

Dancing the Dream Awake

Since 1982

Vol. 23 No. 1

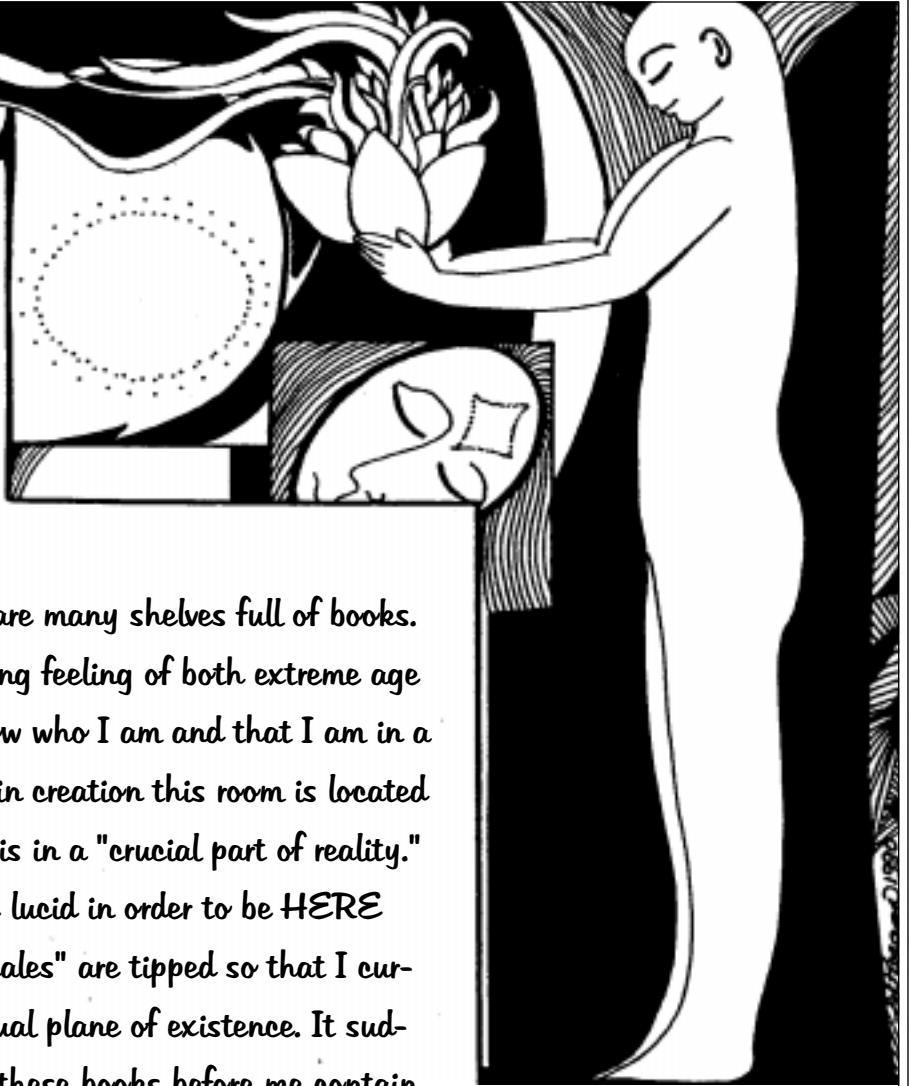
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Dream Network



Accessing the Akashic Records



I am in a small room and there are many shelves full of books. There is a lot of dust and a strong feeling of both extreme age and importance. I am lucid. I know who I am and that I am in a dream state. I don't know where in creation this room is located but it comes to my mind that it is in a "crucial part of reality."

I feel that it is essential to be lucid in order to be **HERE** but, because of it, some sort of "scales" are tipped so that I currently exist more here than the usual plane of existence. It suddenly strikes me consciously that these books before me contain

the sum of knowledge and experience. Not just the human, but '**ALL**'.

They answer the questions of life. I know that to read them would give me total understanding, but I also have a foreboding that if I pick up and begin reading just one book that it will

draw me completely to this plane—this place—and I will never be able to return. My choice is absolute knowledge at my fingertips, requiring that I give up life as I know it... or to return

to my "normal" plane and struggle to increase my knowledge and awareness with my limited human senses. I feel I cannot yet give up my family and my need for familiarity on this plane and the choice is made. I awaken in a small room and my mom is there. I excitedly tell her about my dream and how real it was. Suddenly I notice unusual aspects in my surroundings and I realize that I am still dreaming!

The realization shocks me awake for real this time and I complete this experience by calling my mother on the phone and telling her about it.

I hope to be given this choice again sometime when I'm ready.

I've often wondered if this was a glimpse of the one given all of us, eventually, inevitably.

Statement of Purpose

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Our purpose is to raise individual and cultural appreciation for the value of dreams and to disseminate information that will assist and empower us in taking responsibility for our cultural, emotional and spiritual well-being with the help of dreams & mythology. Our goals are to unite and serve those who respect dreams, to empower dreamers in demystifying dreamwork and to assist with the integration of dreamsharing into our culture, in whatever ways of integrity are shown and given us.

