



MAGNUM OPUS: ALBEDO

Module 3: Dreams and Active Imagination

QUOTE

“The dream shows the inner truth and reality of the patient as it really is: not as I conjecture it to be, and not as he would like it to be, but as it is.”

The Practical Use of Dream Analysis (1934). In CW 16: The Practice of Psychotherapy. pg. 30

Dreams and Active Imagination

Compiled by The Centre for Applied Jungian Studies

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Introduction

Welcome to the third Module in the Albedo Stage. This Module will focus on Dream interpretation and Active Imagination. This is the lecture on dreams and active imagination. Over the next four weeks we will explore a dream or active imagination each week. This means that you will interpret four dreams or active imaginations over the next month.

Dreams are the royal road to the unconscious – Sigmund Freud

He who looks outside dreams, he who looks inside awakes – Carl Jung

“Dreams are like stars....you may never touch them, but if you follow them they will lead you to your destiny.” Anonymous

Transcript

Why do we dream?

Dreaming helps recharge the mind and revitalize the body, but is there more to your dreams?

Throughout time and across cultures and religious beliefs, dreams have captured our imagination as we instinctively try to decipher their hidden meaning.

Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis viewed dreams as representations of our unfulfilled wishes and desires. He discovered that encouraging people to talk about their dream images and the thoughts that these images prompted in

their minds, would reveal the unconscious background to their neuroses, both in what they said and in what they failed to say.

This technique called “free association” played an important part in the development of psychoanalysis for it enabled Freud to use dreams as the starting point from which the unconscious problems of his patients might be explored. Published in 1900, in his ground breaking book ***The Interpretation of Dreams***, Freud famously described the dream as “the royal road to the unconscious.”

So what is the unconscious and how do you gain access to its messages?

The Unconscious

The unconscious was viewed by Freud as a place where forgotten, repressed or dreaded elements of the psyche is held. Carl Jung, one of the first pioneers into the mystery of consciousness and its relationship with the unconscious, viewed the unconscious differently. In his autobiography, ***Memories, Dreams, Reflections***, Jung describes the story of his life as “*a story of the self-realisation of the unconscious. Everything in the unconscious seeks outward manifestation, and the personality too desires to evolve out of its unconscious conditions and to express itself as a whole.*” (p.21)

Jung saw within the unconscious the primal pattern, the “blue print”, according to which your conscious mind and your total personality are formed. These patterns contain all the traits, all the strengths, the weaknesses, the basic structure and parts that make you who you are.

Jung viewed the unconscious as the part of the mind that holds all that is not immediately available to your everyday waking consciousness but which affects your thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

It is your unconscious, made up of thousands of stored programs, that:

- Governs your bodily functions- your breathing, heart rate, kidney, function, liver functions, etc.
- Determines your instinctive behaviour patterns.
- Underpins the beliefs and patterns of your thinking.
- Deletes, distorts or filters out incoming information so that you are only consciously aware of information that you need right now.

Your unconscious does all of this without the help, supervision or even awareness of your conscious mind.

Jung discovered that most of the neurosis of modern living - the feeling of fragmentation that overtakes us, the loss of meaning, the feeling that we have lost a part of ourselves, that something that once belonged to us is missing - results from the isolation of consciousness from the unconscious.

We all need to consult the unconscious and cooperate with it in order to realise the full potential that lies within us. When we are in balance, the conscious mind and the unconscious live in relationship; there is a constant flow of energy and information between these two levels of our mind, which meet in the dimension of dream, vision, ritual and imagination.

As Robert Johnson, in *Inner Work* so eloquently puts it:

“To get a true sense of who we are, become more complete and integrated human beings, we must go to the unconscious and set up communication with it. Much of ourselves and many determinants of our character are contained in the unconscious. It is only by approaching it that we have a chance to become conscious, complete, whole human beings. Jung has shown that by approaching the unconscious and learning its symbolic language, we live richer and fuller lives. We begin to live in partnership with the unconscious rather than at its mercy or in constant warfare with it.” (p.5)

Why dream work?

Dreams express the movements, conflicts, interactions and development of the great energy system within the unconscious. Dreams are therefore a conversation with yourself, in symbolic language that sends messages between the unconscious and conscious parts of your psyche. Through working with your dreams you get to explore yourself, you get to know yourself better.

