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# THE CONSCIOUS LIVING PROGRAMME

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## The Interpretation of Dreams

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# The Interpretation of dreams

*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

## Why do we dream?

Dreaming helps us to recharge the mind and revitalise the body; but are there more to dreams?

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

Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis viewed dreams as representations of 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 struggles of his patients might be explored. Published in his ground-breaking book *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) Freud famously described the dream as 'the royal road to the unconscious'.

## The Unconscious

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

The unconscious was viewed by Freud as a place where forgotten, repressed or dreaded elements of the psyche is stored. Carl Jung, one of the first pioneers into the mystery of consciousness and its relationship with the unconscious, viewed the unconscious contrarily to his peers. 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 stores all the information 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 programmes, that ...

- governs your bodily functions such as your breathing, heart rate, kidney function, liver functions etc.
- determines your instinctive behavioural 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 and 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 cohabitates and there is a constant flow of energy and information between these two functions, yet they 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 in symbolic language with yourself; it sends messages between the unconscious and conscious. Through working with your dreams you make it possible for yourself to explore important parts of your own psyche and you create an opportunity to get to know yourself better.

Dreams ...

- provide insight into the way in which you operate in the world
- help you to examine the recurring patterns playing out in your life and assists you to gain insight into the key challenges and choices that these patterns offer
- provide insight into areas of your life in which you feel stuck
- give insight into your relationships with others
- offer insights into your feelings
- enable you to make conscious and wise choices
- create greater self-knowledge and self-understanding
- provide awareness of new possibilities and opportunities where previously you saw none
- grant access to personal and meaningful messages
- contribute to meaning in your life
- create personal transformation
- offer connections to aspects of yourself that are larger than your ego
- guide your personal growth and support you to achieve your full potential

## So how do you work with your dreams?

In the words of Jung:

*Collective Works 8, p 00*

*'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.'*

## Dream work map

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

Working with your dreams involves the following.

- **Confession – recording your dreams**

Dream work begins with capturing the dream by immediately writing it down for interpretation later (you can also use a voice note). Then write it down as soon as possible.

- **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 these 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 unexplored depths of your psyche.

- **Education – interpreting the dream message**

Translating your dream images through personal as well as objective associations helps you to discover and interpret the dream's meaning and connects the meaning of the dream to the dynamics of your inner life.

- **Transformation – making the dream concrete**

The specific images and messages you receive from your dreams are accompanied by an energy that contains transformative potential; it integrates the insights or the messages of your dreams into your conscious as well as into your waking life. The understanding of your dream is no longer on a purely abstract level or for later interpretation – it provides immediate and concrete reality.

## Stage 1 to 5

The 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 personally, they need to be recorded. Patterns and repeating images are a guide to what your unconscious deems important issues. These become clearer when written down in a dedicated book and kept together. When you start paying attention to your dreams, the unconscious starts communicating 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 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 meaningful 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, and keep the right hand side blank for interpretations, comments, sketches and subsequent analyses. Date the entry and write down the dream in the sequence of events, capturing as much detail of the dream as possible.



When writing down your dream, keep this list handy.

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

Sometimes it is seemingly the most 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, so don't worry about 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

During the first stage you just want to capture your dream; avoid trying to analyse or decipher what your dream might mean. You can also draw images from the dream – frequently this is useful, especially if you are trying to convey something that cannot be expressed in words.

Once you have captured your dream, identify key words in the dream and see if you are able to create a title from these words. This will help you to identify and link dream themes in future.

Having recorded your dream, you are ready to begin the process of illumination and clarification, 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 and 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.

For example:

The king summons his vizier.	King
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Next to the image write down your associations with this image – what are the words, ideas, mental pictures, feelings or memories that pop into your head when you think about this image? Draw as many associations with your 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 do 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? About what does it make you think?
- 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 expression 'backbiting'. This means talking about and undermining someone who is not present (behind their back)
- dreaming about 'taking the bull by the horns' – an idiom which means 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. that you have of the dream image, using Jung's directed or controlled dream associations. This includes exploring spontaneous ideas which originates from the dream situation. It is important to keep going back to your dream image; as you don't want to start a chain of free associations, which will lead you away from the dream image.