We believe that dreams are agents for change and often reveal important new insights about the life of the dreamer, both personal and cultural. Recalling a dream is a signal that we are ready to understand the information that has been presented. Enacting the dream's hint can bring personal empowerment.

We seek to provide a balance and to give all nations, voices and schools of thought an opportunity to be heard.

There will be times when a particular area of interest will be given greater emphasis than another because of the limited space in the Journal and that which is surfacing that is of interest to the readership.

The emphasis will change over time to allow for a wide range of opinions and areas of interest to be explored and expressed.

You are welcome and invited to indicate areas of interest and questions you would like to see explored in future issues.

Dream Network

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Upcoming Focus

for Volume 23 No. 2

The Many Ways of Working with Dreams

Part II

Lifeline: 4 Weeks
after you receive
this issue.

About Our Cover and Feature Article

All photographs submitted for our cover and feature article—**When I Last Dreamed: Creating Dances from Dreams** (p.10-13)—are of the Berry College Dance Troupe, for which Jeanne Schul Elkins is Artistic Director. Cover photo credit and pictures for the article were all taken by Chris Love.

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The credits for the “When Last I Danced” pictures include:

- * Choreography: *Jeanne Schul Elkins*
- * Costume Designer: *Alice Bristow*
- * Scenic Designer: *Christian Boy*
- * Lighting Designer: *John Dolphin*
- * Dancers for Cover Image of Pilgrimage: *Elizabeth Bagwell, Meredith Bricker, Greer Smith, and Justin Wallace.*
- * Dancers for the ending pose of Pilgrimage: *Elizabeth Bagwell, Meredith Bricker, Samuel Bulow, Janie Hitchcock, Scott Knepp, Chandra Palubiak, Dayna Rickett, Greer Smith, Justin Wallace and Kristi Zimmerman.*

Editorial



In tune with the times and in harmony with our focus for this issue,
I would like to share with you one of my most important dreams,
rendered poetically. One of 'The Many Ways of Working with Dreams.'

The Tide is Turning

My dreambody swims many bodies of water

All kinds perceivable:

Streams, creeks, ponds, lakes, rivers,

It seems unbelievable.

There is a conscious knowing in my being as I play,

"Oh, yes, I know... I know water's ways:"

Its twisting and turning, its swellings and yearnings;

In stillness, reflection; in action, projection,

Its anger, its falls; the voices, its walls;

Its whirlpools.... unpredictability;

Its substance: spirituality...

I do know water's ways and how to interact, fearlessly.

In this moment of knowing, I'm inside a huge ocean wave

New Wave, cresting, curling

Have the honor of standing on its floor as its merging

A circular enormous proud moving hall

of turquoise, lavender, blue, creamy pearl.

I revel in seeing this warm womb-bright sight!

(At one point I stand with my 'back to the wall,'

Huge gushes of water may sweep me away!

One wrong move... and that's all!

It's a good thing,—A Good Thing—I know how to play.)

Before it collapses, I plunge into its heart
to surface behind it and watch it depart... as waves do on the sand...

.... when WHAT is this wonder my eyes now behold?

This wave's bending, turning right back. This is bold!

It isn't caressing and teasing the land (are you glancing?)

But doing wave upon wave of water-swirl dancing!

Perplexed, I awaken, a song in my Being

A mantra... a rhythm... not ending... repeating...

υ The Tide is Turning The Tide is Turning The Tide is Turning

May it be so. Love to you! Roberta O

Letters



Comments on Vol 22 No. 4 Dreaming with ETs

As always, your 22/4 was VERY interesting and gave food for thought.

I have a few suggestions for some of your correspondents, if you deem them worthy to be passed on:

1) re your Editorial, I believe that loved ones in dreams may well be visitations, but I am much more inclined to see them as personifications of 'The Higher Self,' the God Within

2) UFO's, IF they are extraneous to the one viewing them (and, once more, not an emanation from the viewer's "self") are, I am sure, in my own mind, benevolent.

3) Dana Redfield, on page 7, is—to my mind—correct in surmising that the whole world is being prepared for a shift in consciousness.

4) Jay Atilares, on page 8, will hopefully meanwhile have made contact with Leah Bowden,. I certainly recommend that she does so.

5) As regards Teresa Vattieri, on page 9, I believe that all these dream messages from various sources are meant to prepare her, not for a physical 'beau,' but for meeting up with her Higher Self, her God Within, an event SHE has to prepare herself for, not by sitting and waiting passively and negatively for 'Him' to materialize physically, but actively in her heart, spiritually, as there the real nuptials will (should) take place.

Maybe I sound 'Holier than thou', but these are my thoughts.

Much love,

Charles de Beer,
Umtentweni, South Africa

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I just received the magazine and you did a great job. Also, great cover art. Thanks!

I love the elephants. Thanks very much for running the story. I really appreciate it!