Dreams:

- Provide you with insight into the way in which you operate in the world.
- Help you examine the recurring patterns playing out in your life and give you insight into the key challenges and choices that these patterns bring into your life.
- Give you insight into areas of your life in which you feel stuck.
- Give you insight into your relationships with others.
- Give you insights into your feelings.
- Enable you to make conscious and wise choices.
- Bring greater self-knowledge and self-understanding.
- Provide new possibilities and opportunities where previously you saw none.
- Give you access to personal and meaningful messages.
- Bring meaning in your life.
- Bring personal transformation.

- Provide you with connections to aspects of yourself that are bigger than your ego, guiding your personal growth and helping you to achieve your full potential.

In the words of Jung:

“The years... when I pursued the inner images, were the most important time of my life. Everything else is to be derived from this. It began at that time, and the later details hardly matter anymore. My entire life consisted in elaborating what had burst forth from the unconscious and flooded me like an enigmatic stream and threatened to break me. That was the stuff and material for more than only one life. Everything later was merely the outer classification, scientific elaboration, and the integration into life. But the numinous beginning, which contained everything, was then.”

So how do you work with your dreams?

Dream Work Map

The method of dream analysis used throughout this guide is principally Jungian in approach and is built around Jung's model of transformation.

Working with your dreams involves:

- Confession – Recording your dreams:

Dream work begins with capturing the dream, writing it down as soon as possible for later interpretation.

- Illumination – Finding Personal Associations:

Every dream is made up of a series of images; the foundation for interpreting dreams is discovering the personal associations and meaning that the images hold for you.

- Amplification – Finding Objective Associations:

Looking at dreams through amplification, through an archetypal framework, expands your personal associations into the realm of the objective and allows you to discover unplumbed depths of your psyche.

- Education – Interpreting the Dream Message:

Translating your dream images, your personal and objective associations into psychological language helps you to discover and interpret the dream's meaning and connect the meaning of the dream to the dynamics of your inner life.

- Transformation – Making the Dream Concrete:

The specific images and message you received from your dream bring with them an energy that contains transformative potential, integrating the insights or the message of your dream into your conscious, waking life takes your understanding of the dream off the purely abstract level and gives it an immediate, concrete reality.

Following is an exploration into the steps of Jungian dream interpretation with sample dreams.

Stage 1: Confession – Recording Your Dreams

“A man’s dreams are an index to his greatness.” Zadock Rabinwitz

Dreams come in many forms, lengths and intensities. To understand them and the meaning they have for you, they need to be recorded. Patterns and repeating images are a guide to what your unconscious deems important issues, and these become clearer when written down in a dedicated book and kept together. When you start paying attention to your dreams, the unconscious starts communication and often the frequency of dreams increase.

Some people struggle to record complete dreams and only remember fragments of their dreams. Don’t let this worry you or stop you from working with your dreams, often a single image from a dream contains vital information about a current situation and these fragments are just as full of meaning as longer dream sequences.

The key to the journaling of dreams is to have a dedicated book on hand next to your bed. Dreams tend to fade during the day, so capture your dream as soon as possible. The value you will get from doing this far outweighs the effort, however it does require you to be disciplined about recording your dreams.

How to capture a dream

Write the dream down on the left hand page of your journal, keeping the right hand side blank for interpretations, comments, sketches and subsequent analysis. Date the entry and write down the dream in sequence of events, capturing as much detail of the dream as possible:

- The place/setting of the dream
- The players in the dream – people both known and unknown
- The puns and metaphors appearing in the dream
- The symbols in the dream
- The feelings in the dream
- The colour, sounds, smells
- The movement of the dream
- What happens in the dream

It is sometimes the most apparently insignificant aspects of a dream that turns out to be the most revealing. Remember you are not trying to make sense of

these images yet, don't worry how bizarre they may appear, don't try and box them into a waking logic, allow the dream logic to speak.

Capture your dream in the present tense, as if it is currently happening, for example:

Date:

The king summons his vizier.

At this stage you just want to capture your dream and so avoid trying to analyse or decipher what your dream means. You can draw images as well from the dream and frequently this is useful in conveying something inexpressible in words.

Once you have captured your dream, identify key words in the dream out of which you can create a title, this will help you to identify and link dream themes in the future.

Having recorded your dream, you are ready to begin the process of illumination or finding personal associations for your dream images.

Stage 2: Illuminating the Dream - Finding Personal Associations

“Dreams are a conversation with oneself, a dialogue of symbols and images that takes place between the unconscious and conscious levels of the mind.”

David Fontana

Every dream is made up of a series of images and symbols, dream work begins with discovering the meaning that these images have for you. On the right hand side of your journal, opposite to the dream you captured, write down the first image that appears in the dream:

Example:

The king summons his vizier.	King
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Next to the image write down your associations to this image - what words, ideas, mental pictures, feelings or memories pop into your head when you think about this image? Draw as many associations with the dream images as possible.