For example:

The king summons his vizier	<b>King</b>  - a ruler  - a person who rules over a territory  - the best or most important person or object/subject 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. In your dreams, your unconscious is communicating with you alone, selecting images and symbols that have meaning to you and to nobody else. No other individual has your background, your emotions or your experience. The interpretation of dreams are therefore an entirely personal and individual matter which can only be interpreted in the context of your own life.

There is no single 'correct' symbol interpretation and you can't consult a dream guide to provide you with dream interpretation – you cannot find the answer to what your dream is trying to communicate to you outside of yourself – dream symbols cannot be classified.

You will experience a feeling of appropriateness or recognition ('this is right') when you find the correct association to your dream image – it will make complete sense to you. Looking back at the dream snippet shared, your ideas and associations for 'king' may be different to mine, as the image probably has a different meaning or message for you.

Repeat this process for each image in the dream.

The king summons his vizier.	<p><u>King</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- a ruler</li><li>- a person who rules over a territory</li><li>- the best or most important person or object in a group</li></ul> <p><u>Summons</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- to call</li><li>- an order to appear</li></ul> <p><u>Vizier</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- the king's main adviser or servant or steward</li><li>- a helper</li></ul>
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As you work through your personal associations with your dream images you may at certain times experience that you just can't connect the image 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 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 concept 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 characteristics, motivations and personality traits. Examples of the archetypal images are for instance the hero, the child or the mother, etc. Jung’s archetypes are not limited to human characters; there are also animal archetypes like the serpent and the lion; as well as objects functioning as archetypes, such as 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, shading 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 and their manifestations in images and symbols; as well as 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 and that the image or symbol can be found universally and across all 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; also write down your amplified associations and see what they say about who you are and what forces are at work within 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 following.

- **The persona.** The word persona comes from the large carved masks worn by Greek actors as they performed before audiences. It actually means 'to sound through'. These masks were not only used to identify the characters in the play; it also served as primitive megaphones carrying 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; and serves as a bridge between our ego and the external world. The persona is our public personality, the face we show the world and it also acts as the mask through which we get to know each other and interact. The persona is a compromise between what society expects of us and our own inner personal identity. Today, most of us are inclined 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. It is this negativity towards the persona, seen 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 symbolised by what we are wearing, our clothing, uniforms, animal skins or by our own skin, our nakedness.

- **The ego** is the centre 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 symbolised by the hero.
- **The shadow** represents unknown or little known characteristics of the ego. The shadow is the inferior being in all of us, '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 uncivilised 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 symbolised by an inferior figure – tramp, beggar, servant, drug addict, pervert, thief, gypsy, prostitute or by anything dark and threatening, such as a 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; we call this the Animus. A man's 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 symbolised by a person of the opposite sex to the dreamer; a woman, a sister or a cow, a cat, a tiger, a cave, a ship. In addition to a person of the opposite sex, the animus would be symbolised by an eagle, a bull or a lion.

**Amplifying dream settings**

The unconscious is often thought of as a set of divided 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 us. These rooms also symbolise aspects of our personality: be aware of 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**

<p>The king summons his vizier</p>	<p>King</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a ruler</li> <li>- a person who rules over a territory</li> <li>- the best or most important person or object in a group</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Objectively a king refers to whatever rules a territory</i></b></p> <p>Summons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-a call</li> <li>-an order to appear</li> </ul> <p><b>Objectively to summons means to call for someone or something</b></p> <p>Vizier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a helper</li> <li>- the kings main adviser or servant or steward</li> </ul>
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	<b>Objectively a vizier is the main helper to the king</b>
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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 <http://appliedjung.com/applied-guide> You have now completed Stage 3 and have identified your personal associations and objective association with your dream images. In Stage 4, we are now going to look at interpreting 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 made by beginners in dream interpretation, is to enquire, ‘What does this dream mean?’ instead of ‘what is this dream saying to me?’ 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; while ignoring the hidden message which the dream invariably 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 ...

- it presents a map, showing your consciousness the path it is on; how this path may have diverged from the one you are meant to travel and what pitfalls and treasures lie ahead. Dreams are guides to areas in your psyche which need work
- it never tells you what you already know. They tell you what you don’t know and what is not seen by you. They intentionally communicate something to you that is currently consciously unknown and so invariably they communicate your blind spot or an one-sidedness that has developed in your personality. Usually, if the meaning is clear and too obvious; your interpretation is 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
- it 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 this experience.
- Dreams are the only access which 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. Frequently, the function of dreams is to provide you with the opposite point of view, the dream attempts 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 represented by the situation in the dream image. This can be done by asking yourself the following questions.