John D. Goldhammer, Seattle, WA

(Dr. Krippner—one of my highly regarded and deeply valued advisors—gave permission to share his well deserved award. Congratulations, Stanley! Editor)

Dr. Stanley Krippner, PhD
Saybrook Graduate School and Research Center
450 Pacific Avenue, 3rd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94133-4640
Fax: 415-433-9271

Dear Stan,

On behalf of Common Bond Institute, HARMONY Institute, the Association for Humanistic Psychology, and the Annual International Conference on Conflict Resolution, it is my great pleasure to inform you that you have been selected to receive the 2003 Ashley Montagu Peace Award, which will be presented at this year's 11th Annual International Conference on Conflict Resolution (ICR) in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Established in 1995, the Ashley Montagu Peace Award is regularly presented at the Annual ICR Conference to recognize and honor individuals whose life work has distinguished them in contributing to an international culture of peace and understanding.

Spanning many years and many countries, your life work in international psychology certainly exemplifies the kind of day to day commitment to 'the long run' and a deep, lasting contribution to grassroots peace, reconciliation, and healing efforts that the Ashley Montague Peace Award was established to pay tribute to.

We are pleased to honor you and your remarkable contribution in this way, and look forward to formally recognizing you at a plenary session of this year's Annual International Conference on Conflict Resolution in St. Petersburg.

Sincerely,

Steve Olweean, Director
Conference Coordinator
Common Bond Institute

Dream Network: Splendid!

What a splendid magazine—first time I've seen it! Almost every article and letter in Vol. 22 No. 4 hit the spot. Great information and lots of happy synchronicities. Like for instance Dana Redfield's letter about a sky full of ships, the wonderfully written piece by Andrew Ramer, "Dreaming of Aliens." I knew Andrew back in the 1980's when we wrote a book together and I can guarantee that he is one remarkable old alien, when he's not being an angel, or a dove-like spiritual master. I hope one day he will get to tell the whole of his story.

God Bless the Goddess, the magnificent Rainbow Serpent, the Fallen Mother, Dark Matter and ALL who sail in the air. With Love and Blessings,

Timothy Wyllie, Mountainair, NM

(Timothy's letter was sent on a card displaying his own artwork: A Sky Full of Ships! Ed.)

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Change Your World!

Whoever transmitted this translated message to you is irrelevant, and should remain anonymous in your mind. It is what you will do with this message that matters.

Each one of you wishes to exercise her/his free will and experience happiness. These are attributes that were shown to us and to which we now have access. Your free will depends upon the knowledge you have of your own power. Your happiness depends upon the love that you give and receive.

Who are we ?

Neither your scientists nor your religious representatives speak unanimously about the unexplained celestial events that mankind has witnessed for thousands of years. To know the truth, one must face it without the filter of one's beliefs, however respectable they may be.

A growing number of anonymous

researchers of yours are exploring new knowledge paths and are getting very close to reality. Today, your civilization is flooded with an ocean of information of which only a tiny part, the less upsetting one, is notably diffused.

What in your history seemed ridiculous or improbable has often become possible, then realized, in particular in the last fifty years. Be aware that the future will be even more surprising. You will discover the worst as well as the best.

Like billions of others in this galaxy, we are conscious creatures that some name "extraterrestrials", even though reality is subtler.

There is no fundamental difference between you and us, save for the experience of certain stages of evolution. Like in any other organized structure, hierarchy exists in our internal relationships. Ours is based upon the wisdom of several races. It is with the approval of this hierarchy that we turn to you.

Like most of you, we are in the quest of the Supreme Being. Therefore, we are not gods or lesser gods but virtually your equals in the Cosmic Brotherhood.

Physically, we are somewhat different from you, but for most of us humanoid-shaped.

Our existence is a reality but the majority of you do not perceive it yet. We are not mere observations, we are consciences just like you. You fail to be aware of us because we remain invisible to your senses and measure instruments most of the time.

We wish to fill this void at this moment in your history. We made this collective decision but this is not enough. We need yours. Through this message, you become the decision-makers! You personally. We have no human representative on Earth who could guide your decision.

What can we offer?

We can offer you a more holistic vision of the universe and of life, constructive interactions, the experience of fair and fraternal relationships, liberating technical

knowledge, eradication of suffering, controlled exercise of individual powers, the access to new forms of energy and, finally, a better comprehension of consciousness.

We cannot help you overcome your individual and collective fears, or bring you laws that you would not have chosen. You must work on your own selves, and make a collective effort to build the world you desire.

What is the question we ask you?

"Do You Wish That We Show Up?"

How can you answer this question?

The truth of soul can be read by telepathy. You only need to clearly ask yourself this question and give your answer as clearly, on your own or in a group, as you wish. Being in the heart of a city or in the middle of a desert does not impact the efficiency of your answer, YES or NO, immediately after asking the question. Just do it as if you were speaking to yourself.

This is a universal question and these mere few words, put in their context, have a powerful meaning. You should not let hesitation get in the way. This is why you should calmly think about the question and your response, in all conscience. In order to perfectly associate your answer with the question, it is recommended that you answer right after another reading of this message.

Do not rush to answer. Breathe and let all the power of your own free will penetrate you. Be proud of what you are! The problems that you may have weaken you. Forget about them for a few minutes and be yourSelves. Feel the force that springs up in you. You are in control of yourselves!