While looking for your personal associations, think about:

- Where was the dream set? Do you know this place or does it remind you of any place that you know? What does it remind you of?
- Do you know the people in your dream, or do they remind you of anyone you know? What is your relationship to this person? How would you describe this person?
- What did you see? What does it remind you of? What does it make you think of?

- How do you feel in the dream? When have you felt like this before? What does it remind you of?
- What were you thinking?
- What feeling do you have about this image? What words or ideas come to mind when you look at it?

When looking for associations it is also helpful to look for the idiom or metaphor the dream is expressing, for example:

- Dreaming of someone biting your back alludes to the idiom backbiting, meaning spiteful talk about someone who is not present
- Dreaming about taking the bull by the horns, an idiom meaning dealing decisively with a difficult situation.
- Dreaming of blue could refer to feeling blue, in other words feeling sad or depressed about something.

At this stage you want to link your ideas, perceptions etc. of the dream image using Jung's directed or controlled dream associations. That is exploring spontaneous ideas which proceed from the dream situation. Keep going back to the your dream image; you don't want to start a chain of free associations as this will lead you away from the dream image.

Example:

The king summons his vizier.	King: -a ruler - a person who rules over a territory
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-the best or most important person or thing in a group-someone in charge-someone rich and powerful
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It is important to realise that dreams are unique, no dream or dream symbol can be separated from the individual who dreams it. No other individual has your background, your emotions, or your experience. In your dreams, your unconscious is communicating with you alone, selecting images and symbols that have meaning to you and to nobody else. The interpretation of dreams therefore, is an entirely personal and individual business that can only be interpreted in the context of your life. There can be no single correct symbol interpretation, you can't look to a dream guide to provide you with the answer to what your dream is trying to communicate, dream symbols cannot be classified.

You will experience a feeling of rightness when you find the correct association to the image for you; it will feel as if the association clicks for you. Looking back at the dream snippet shared, your ideas and associations for king may be different to mine. That is okay, this image may have a different meaning or message for you.

Repeat this process for each image in the dream.

The king summons his vizier.	King: <ul style="list-style-type: none">-a ruler- a person who rules over a territory
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	<p>-the best or most important person or thing in a group</p> <p>Summons:</p> <p>-to call</p> <p>-an order to appear</p> <p>Vizier:</p> <p>-the kings main adviser or servant or steward</p> <p>-a helper</p>
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As you work through your personal associations to your dream images you may experience at times and with certain images that you just can't come up with a personal association, or you may feel that your personal associations are not adequately conveying your sense of what the dream image means, this is when you need to continue to the next stage of the dream analysis – amplification or finding objective associations.

Stage 3: Amplification – Finding Objective Associations

“The soul thinks in images.” Aristotle

Amplification is a Jungian technique which attempts to expand your personal associations and personal understanding of your dream images, to connect with the collective unconscious, or as Jung came to call it later in life, the Objective Psyche. By looking at your dreams through amplification, through an archetypal framework you will find unplumbed depths of your psyche. Yorum Kaufmann, in *The Way of the Image* advises that by looking at the image objectively you can avoid being led astray by your personal, subjective associations.

The idea of psychological archetypes is one of Jung’s most useful and provocative contributions to modern thought. Jung became aware of the archetypes when he observed that the symbols that arise in dreams often correspond to images that have appeared in ancient myths, legends and religion throughout time and across all cultures.

Archetypes are primordial images and symbols found in the collective unconscious. Each archetype has a unique set of meanings, motivations and personality traits for example the archetypal images of the hero, the child, the mother, etc. Jung’s archetypes are not limited to human characters; there are also animal archetypes like the serpent and the lion and objects functioning as archetypes, like gold, the castle or the forest.

Archetypes are inherited, inborn potentials; patterns of thought and emotions which provide us with a set of tools, skills, capabilities, lessons, opportunities and potential for this lifetime. They form the foundation upon which each individual builds his own experience of life, colouring them with his unique culture, personality and life events. Since they are unconscious, they cannot

be known or experienced in themselves and can only be known indirectly through examining their effects, their manifestations in images and symbols and by examining behaviour, images, art, stories, myths or dreams.

Amplifying your dream images

You amplify your dream image by moving beyond your personal associations to look at the attributes of the images, objects, people, animals and archetypes, expressed in your dream images through the lens of myths, legends, fairy tales and ancient texts.

Once you recognise that the dream setting, dream figure or dream symbol is archetypal, that is the image or symbol can be found universally, across cultures, the next step is to go to the myths or other sources where the same archetype appears. What does it tell you about this great archetype? What is its role in your life?

