public arenas; to encourage research into the nature, function, and significance of dreaming; to advance the application of the study of dreams; and to provide a forum for the eclectic and interdisciplinary exchange of ideas and information. IASD is open to anyone who studies, explores, or works with dreams. Membership represents about 30 countries and people from all disciplines including: psychology, psychiatry, social work, education at all levels, religious studies, anthropology, medicine, the expressive and performing arts, literature, philosophy, humanities and business. Membership benefits include the professional journal *Dreaming* and the magazine *Dream Time,* discounts to online and Annual International Confernces, plus many on-line benefits. For information on the organization, or to become a member, please go to the web site**:**

The Haden Institute

https://www.hadeninstitute.com/

Bob Haden founded the Haden Institute in 1994, as a forum to educate others about the transformational gifts of spirituality and Jungian psychology. Bob, both an Episcopal priest and a Jungian-oriented therapist, had discovered that spirituality and Jungian psychology teachings are complementary on the

transformational path to health, *wholeness*, spiritual maturity, and *individuation*. In 2017, Allen Proctor, a Presbyterian minister and life-long student of psychological development, assumed the role of Director and is continuing to bring psycho-spiritual teachings and practices to others.

The Dream Work and Spiritual Direction Training programs are all two-year programs, offered through large group on-site intensives, and distance learning. Small groups enter the programs each spring and fall in North Carolina, every two years in Canada, and each small group is guided through the program by a Haden Institute mentor. The group interaction provides a support community throughout the two years. In addition to reading and writing assignments, lectures, and discussions, participants share spiritual direction case studies and lead dream groups as the teachings are put into practice. These programs provide a safe environment for each participant to develop the skills of spiritual direction and dream work, while experiencing the impact of these learnings on their own journey to greater health and *wholeness*. The Summer Dream and Spirituality Conference is an annual opportunity for spiritual seekers and dream workers to gather in the beauty of Western North Carolina, learn from key-note speakers and workshop presenters, and participate in dream groups facilitated by the Haden Institute staff.

Dreams and Energy Psychology

www.Eft4dreams.com

This site is offered as part of EFT Universe https://www.eftuniverse.com/ founded by Dawson Church PhD. There are many fascinating accounts of using EFT with dreams as well as information and downloadable worksheets on the *Dream to Freedom Technique* developed by Bob and Lynne Hoss. EFT can take away the emotional charge associated with nightmares, disturbing dreams, and recurring dreams as well as emotional stress that might surface during dreamwork. The articles on the website gives you ideas on how to approach dreamwork with EFT. **EFT (**Emotional Freedom Techniques or "Tapping") is a stress reduction method that can be used in conjunction with dreamwork or independently. EFT has demonstrated efficacy for anxiety, depression, PTSD, and phobias. Over 100 scientific papers about EFT have appeared in peer-reviewed medical and psychology journal including randomized controlled trials, outcome studies, and review articles by investigators from Harvard Medical School, Perdue University, Stanford University, University of Arizona, and many other top institutions.

The **EFT Universe** community was founded in 2010 by Dawson Church, PhD, author of the best selling and award winning science book, *The Genie in Your Genes*, as well as the latest edition of *The EFT Manual*. The mission of EFT Universe is to bring the healing benefits of to the greatest number of people consistent with high standards of ethics, integrity, and professionalism. EFT Universe has the largest EFT training and certification program in the world. The free starter package and EFT Mini-Manual can be downloaded from the site.

Dreams and Energy Psychology

Innersource

http://www.innersource.net/ep/

Information and programs for developing optimal health, personal growth, spiritual development and well-being through Energy Medicine, Energy Psychology and Conscious Living programs for professionals, lay persons and students.

About the Author
Robert J, Hoss, MS

Robert (Bob) Hoss is a Director and former President and Chair of the International Association for the Study of Dreams (IASD), an organization that sponsors education and research in the field of dreams and dreamwork. Within IASD he is the International Conference Director and also directs DreamScience Foundation for research grants. He is a faculty trainer with the Haden Institute, on the board of the Institute of Integrative Healthcare, on the research committees of IASD and ACEP (Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology) and a submission reviewer for three peer reviewed journals.

He is: managing editor/author of the 2-volume reference book *Dreams: Understanding the Biology, Psychology and Culture* (Greenwood, 2019); editor/author of *Dreams that Change Our Lives* (Chiron, 2017); author of *Dream to Freedom* (EP Press, 2013), and author of this e-book *Dream Language* and its previous hard copy version (Innersource, 2005 – 2014). He is also a chapter author in 8 other publications among them: *Working with Dreams and PTSD Nightmares* (Praeger, 2016); *Encyclopedia of Sleep and Dreams* (Praeger, 2012); *Weaving Dreams into the Classroom* (Universal, 2014), and *Perchance to Dream* (Nova, 2010); *Dreams and Spirituality* (Canturbury, 2015); and the *Clinical EFT Handbook* (EP Press, 2013). His work, including his dream color research, is published in three peer reviewed Journals and he has been featured in a PBS special, Readers Digest, Prevention, the Psychology Today blog and USA Today.

His career includes both industry and education. He was a former scientist, applied researcher and corporate executive, and holds three patents and was an instructor at such institutions as George Washington University, Sonoma State University and Richland College. He is educated in the fields of science and psychology with a Master of Science degree and training in Gestalt Therapy plus experience and training in Humanistic, Jungian, Gestalt and Ullman theory and dreamwork practices. His dreamworking approach therefore integrates the psychological methodologies of Jung, Gestalt and Ullman with applicable findings from neuroscience.

His work has been published in 3 peer reviewed journals – of which those applicable to this book include: The Neuropsychology of Dreaming: Studies and Observations", Journal of Counsellors and Psychotherapists CAPA, V3 (2012); "Content analysis on the potential significance of color in dreams", IJODR V3-1, 2010; "The continuity and discontinuity between waking and dreaming from the perspective of an analytical psychological construct", IJODR V4-2, 2011

He has served as adjunct faculty at Sonoma State University, Richland College in Texas and Scottsdale Community College in Arizona. He was host of the DreamTime Radio series is a frequent guest on radio and TV and has been an internationally acclaimed lecturer and instructor on dreams and dreamwork for over 40 years. Aside from the numerous workshops and presentations for IASD and the Haden Institute over that timeframe, he has been an invited instructor or lecturer at such institutions as Sonoma State University; JFK University; Association for Humanistic Psychology, Academy of Intergrative Health and Medicine; Human Potential Institute, Ontario Institute of Psychotherapy; the American Holistic Nurses Association; Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology (ACEP); ISSSEEM; ARE; Energy Medicine University; the Natural Spirituality Conference; the Journey Conference among others.

Visit the web site at **www.dreamscience.org** where you can find ongoing information updates, training and online courses, conference announcements, books and other resources related to the study of dreams.