A single thought, a single answer can drastically change your near future, in one way or another. Your individual decision of asking your inner self that we show up on your material plan and in broad daylight is precious and essential to us.

Even though you can choose the way that best suits you, rituals are

essentially useless. A sincere request made with your heart and your own will will always be perceived by those of us whom it is sent to. In your own private polling booth of your secret will, you will determine the future.

What would be the consequences of a positive decision?

For us, the immediate consequence of a collective favorable decision would be the materialization of many ships, in your sky and on Earth.

For you, the direct effect would be the rapid abandoning of many certitudes and beliefs.

A simple, conclusive visual contact would have huge repercussions on your future. Much knowledge would be modified forever. The organization of your societies would be deeply upheaved forever, in all fields of activity. Power would become individual because you would see for yourself that we are living. Concretely, you would change the scale of your values!

The most important thing for us is that humankind would form a single family in front of this "unknown" we would represent!

Danger would slowly melt away from your homes because you would indirectly force the undesirable ones, those we name the "third party", to show up and vanish. You would all bear the same name and share the same roots: Mankind!

Later on, peaceful and respectful exchanges would be thus possible, if such is your wish. For now, he who is hungry cannot smile, he who is fearful cannot welcome us. We are sad to see men, women and children suffering to such a degree in their flesh and in their hearts when they bear such an inner light. This light can be your future. Our relationships could be progressive.

Several stages of several years or decades would occur: demonstrative appearance of our ships, physical appearance beside human beings, collaboration in your technical and spiritual evolution, discovery of parts of the galaxy.

Every time, new choices would be

offered to you. You would then decide by yourself to cross new stages if you think it necessary to your external and inner well-being. No interference would be decided upon unilaterally. We would leave as soon as you would collectively wish that we do.

Depending upon the speed to spread the message across the world, several weeks, or even several months will be necessary before our "great appearance", if such is the decision made by the majority of those who will have used their capacity to choose, and if this message receives the necessary support. The main difference between your daily prayers to entities of a strictly spiritual nature and your current decision is extremely simple: we are technically equipped to materialize!

Why spread such a message among yourselves?

Translate and spread this message widely. This action will affect your future in an irreversible and historical way at the scale of millenniums, otherwise, it will postpone a new opportunity to choose to several years later, at least one generation, if it can survive.

Not choosing stands for undergoing other people's choice. Not informing others stands for running the risk of obtaining a result that is contrary to one's expectations. Remaining indifferent means giving up one's free will. It is all about your future. It is all about your evolution.

It is possible that this invitation does not receive your collective assent and that, because of a lack of information, it will be disregarded. Nevertheless, no individual desire goes unheeded in the universe.

Imagine our arrival tomorrow. Thousands of ships. A unique cultural shock in today's/mankind's history. It will then be too late to regret about not making a choice and spreading the message because this discovery will be irreversible. We do insist that you do not rush into it, but do think about it... and decide!

The big medias will not be necessarily interested in spreading this message. It is therefore your task, as an anonymous yet an extraordinary thinking and loving being, to transmit it.

You are still the architects of your own fate...

"Do you wish that we show up?"

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Errata in Unariuns Dreaming Vol. 22 No. 4

I read the preview of the *Unariuns Dreaming* article Online, which was very exciting, but I was very dismayed to read one of the changes that was made in the article I wrote, for it totally changes the meaning, and actually doesn't make sense. Here is what I submitted as the last two sentences of the second paragraph...

"I know without a doubt that the beings on board that ship are coming to help us because I can feel the love oscillation that they are projecting, and it's wonderful! I must let other people know that they are coming in peace, so they won't be afraid of these benevolent beings."

What appears in the article is... "I must let other people know that they are coming in peace, so the aliens won't be afraid of these benevolent beings. They refers to other people from the first part of the sentence, the earth people, so changing to aliens doesn't make sense—so the beings won't be afraid of themselves?"

I would have appreciated you contacting me if you, or whomever edited my write-up, felt the sentence was unclear, to clarify what was being said instead of changing them to aliens.

In Light, Celeste Appel
El Cajon, CA cappel@cox.net

We offer our apology and encourage readers to refer to your article, integrating this information. Please accept. Ed.

I received the *Dream Network Journal* Vol. 22 No. 4 and I thank you for sending it. I find it very interesting but I was hoping that you could send it in Spanish because I don't read English very well.

It was brought to my attention a book in the journal: *Radical Dreaming* by John Goldhamer. I would like to purchase this book if it is available in Spanish.

Thank you again!

Mario Guerrero, Bath, NY

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Our 'Letters' section is the place for you to ask Questions, share your experience, inspirations, dreams and perspectives. You may even choose to initiate a debate!

Please send one or more of the above to
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Focus: (Some of)

The Many Ways of

Working with Dreams

Part I



Dancing the Dream Awake

When Last I Dreamed: Creating Dances from Dreams



By Jeanne Schul Elkins

Introduction

DANCE HAS THE POWER TO MANIFEST THE UNCONSCIOUS visibly through the physical shapes the dancers make and the movement patterns that they trace through space. The imagery that the dance stirs up in the mind's eye engages the audience's imagination. "Dreams never lie," C. G. Jung assures us. Gabrielle Roth asserts, "The body never lies." Therefore, a dream dance has the potential to express a very primal truth.