As you amplify your dream images, you continue what you have already done in your personal associations and write down your amplified associations. See what they say about who you are and what forces are at work in you.

Amplifying Dream Characters

Jung discovered that whether known or unknown, people in dreams represent some aspect of the dreamer's personality and are usually projections of some

aspect of the dreamer. Common archetypal dream figures that appear include:

- **The persona.** The word persona comes from the large carved masks worn by Greek actors as they performed before audiences, and means “to sound through”. These masks besides identifying the characters in the play, served as primitive megaphones to carry the voice of the actors to the top benches of the amphitheatre. In the same way our persona facilitates communication between ourselves and the world, serving as a bridge between our ego and the external world. The persona is our public personality, the face we show the world. The persona is the mask through which we get to know each other and interact with each other. The persona is a compromise between what society expects of us and our own inner personal identity. Most of us are inclined today to identify ourselves with our inner world or at the very least with our private selves. The persona is seen as a necessary evil, a mask that needs to be worn for the world out there. And it is this negativity towards the persona as being somehow less than one hundred percent authentic that casts it in a poor light. **It is the persona that is the true carrier of our essential being into the world.** It is through the persona that the world comes to know us, not through our inner life. In dreams, myths and stories the persona is often symbolized by what we are wearing, our clothing, uniform, animal skins or other covering or by our own skin, our nakedness.
- **The ego** is the center of consciousness; it is the bearer of our personality, our concept of ourselves. It distinguishes us from others and gives us our sense of identity, our “I”. The Ego stands at the junction between our inner and outer worlds, performing the function of perceiving meaning and assessing value. The ego provides a sense of consistency and direction in

our conscious lives and plays an important part in the development of a healthy psyche. Without the ego there is no driver of the psyche. In dreams, myths and stories the ego is often symbolized by the Hero.

- **The shadow** represents unknown or little known characteristics of the ego. The shadow is the inferior being in us all, it wants to do all the things that we do not allow ourselves to do, or that we don't want to be. It is our uncivilized desires and emotions, our dark side, those aspects of ourselves that exist but which we do not acknowledge or with which we do not identify. It is the unconscious aspect of our personality, usually hidden and repressed. It is all we are ashamed of, such as egotism, laziness, lustfulness, selfishness, greed, envy, anger, rage. Whatever we see as evil, inferior or unacceptable and deny within ourselves becomes part of our shadow. It is in our dreams that we encounter many unsavoury aspects of life and shadowy characters that in waking life we may shy away from. We learn from depth psychology that all of these dynamics being acted out in our dreams are aspects of ourselves. In our dream state the conscious censor is sidestepped and we see directly into the unconscious. Once we learn to interpret and understand our dreams we gain a direct line of sight on our shadows. In dreams, myths and stories the shadow is often symbolized by an inferior figure – tramp, beggar, servant, drug addict, pervert, thief, gypsy, prostitute or by anything dark and threatening such as zombie.
- **The anima/animus.** Jung thought that the psyche was inherently an androgynous entity regardless of the physical gender, containing and embracing both the feminine and masculine. In a woman her contra sexuality is masculine and governs her rational thinking function and we call this the Animus. In a man his contra sexuality is feminine and governs his irrational feeling function and we call this the Anima. In dreams, myths and

stories the anima is often symbolized by a person of the opposite sex to the dreamer; a woman, a sister or by a cow, a cat, a tiger, a cave, a ship. In addition to a person of the opposite sex, the animus would be symbolized by an eagle, a bull, a lion.

Amplifying Dream Settings

The unconscious is often thought of as being divided into rooms where we keep or hide different memories or aspects of ourselves. Opening a door and entering a room generally symbolises a willingness to enter and face areas that are normally hidden from you. Rooms also symbolise an aspect of your personality. Note the condition of the room. As the house typically represents the self, an unfinished house or one in poor repair may be pointing out to the dreamer that work is required on some aspects of mind or body.

Amplifying Our Dream Example

The king summons his vizier.	King: -a ruler - a person who rules over a territory -the best or most important person or thing in a group <i>Objectively a king refers to whatever rules a territory</i>
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	<p>Summons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-a call-an order to appear <p>Objectively to summons means to call for someone or something</p> <p>Vizier:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-a helper-the kings main adviser or servant or steward <p>Objectively a vizier is the main helper to the king</p>
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If you are interested in learning more download our free Applied Jung Lexicon on Archetypes which is available on our website

<https://appliedjung.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Archetypes-Lexicon-Guide.pdf>

Having identified your personal associations and objective association for your dream images, you are now ready to interpret the message of your dream.