- What is the initial situation?
- What develops or changes?
- What is the action?
- What is the climax?
- How does the dream end?
- Has the situation changed from the beginning of the dream?
- How did you leave things?

Having answered the questions above, you should now be able to identify the central, most important message that the dream is trying to communicate to you.

Ask yourself:

- why 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 greater meaning of the dream; pertaining to my whole life?

### Example

From our sample snippet we gather the following:

- 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. You need to figure out what is going on inside of you and what is happening in your psyche.

Ask yourself the following questions to figure out what is represented by the situation in the dream image.

- 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 this same trait in other parts of my personality?
- Who is it inside of me, who feels like this or behaves like this?
- 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?

From our sample dream snippet (The king summons his vizier) 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. However, how do you decide which one is the right one among these possible interpretations?

Robert Johnson (*Inner Work*) advises us to refer to the following principles when seeking clarity or confirming an interpretation.



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

Congratulations! At this stage you have uncovered the message or meaning of your dream. Now you are 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 messages you received from your dream are accompanied by an energy that contains transformative potential. Having insight and an understanding of these images and messages will not necessarily bring about transformation in your life. To transform, you need to turn your insights into action in the real world.

It is imperative 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. It is important to ask yourself, ‘What am I going to do about this dream?’

Performing a physical act takes your understanding of the dream from a purely abstract level to an immediate, concrete reality, however this step requires either a practical or a symbolic act.

- **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 and this could include taking control of your finances; becoming more security conscious; taking a closer look at 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 – more relaxation, fun, exercise, etc. A practical act would be to choose one of these activities, decide how much time you wish to spend on it and schedule time in your day or week for this. You need to honour your dreams by incorporating their advice into your life.
- **A symbolic act.** Sometimes there may not be a specific or practical act that you can perform – in these cases you can bring your dream into the real world by performing a symbolic or ritual act. Examples include 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 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 or 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 and be in charge.

## Dream Work – an overview

To see the dream analysis process at work, take a look at dream work 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 are sticking out of the pot through two holes on the side. I carefully take him out, so that I won't hurt his legs; and put him in the other pot."*

#### **The dreamer's associations**

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

*Green represents money, but it also represents 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 under, specifically the responsibility of caring for his family and making sure that they are financially taken care of. To him, his son also represents the future. Amplifying this image the dreamer's son also represents the dreamer's inner child; and in some way the dreamer's inner child is in the pot – entangled in this decision.*

*Legs are something which carries you forward.*

*Cooking is a form of preparation, an alchemical process; and here the dreamer is cooking up his future, like the alchemists of old, he is attempting to transmute base metal into gold. Here, again the 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 perspective and that he hasn't evaluated the situation properly.

The dream is advising the dreamer to proceed carefully (he had to take his son carefully out of the pot) and highlighting that the time is not ripe yet.

### ***Dream transformation***

Practically this dreamer needs to re-evaluate his decision and 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 and simply denies that the appointment was for 8.00 am. I suspect he is seeking to not meet with me and is using the mix-up with the time as a way to avoid the issues which we need to deal 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 to specifically ask to see the appointment book.”*

### ***The dreamer’s 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 the change.

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

*Senior manager is someone in charge. Amplifying this image 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). When amplified, this image could be the dreamer’s inner guide or the wise old man.*

*The manager’s secretary is traditionally feminine and when amplified, it 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 the issues are which he needs to deal with; he also needs to look at which issues he is avoiding. In doing this the dreamer needs to consult with his feeling function which evaluates; but when ignored, manifests as moodiness and highly charged emotions. The dreamer should not be so focused on his thinking function, as it is misleading him.

### **Dirty Laundry**

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

### ***The dreamer's associations***

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

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

*Laundry basket, a container.*

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

*He feels embarrassed by the dirty laundry.*

### ***The dream message***

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

### ***Dream transformation***

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

### Jung's Dream House

*"I was in a two-storey house I was not familiar with. 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 was astounded that this was 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. Here everything was much older and I realised that this part of the house must date back from 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 made 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<sup>[2]</sup> 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 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' and '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.

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; it also casts an increasingly wide net so that his interconnectedness to his fellow man is intensified. Perhaps it is better stated if we 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.