I teach dance at a small, private liberal arts college where I am Artistic Director of the Berry College Dance Troupe. We present an annual dance concert for which I develop original dances. For the 2002 concert entitled, 'Wishes, Lies, and Dreams,' I created a dream dance as a way of working with the dream material that was bubbling up to consciousness for me.

For years, I have recorded every dream that awakened me from sleep. These dreams were often intensely gripping nightmares that demanded my immediate attention. I have also done stream-of-consciousness journaling in which much of my dream material arises.

When Last I Dreamed

When I began working on this dream dance, my students found this way of honoring dreams fascinating. I brought in passages from Jung and John Sanford to give them a deeper perspective on how I was transforming the dreams into choreography. Before I began teaching a dance phrase, I would read the dream to them that we were about to enact. I wanted the dancers to understand the motivation behind the movement. Sometimes the dream would speak to one of the dancers personally and he/she would literally jump at the chance to portray the protagonist.

'When Last I Dreamed' provided the opportunity to embody my dreams. It recreated the visions I had seen in my sleep. Although I did a great deal of research into dream symbolism, my goal was to delve into the feeling state that came up in the dream, rather than analyzing the meaning of the dream. I also explored active imagination as a way of finishing a dream or to further develop dream material.

Opening



Full Set

'When Last I Dreamed' opened in relative stillness. The audience was invited into the dreamscape, which included the outline of a two-story Tudor style home with twin dormers, a huge birdcage, and a pedestal. The two male dancers and six female dancers were costumed in fluid silk pants and short-sleeved shirts in pale tones, reminiscent of pajamas.

Angels

The first dream sequence re-enacted Jacob's classic dream from the Old Testament, wherein a ladder connecting heaven and earth appeared, with angels flowing up and down the rungs. In this angelic dance, the female dancers entered sequentially and began turning. The Dervish-like spinning invoked a sense of relinquishing control, of surrendering to the Divine. Next, pairs and single dancers 'took flight,' in the form of running leaps, as well as

male-assisted lifts. So, the opening dream sequence created a sense of Divine presence in the dream dance.

Man with a Gun



The next section of the dance depicted scenes from nightmares. My first disturbing dream reported:

I am at the home of my childhood, even though I am a young mother. I am facing our green front door, surrounded by ivy wallpaper. I can see a man that I recognize on the other side of the door, a man with whom I was once very much in love. Now, however, the sight of this man holding a gun outside my front door is extremely threatening. I panic as I realize that my parents have never locked their doors, in fact, none of their doors or windows lock. I feel extremely vulnerable. My heart is pounding. I know that there is no way of keeping this man at bay. Somehow, I muster the courage to shove the front door open and he falls into an abyss with his gun falling after him.

This dark dream unfolded as a dance phrase in which a young woman seemed to be panicking and running from room to room inside the Tudor house. A large man with a gun crept up to the house and paced back and forth in front of the window. He peered inside at her. The female recognized him, but only responded to him as a threat to her security. The tension mounted, as harsh music grew more intense, until she finally fainted and he ran off stage.

Two Women

The second section of the dark dreams involved two female dancers who performed a frantic dance to discordant music. Their movements were harsh, angular, and staccato. Their arm gestures slashed out into space. They fell to the floor. Their bodies exploded open. They contracted violently closed. It was a dance of possession. It brought up images of the medieval Tarantella, in which women reportedly danced out of control until they passed out or died.

Falling

After we had been building the dance for several weeks, I asked all the dancers, "What dreams do you have that we are not portraying?" "Falling dreams!" was the resounding response. So, we immediately began to recreate their dream experiences. Three of the tiniest dancers agreed to be the fallers. They each mounted the pedestal and one after another fell backwards into the arms of the other dancers, who then eased each to the floor. This added interest to the dance and the collaboration gave everyone a sense of ownership in the creative process. Then our 6' 6" former collegiate baseball player shared his idea: "I always dream that I'm falling face first. I'd like to try doing that." Everyone froze! He outweighed most of our dancers by over one hundred pounds! Still, everyone agreed to let him have his turn falling, very aware of how much force would have to be absorbed to keep him safe. When it was his turn, he didn't just fall passively into their arms; he sprung off the pedestal like he was diving into a swimming pool!

The studio echoed with the slapping sound of twelve hands breaking his fall. Although it was a very stressful scene, it stayed in the choreography. Every run of the show, his fall brought gasps, as members of the audience revisited their worst falling dreams.

Birdcage



The next dreamscape involved a human-sized Victorian birdcage. This metaphor grew out of dream imagery in which I reported: *I feel like I'm suffocating, gasping for air or caged as a wild animal, having always known sweet freedom.* In other dream imagery a beautiful bird often appeared in a gilded cage. My research suggested that birds often symbolize the soul, as a creature of both the earth and the sky. The image of a cage suggested the restriction of an instinctive aspect of the self. A caged bird reportedly served as a metaphor for frustrated spiritual ambitions.