Stage 4: Education – Interpreting the Dream Message

“A riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma.” Winston Churchill

The classic error that beginners make in dream interpretation is to enquire, “What does this dream mean” instead of “what is this dream saying.” To take the approach “what does this dream mean” often side-lines valuable information contained in the dream. The dreamer will guess or accept an obvious interpretation, which often is already known by the dreamer and ignore the hidden message which the dream invariable contains.

Before you can discover the meaning of your dream, there are a couple of things you need to know about the nature of your dreams.

Your dreams seek to educate you:

- They show you a map, showing your consciousness the path it is on, how that path may have diverged from the one you are meant to travel, and what pitfalls and treasures lie ahead. They are guides to areas which need work in your psyche.
- Dreams never tell you what you already know. They tell you what you don’t know, what you aren’t seeing. They have the intention of communicating something to you that is currently consciously unknown and so invariably communicate your blind spot or a one-sidedness that has developed in your personality. This is important to realise when you interpret your dream. If the meaning is too obvious, then usually you are interpreting based on what you know.
- Dreams are teleological in nature that is they are forward looking, even though they appear to use images from your past.

- Your dream is generally triggered by an event/experience/realisation/thought that you had during the day prior to the dream. Reflect on the events of the day and try to identify an incident that triggered you emotionally or elicited some response from you. The dream is about that experience.
- Dreams are the only access you have to the “objective version” of your situation or experience since it presents a picture without personal bias.
- It is important to remember the dream is usually a criticism of your position or orientation towards a situation. The function of dreams is frequently to provide you with the opposite point of view, in an attempt to balance your conscious one sidedness.

Having identified your personal and objective associations with your dream images, you need to figure out what is going on inside of you that is that is represented by the situation in the dream image, this can be done by asking yourself:

- What is the initial situation?
- What develops or changes?
- What is the action?
- What is the climax?
- What is the lysis? That is how does the dream end? Has the situation changed from the beginning of the dream? How are things left?

Having answered these questions, you should now be able to identify the central, most important message that this dream is trying to communicate to you. Ask yourself:

- Why this dream image now, what is the dream trying to tell me that I don't already know or that I am not seeing?

- What is this dream advising me to do?
- What is the overall meaning of the dream for my life?

Example:

From our sample dream snippet we can see that:

– Whatever rules a territory, summons the force that is its main help in governing.

You can now translate the images and your associations into psychological language and connect your dream images to your inner dynamics, what is happening inside of your psyche. At this stage you need to figure out what is going on inside of you that is that is represented by the situation in the dream image, this can be done by asking yourself:

- What is the dream commenting on?
- What part of me is this?
- Where have I seen it functioning in my life lately?
- Where do I see that same trait in my personality?
- Who is it inside of me, who feels like that or behaves like that?
- What is it saying about my behaviour/attitude?
- What is it implying about the situation/problem I am experiencing?
- How do I feel about it?

- What is the dynamic or pattern which the dream is commenting on?
- Where do I display this dynamic in my waking life?
- Is this dynamic/pattern affecting how I relate to people or situations?
- Is it working for me?
- Can I change it or am I willing to change it?

Example:

From our sample dream snippet we can see that:

– Whatever rules a territory summons the force that is its main help in governing.

Now you can ask yourself what is ruling you during this time, what help do you need to summon?

Sometimes you find that you can create several interpretations from your associations with the dream, and they all make sense. How do you decide among these possible interpretations?

Johnson advises us to refer to the following principles to either confirm an interpretation or steer you away from one that is unsound:

- Choose an interpretation that shows you something you don't already know.
- Avoid the interpretation that inflates your ego or is self-congratulatory.
- Avoid interpretations that shift responsibility away from yourself.

Congratulations at this stage you have uncovered the message or meaning of your dream, you are now ready to take this insight into your life and experience the transformative power of your dreams.

Stage 5: Transformation – Making the dream concrete

“What if you slept? And what if in your sleep, you dreamed? And what if in your dream, you went to heaven and there plucked a strange and beautiful flower? And what if, when you woke, you held that flower in your hand? Ah! What then?”

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

The specific images and message you received from your dream bring with them an energy that contains transformative potential, but understanding the images, understanding the message of your dream, while bringing insight will not necessarily bring about transformation in your life. To transform you need to turn our insights into action in the real world.

It is important at this stage of your dream work to find a way of integrating your insights or the message of your dream into your conscious, waking life. To ask yourself, “What am I going to do about this dream?”