## References

Robert A Johnson *Inner Work Using Dreams and Active Imagination for Personal Growth* Harper Collins 1989

Yorum Kaufmann *The Way of the Image* Zahav Books Inc 2009

## **Quick Dream Interpretation Guide**

The following steps to dream interpretation follows the same formula from the 4 Steps of Transformation. Before I guide you through the process, I would like to point out two important aspects that must be considered when interpreting your dream.

1. **The dream is usually a comment** on something that happened during the day. You read something or someone said something and this made an impression on you and you had some thoughts about it. When you record your dream, try to identify the events of the previous day that may have influenced it.
2. **The dream is usually a criticism.** Don't be fooled into believing that the dream is a confirmation or affirmation. Work through your interpretation first. The dream is the only objective perspective on what you are experiencing and it is often brought about by a one-sided and incorrect attitude on your ego's part. Keep this in mind when you do your interpretation.

## Step 1 Confession

Capture the dream in detail; even if it is a snippet, write it down. As you give attention to your dreams (even the little pieces you remember); they will become clearer and more detailed. Write down where the dream took place, how you felt, who was in it, the movement and flow of the dream, where there colours and anything else that you can remember.

## Step 2 Illumination

Go through the dream line by line and write down your associations. Are there any similarities to real places or real people? Did it reflect a real event or a conversation or something you read or watched? Feelings, emotions, thoughts, all associations must be captured. If the association brings up memories, fantasies or ruminations, capture these as well. It may be helpful to see how the dream differs from reality. Does anything happen in the dream that is impossible or highly unlikely? This usually points to a skewed perspective or paradigm in the waking ego.

## Step 3 Amplification

Reflect on the images in your dream from an archetypal perspective. Are the characters in your dream archetypal, i.e. a king or a beggar? What about other images in the dream such as animals, metal or any objects? Are any of these archetypal? Consider what information these dream images contain for you and their relevance to your current situation.

## Step 4 Education

Carefully go through your associations. What do you think the dream is making a comment on (remember what happened during the day preceding the dream). Is the dream perhaps reflecting how you really feel or giving you a different perspective on an issue or an event?

See what emerges from the information that you have extracted from the dream.

## Step 5 Transformation

If you have an idea what the dream is saying to you, then this last step is about acknowledging this perspective and adjusting the waking ego's behaviour in some way to bring about an integration of this perspective into consciousness. What can you do to bring this back into balance or how can you include this information in your current paradigm? These questions are the foundation of potential transformation contained in a dream.

## Resources

### Books

Freud S (1931) *The Interpretation of Dreams* The Macmillan Company, New York

Fromm E (2013) *The forgotten language: An introduction to the understanding of dreams, fairy tales, and myths* Open Road Media, New York

Jung C G (1928-1930) *Dream analysis: notes of the seminar given in 1928-1930* Routledge & Kegan Paul 1984 Abingdon-on-Thames, United Kingdom

Jung C G (1945) *On the nature of dreams* *Collected Works* 8 pp 363-379 Princeton University Press, New Jersey

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Jung C G & Shamdasani S (2010) *Dreams* (From Volumes 4, 8, 12 and 16 of the *Collected Works of CG Jung*) (New in Paper) (Vol 20). Princeton University Press, New Jersey

Kaufmann Y (2009) *The Way of the Image: the orientational approach to the psyche* Zahav Books, New York

Neumann E (1954) *The Origins and History of Consciousness* Princeton University Press, New Jersey

Von Franz Marie-Louise (posthumous 1998) *On dreams and death* Open Court, Chicago

## Youtube videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDEeQegYOz4> (The importance of dreams part 1)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zg0y7WXZfy0> (The importance of dreams part 2)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8vttgYRQ9PI> (The way of the dream by Marie Louise von Franz)

## Articles

[http://www.jungiananalysts.com/wp/?page\\_id=37](http://www.jungiananalysts.com/wp/?page_id=37)

<https://www.google.co.za/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=12&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CDQQFjABOAo&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dreamresearch.ca%2Fpdf%2Fjung.pdf&ei=vICTVcmDI6P17AbV7IqQAw&usg=AFQjCNGu7cTeabcrBLOX0LEaiSOSm-434w&sig2=Eqq0zxDfPP4VUwdPP05Gow>

<http://www.carl-jung.net/dreams.html>