To depict the essence of the caged bird, a stark white light illuminated the cage. A single female dancer gripped the bars with both hands and peered out. As the dissident music built to a climax, she kicked and swung her legs about the limited space, but froze all activity to watch another female dancer 'fly' past the cage as two men lifted her.

The Dream Lover's Dance

The caged dancer remained confined, as four other female dancers joined her on stage, along with a tall male. The man relaxed on the ped-

estal and watched as his Anima or dream lover dance unfolded. The four women on stage moved sensuously, with gestures that communicated longing and desire. The caged dancer joined their dance in her confined space; her arms reached out of the bars, beseechingly. When this dream concluded, all of the characters exited the stage, including she who had been contained in the birdcage.

Snake Goddess



The snake dance grew out of a specific dream I had:

'There are snakes everywhere, venomous snakes. I witness this scene, but do not physically interact. My beautiful middle daughter and her father are rallying these snakes into the center of the space between the two of them. In pairs, the snakes merge and wrap around each other and rise upward. However, they begin devouring one another instead. As the energy changes, the young woman becomes less cautious in the way she is handling the snakes. Just as she drops two snakes on the ground and they escape between her feet and legs, I speak. "Do not allow those snakes to run between your

legs. They could bite your ankle or slide up your leg." Just then, she grips another snake close to the tail and lifts it toward herself. The snake slings itself against her torso and ascends her body, biting her neck as it slides under her hair. "I am bitten," she announces simply, releasing her grasp on the snake.'

There were many ways to work with this dream. I chose to focus on the transformative symbol of the snake, with its ability to shed its skin and start life anew in another manifestation. I was also aware of the medical symbol inherent in the entwined rising snakes as I continued my research. Death in dreams reportedly symbolized another form of transformation, from one life experience to the next. So, I worked with this dream dance phrase by focusing all the transformative energy on the central female. She undergoes metamorphosis into the Snake Goddess of early Cretan culture.

As I recreated the snake dream, I opened the scene with a beautiful young woman dancing into center stage with a 6-foot snake wrapped around her shoulders like a shawl. Her undulating solo portrayed snake-like sensuality. She commanded the stage with her powerful presence and took on the persona of the Snake Goddess. Then, pairs of women entered from opposite sides of the stage, each with a snake held between her hands. After encircling the Snake Goddess, each draped her snake on the outstretched arms of the Goddess and exited, as another pair of dancers entered holding their snakes. This continued until the Snake Goddess was laden with snakes undulating all over her upper torso. At this point, two men advanced toward her, presenting a throne upon which she sat, balancing all of her snakes, and they carried her offstage.

Ending



'When Last I Danced' concluded by revisiting the still point imagery with which it began. Dancers were joined in pairs and trios, mirroring one another or mutually supporting the other in shapes that challenged their balance and level of trust. Each image that emerged out of their bodies blending and entwining offered a gateway to the audience's own fantasies, with a final group sculpture depicting diversity within wholeness.

Conclusion

This choreography was my creative response to delving into the realm of my own dreams, knowing that there was nowhere to hide. 'When Last I Dreamed' evolved in collaboration with my student dancers. Without their willingness to take dreams seriously, I could never have taken the risks involved in telling the world what I least understand about myself! ☺

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All photographs submitted for this article are of the Berry College Dance Troupe, for which Jeanne Schul Elkins is Artistic Director. Cover & article photos were taken by Chris Love, a middle grades math and science teacher at the Berry College Middle School. He enjoys amateur photography and digital artistry. His wife and daughter are a constant supporter of his dreams and aspirations.



by Noreen Wessling

"IT'S BECOMING A TRADITION," said Robert Moss, "for you, Noreen, to give us another Dream Theatre. Will you?"

Will I! I can't wait. This is my third year in a row to immerse myself in more new adventurous experiences within my dreaming psyche at this latest weekend workshop, 'Dancing With The Bear.' Even Robert doesn't know this, but I was hoping to do Dream Theatre on a completely different dream than the one that pranced forth. But that's fine ... it's good for me to be spontaneous within the moment. Maybe next year!

It all falls in place as Robert asks each of us (around 22 people) to tell a dream and say what our purpose is for being here—what do we most want? When my turn comes, I, for some unknown reason, am prompted to tell a dream from last December. Here it is ...

"Deer Mother Love"

It's a lovely day, so I happily hike down the path into our pine woods. However, my mood changes in an instant when I see a beautiful, young deer lying dead on the ground. An aching sadness envelopes me and I start to cry. Then I look to the right and am devastated to see yet another deer lying dead among the leaves.

By now I'm inconsolable with sadness. Then I hear a slight noise further back in the woods. It's the Mother Deer. She has injured her back left leg and is now dragging herself, with what seems to me to be the last ounce of her strength, towards her dear children.

By now I am in awe of what happens next. Mother Deer reaches her children and embraces them with her two great arms (front legs), at which moment the big soulful brown eyes of both young deer open wide as they gaze lovingly towards their Mother. They are not dead. They have been brought back to life. I feel a warm rush of tenderness and know, like never before, the healing power of Mother Love.