Doing a physical act takes your understanding of the dream off the purely abstract level and gives it an immediate, concrete reality. This step requires either:

- **A practical act.** Often our dreams will show us where, how and what corrective action we need to take, the dream will demonstrate the need for practical action, this could include taking control of your finances, becoming more security conscious, the need for a more balanced lifestyle such as eating less junk food or the need to exercise more, etc. Perhaps you discovered that you are being ruled by work and that you need balance in your life – relaxation, fun, exercise, etc. then your action would be to choose one of these activities, decide how much time you

wish to spend on this activity and schedule time in your day or week for this activity. You need to honour your dreams by incorporating their advice into your life.

- **A symbolic act.** Sometimes there may be no practical act that you can do following your dream, in these cases you can bring your dream into the real world by performing a symbolic or ritual act such as painting a picture of the dream image, making a pottery piece that represents the dream, finding a symbol of the dream and keeping it in an appropriate place or by writing a letter to someone who you are angry with and burning it afterwards.

A word of warning, don't use your dream as a license to act out, to destructively confront other people or take inappropriate action such as breaking up relationships or performing destructive acts like getting drunk or taking drugs, remember your conscious self, your ego still needs to be in control, to be in charge.

Take a look at some of sample dreams that follow, to see the process of dream analysis at work.

Dream Work – An Overview:

Take a look at dream work in action as seen through the lens of these sample dreams:

Pots of Green Pasta

“I am cooking a big pot of green pasta. I have to transfer the pasta to another pot. When I start taking the pasta out, I find my five year old son in the pot. His legs stick out of the pot through two holes in the side. I take him out carefully so that I don’t hurt his legs and put him in the other pot.”

The dreamers associations:

The dreamer was doing financial planning the previous day. He was in the middle of changing direction in his professional life. He was feeling anxious about replacing his income with his new professional venture.

Green represents money, but it also represents the fruit which is not yet ripe.

Transferring the green pasta from one container to another is a symbol of moving the “money” from one career to another.

He loves his son dearly and felt that his son symbolised the pressure he was experiencing from the responsibility of caring for his family and making sure that they are financially taken care of. His son also represents for him the future. Amplifying this image the dreamer’s son also represents the dreamer’s inner child. And so in some way the dreamer’s inner child is in the pot, that is involved in this decision.

Legs something which carries you forward.

Cooking is a form of preparation, an alchemical process. So the dreamer is cooking up his future, like the alchemists of old, he is attempting to transmute base metal into gold. Again this dream image has been amplified.

The dream message:

The dream is showing the dreamer that part of this decision is being made from a childish, unrealistic viewpoint and that he hasn’t made a proper evaluation of what he is doing. The dream is advising the dreamer to proceed

carefully (he had to take his son carefully out of the pot), it is highlighting that the time is not yet ripe.

Dream transformation:

Practically this dreamer needs to re-evaluate his decision; he needs to examine how his decision has been influenced by his inner child before he proceeds further.

A Message from Dad

“I am on my way to an appointment with a senior manager of a certain organisation, not sure what exactly. When I call the manager denies that the appointment is at 8.00 am and claims that it is only at 3.40 pm. I become quite angry and start arguing with him. He stands his ground however and simply denies the appointment which I know to be the one made. I suspect he is seeking not to meet with me as a way to avoid the issues which need to be dealt with. On my way to his office I meet with my father, who tells me how to handle the confrontation with the manager. He tells me to question the manager’s secretary and specifically to ask to see the appointment diary.”

The dreamers associations:

The dreamer was in the process of changing professions. He was finding this to be a difficult time in his life and was suffering with some anxiety about this change.

Appointment is an arranged meeting or a job or position or the appointment of someone to a job.

Senior manager someone in charge. Amplifying this image it could be the dreamer’s ego or his thinking function, his animus.

8.00 am is the start of the day, 3.40 is the end of the day.

The dreamer's father is deceased (Jung believed that the spirits of deceased relatives visit us in dreams). Amplified this image could be the dreamer's inner guide or the wise old man.

The manager's secretary is traditionally feminine and amplified refers to the dreamer's anima, his feeling, evaluative function.

The dreamer felt that this dream was telling him to be less emotional and more strategic in his approach.

The dream message:

The dream is indicating that the dreamer hasn't made a proper evaluation of what he is doing and needs to look at other aspects of his decision and how it will affect him.

Dream transformation:

In changing professions, the dreamer needs to look at what issues that need to be dealt with he is avoiding. In doing this the dreamer needs to consult with his feeling function which evaluates but when ignored manifests as moods and highly charged emotions and not be so focused on his thinking function which is misleading him.

Dirty Washing

"I open my front door and find a washing basket full of dirty washing on the front step."

The dreamers associations:

The dreamer was in the process of an emotionally draining divorce.

Front door, entrance to the world, amplified the persona.

Washing basket, a container.

Dirty washing an idiom for someone's dirty secrets or failures. Amplified this could refer to some shadow aspect.

He feels embarrassed by the dirty washing.

The dream message:

The dream is showing the dreamer that he feels that his dirty laundry is on display, for the world to see.

Dream transformation:

The dreamer needs to take a look at whose dirty secrets are on display, as the dream does not indicate that it is the dreamer's dirty laundry. The dreamer needs to look at whose failures and what failings he feels are being displayed and to come to terms with the fact that we all have dirty washing so why is the dreamer embarrassed by the dirty washing.

Jung's Dream House

"I was in a house I did not know, which had two storeys. It was "my house". I found myself in the upper storey, where there was a kind of salon furnished with fine old pieces in Rococo style. On the walls hung a number of precious, old paintings. I wondered that this should be my house and thought, "Not bad". But then it occurred to me that I did not know what the lower floor looked like. Descending the stairs, I reached the ground floor. There everything was much older. I realised that this part of the house must date from about the fifteenth or sixteenth century. The furnishings were medieval, the floors were of red brick. Everywhere it was rather dark. I went from one room to another, thinking, "Now I really must explore the whole house." I came upon a heavy door and opened it. Beyond it, I discovered a stone stairway that led down into a cellar. Descending again, I found myself in a beautifully vaulted room which looked exceedingly ancient. Examining the walls, I discovered layers of brick among the ordinary stone blocks, and chips of brick in the mortar. As soon as I saw this, I knew that the walls dated from Roman times. My interest by now was intense. I looked more closely at the floor. It was of stone slabs and in one of these I discovered a ring. When I pulled it, the stone slab lifted and again I saw a stairway of narrow stone steps leading down to the depths. These, too, I descended and entered a low cave cut into rock. Thick dust lay on the floor and in the dust were scattered bones and broken pottery, like remains of a primitive culture. I discovered two human skulls, obviously very old, and half disintegrated. Then I awoke."

Jung's associations and interpretation:

Jung presented the dream to Freud, who he was working very closely with at the time, but dissatisfied with his (Freud's) reading of it^[2] Jung independently interpreted the dream along the following lines: the house was a symbol of his

psyche or psychology. Our homes being amongst the most primal of our collective symbols. The home is where the heart is, as the old saying goes. Our homes are our castles (irrespective of how modest they may be), our sanctuaries. They are sacred ground. The border of the home constitutes a boundary between me and mine and “the world”, “the others”. Its boundaries are designed to keep the unwelcome out and admit the welcome by my invitation. In my home (ideally) I feel contained, safe, held. The home symbolically is an extended psychic body, a manifestation of my soul in the world. And inasmuch as it holds me it is also a symbol of the mother. This symbolic significance explains much of the cultural rituals and protocols around our homes and their status in our society. Once you become a guest in my home there is a subtle but significant shift in your status from someone-out-there to someone-one-in-here. The beliefs and cultural norms of the Bedouin tribes are particularly telling in this regard. This also goes some way to explaining the lasting psychological trauma of a home invasion and the frequent need to relocate.

And in the dream Jung is clear that it is not just any house but his house, “my house”. Once one is armed with the concept of the collective unconscious the rest follows fairly organically. Of course Jung himself wasn’t, so the reading he birthed is a testament to his genius. As he descends the various layers of his house, he is descending the layers of his own psychology, psyche or soul. What he discovers is that each successive layer connects him with an earlier time in man’s history and the history of his ancestral line and also casts an increasingly wide net so that his interconnectedness to his fellow man is increased. Or perhaps it is better stated to say he is increasingly connected to an ever wider group of fellow human beings who share, at the various levels, his ancestry. Such that he begins in his personal living space on the upper floor and ends in the shared prehistoric roots of all mankind.

Active Imagination

An addition and amplification of dream analysis is active imagination. This unique method of accessing and dialoguing with the unconscious was discovered by Jung. It must number among his most significant contributions to depth psychology. Active imagination is the method of dreaming awake. Whilst it has similarities to lucid dreaming, it should not be confused with it. Lucid dreaming is waking up in your dream state. Active imagination is entering a dream-like state whilst literally awake.¹

Active imagination unlike dreaming and reverie (day dreaming, spontaneous fantasy creation) is not spontaneous. It is method that has to be consciously learnt and practised. It can perhaps be usefully compared to a meditative practise. Active Imagination is a Western form of mediation. Beyond its adoption by Jungian psychology it is also practice of the Sufi tradition. Subsequent to Jung's original formulation, there has been a cross pollination of Sufi ideas into Jungian psychology. Specifically, in the work of James Hillman and Imaginal Psychology. Hillman, being inspired by the work of the French philosopher, Henry Corbin.