I should have known something was brewing, because as I related this dream to the circle, I was getting choked-up and teary-eyed. In answer to Robert's question, "What is your purpose for being here? I say, "To understand what true compassion is and learn how to live it."

So, you can see the stage is set. When Robert now asks me to do the Dream Theatre with this dream, how can I resist! You'd think by this time I'd be used to doing these performances, but no way! Each time is as fresh an experience as eating fish right out of the ocean.

It's a treat to choose the players for my dream story enactment, giving me an inkling that in truth, "I really DO direct my own life." The trick, I'm realizing more all the time, is to direct my life consciously in the way I want it to go. Otherwise, I'll direct my life unconsciously by default, and who wants that! Carl Jung was very wise when he pointed out that one of the most important things dreams can do for us is to make our unconscious conscious.

Rehearsal

Now it's rehearsal time. I've chosen my cast and there is laughter and mounting excitement already as I prompt our various dream group people to experience their roles. Neal and Bud are doing a fine job as the two dead deer as they lie awkwardly sprawled and immobile on the hard wood floor (pretending to be in the woods, of course). I choose these two people because I sense their deep connection with the Earth Mother.

I choose Mishalla to play me. She played the lyrical, lovely, lute player in my last Dream Theatre a year ago. I sense she has a gentle compassion within her and therefore is just right for the role.

Now who would be just perfect to play the Mother Deer? Why, none other than Robert Moss, of course. (This is the second time I've chosen him to play a mother!!!). There is more truth to this than I know at the time, for Robert shared with me later that, even though the title for this weekend workshop is, "Dancing With The BEAR," he had been feeling strongly the energy of DEER the last day or two. He even let me hold and ring a beautiful little 'deer bell' that he had brought along.

As always, I wish I could remember the names of everyone in our group, but nope, not yet. So I smile and point to various people asking if they would be willing to play the supporting roles, which include the back porch, the path to the woods and all the trees in the woods.

Every one has an important role.

"It's time to do the rehearsal now," booms the resonant voice of Robert Moss, right before he shape-shifts into the injured Mother Deer. I'm aware of deep emotions building up in me even as we do our rehearsal. I'm already feeling great sadness and starting to cry. We finish, and in a limp effort to steady myself, I quip, "And this is only the rehearsal!"

The Real Thing

Take One ... Action! The living story that follows can not be duplicated and totally encompasses the essence and fullness of what my dream is about—at least for me—now. At this point, I play myself and Mishalla becomes my 'etheric other,' walking slightly in front of me and it is she who gently calls to me from within the woods to bring my attention to the Deer Mother.

The sadness and despair I felt before are pale in comparison to the intensity of these feelings in me now as I stand over the two lifeless deer (Neal and Bud). In the few seconds that I stand there, tears running unabashedly down my cheeks, an odd collection of images flash through my mind in a matter of seconds, such as: scenes from my childhood impressions of World War 2 whiz through my mind; myself in the air raid shelter with only Mum and my Teddy Bear to comfort and protect me; bombs, death, blackouts, raw fear. This thread-worn Bear with his tilted head and winsome smile has been with me from my earliest years—longer than anyone else I know. Yes, he's my lifelong furry friend whom I brought to the altar at this workshop. He thoroughly

enjoyed it! And yes, I'll admit it, even thoughts of Bambi flashed during these few seconds. I loved this movie and it was my first experience with loving a deer.

My rambling thoughts are now interrupted as Mother Deer—Robert—in her excruciating pain,

I'm crying on (he has shorts on) and the hairs on his leg are tickling my nose. Ah, such is life. Nothing is without its humorous side, thank Goddess! He doesn't know this. Maybe he'll read this article. Later, Robert tells me that Deer as a totem animal brings healing and protection.

Back to the drama: As Mother Deer embraces her children and me, so also do the trees, the path and the back porch; all move gracefully into widening and deepening this one immense single embrace. It is truly awesome to feel in my bones, my very cells, the effect of this Communion. For this is what it truly is. In my tenuous Catholic days (from age 21 to 28), 'communion' never did it for me. I was old enough that (Catholicism) never really 'took.' This does. Finally, as I pull myself upright again—hoping that my smeared mascara doesn't make me look too dorky; OK, so my ego is still alive and well—

somehow rises above it and drags her injured body towards her children. By now, I'm totally ripped up, crying my eyes out. Then the Deer Mother enfolds her children in her 'arms.' With this amazing act of love, compassion and courage, the two young deer are brought back to life. Their adoring brown eyes gaze upon their Mother.