The idea from Corbin and the Sufi tradition being that when the practise of active imagination is done properly the subject is transported to the mundus imaginalis, or imaginal world. By "properly" here what is meant is that the imagination used in this way is a faculty of perception. And, this type of perception is wholly distinct from the fabrications and illusions of fantasy and wish fulfilment. When one enters the mundus imaginalis, or in the Sufi tradition, alam al-mithal, one is in the words of Hillman, in the archetypal realm. The mundus imaginalis is the location of the archetypes. For those of you who have seen the series, Twin Peaks, the Black and White Lodges that Cooper visits in his dreams, are a useful cinematic metaphor for this idea.

¹ Jung, 1935, CW. 6, para. 723

The method

Everything that follows in terms of method should be treated as provisional. These are not hard and fast rules, cast in stone, but rather guidelines. Ultimately you need to discover for yourself the method and conditions that best suit you entering this space. That said, treat this as a starting point to for the practice of active imagination if you are not already familiar with and adept at it.

- You will need to find a space and place where you feel safe, that is private and where you will not be disturbed.
- You want to be fully lucid and awake. Doing this just before going to sleep, for example is not ideal; typically, you will then fall asleep. What you want is be full wake, conscious and aware.
- Do some brief relaxation technique, no more than 3 to 5 minutes, such as slow deep breathing to prepare yourself for the active imagination.
- Close your eyes and focus on a recent dream or one of your symbols or some fantasy content (for the purposes of this application avoid any sexual fantasy) or a provocative image or a situation you found very stimulating or disturbing (once again, nothing sexual). Focus on the image as though you were seeing it on a screen, for our purposes though, a fully immersive screen – something like an Imax theatre or for those who are familiar with them virtual reality goggles. Hold this focus until the images start to become animated. As soon as this happens you are in the active imagination. Now allow the active imagination to unfold as it will and observe and be aware of what you are witnessing.
- Once you are done you will record what you witnessed as though it were a dream, in effect it is.
- The entire active imagination should not endure longer than a few minutes. It is difficult to be too prescriptive here, but ten minutes would

probably be too long, three to five minutes would be a good ballpark average.

- What you need to avoid:
 - Do not try and control the outcome of the active imagination or influence it in any way. This is not a form of positive visualisation!
 - Do NOT allow any harm to come to your psychic self! Should that occur, you need to immediately consciously intervene and literally defend yourself, i.e. to manipulate what is happening, or break off the imagination immediately.
 - DO NOT doubt what you have witnessed with the thought, well I just made that up or some variance of that idea. That is an impossibility, whatever comes to you is a product of the unconscious. /you can close down the process by contriving it, i.e. consciously manipulating it, but you cannot “; make anything up”, whatever you make up is in fact the unconscious content.

Application

Please use the transcript as a guide to interpreting your dreams and active imaginations. Just to recap this process, follow the following steps:

Step 1: Record your dream:

Dream work begins with capturing the dream, writing it down as soon as possible for later interpretation.

Step 2: Finding Personal Associations:

Every dream is made up of a series of images; the foundation for interpreting dreams is discovering the personal associations and meaning that the images hold for you.

Step 3: Finding Objective Associations:

Looking at dreams through amplification, through an archetypal framework, expands your personal associations into the realm of the objective and allows you to discover unplumbed depths of your psyche.

Step 4: Interpreting the Dream Message:

Translating your dream images, your personal and objective associations into psychological language helps you to discover and interpret the dream's meaning and connect the meaning of the dream to the dynamics of your inner life.

Step 5: Making the Dream Concrete:

The specific images and message you received from your dream bring with them an energy that contains transformative potential, integrating the insights or the message of your dream into your conscious, waking life takes your understanding of the dream off the purely abstract level and gives it an immediate, concrete reality.

The facilitators will be on the FB group page to help and guide you through this process. We look forward to helping you explore your dreamscape!

References:

Robert A. Johnson, Inner Work, Using Dreams and Active Imagination for Personal Growth, published by Harper Collins, 1989

Yorum Kaufmann, The Way of the Image, published by Zahav Books Inc, 2009