The healing power of Mother Love brings me to my knees now, my head trying to burrow in the earth. I can't help myself. Tears become big sobs from my childhood as I lean on the leg of one of the deer, knowing I'm getting his leg wet. Even in the midst of my turmoiled emotions, I am aware that it's Bud's leg that

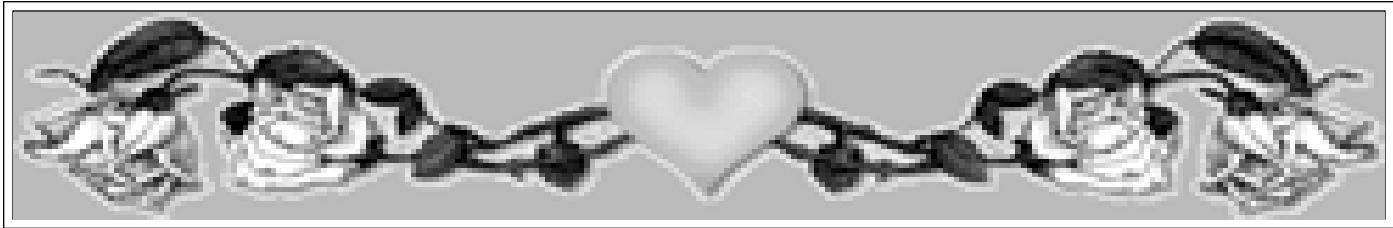
I see tears in the bright eyes of many in our cast. Hugs abound. The three deer are all alive and bounding happily around. All is right with my world.

What is SO wonderful about Dream Theatre is this: It can be, at its best, a splendid example of 'living in the now' and experiencing 'oneness.' Yes, I know these are terms that get a bit bandied around these days, but when you feel it, you KNOW it to be true ... and it is delicious!

Muchas gracias to the whole cast and may your eyes continue to shine.

End of Dream Theatre

(More 



PostScript

(the beginning at the end/the deer were in cahoots from the beginning to the end/the inter-relatedness of it all)

Here's what happened a couple of days before this workshop. I am biking real early in the morning on the bike trail. No one is around. As is my custom, I stop on the bridge overlooking the scenic Little Miami river ... just to look around and see what's happening down there... what critters are there today. Things like that. So, as I'm gazing over the water on this beautiful morning, the thought of my parents comes to me. (They both died in 1986 within 14 weeks of each other). "Mum and Dad," I hear myself say, "Thank you ever so much for bringing me into this life, it's pretty wonderful." I'd barely finished my

sentence when, over to the right, I see a Deer come out of the woods and stand by the edge of the river. Transfixed, I watch as the deer wades into the water with the obvious intent of crossing the river, which it does. I've never seen a deer do this before. Then he disappears into the woods. Instantly, I know this is a response somehow from the spirit of my parents and they are communicating, "Noreen, how dear (deer) you are to us." My whole body tingles with delight. Could it possibly be that this encounter has a role in



the upcoming Dream Theatre? Is the Pope Polish!

The Cherry on the Sundae

To top off this final Sunday as our workshop ends, I feel the need to hike at the Nature Center not too far away. So, after stopping off at Wendy's to pick up a baked potato and salad... to feed the deer in me. I head off and meditate in my hot car, ravenously gobble down my picnic, have a lovely leisurely hike around the lily pond, admire 15 geese on the pond bank, enjoy the

Haaaarumph, Haaaarumph sounds from the local Frog Chorus (even joined in a bit), then head down the last path back to my car. It is now that I see her ... the DEER. Ever so close to me, she is walking on her parallel path. She stops to relieve herself. I move closer. She sees me. She spits straight at me while making a loud guttural sound. I'm startled and amused both at the same time. My logic tells me that this is a natural protective maneuver while 'relieving herself,' then I remember what Robert said earlier this day about how a Shaman will sometimes vigorously spit on the ground after working with a person who has toxic or negative things which he, the Shaman, is attempting to release.

Now I'm getting the feeling that this deer is in cahoots with our Dream Theatre and is actually helping me to release some of my toxic junk. Thank you, Deer, that's a very cool thing to do. As if to confirm that we are indeed friends, she continues to walk slowly with me on her parallel path for a few more minutes. Three times she stops and looks at me. At the end of the path, she looks at me once again before prancing off into the woods.

I, in turn, prance off to my car wondering if indeed I should have become an actress after all. ☺

Oh, Deer!

A Dream of Cooperative Healing

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AT 1 P.M. IN THE AFTERNOON, as I get ready to go out to do my errands, I glance out the window and see something strange behind a bush. Oh, it's a deer's little nubbin of a tail. Nothing too unusual about that, for although I live in a neighborhood surrounded by houses, my yard is full of ivy, a circle of small trees low to the ground and pretty green weeds. It is not unusual for the deer to stop by, for the area in front of my house is quite safe. I do worry about them when they stay too late in the day and have to brave traffic on their way home to the nearby canyon. So this time of day is unusual and somewhat dangerous for a deer to visit.

As I watch her grazing around the trees, I realize that one foot or leg is injured; she can stand and walk but cannot put her weight on her left hind leg. I decide to be very quiet and wait till she leaves. I begin to send her Reiki energy with Rescue Remedy on my hands. I visualize holding her foot, massaging her hind quarters and leg with arnica and calendula. I pray to the Holy Mother to heal her. Eventually, I abandon my errands and stay quietly in my house, communicating to the deer to rest quietly

and safely in my yard. Late in the afternoon, I leave messages for my landlady and her sister that an

I felt badly afterward and apologized to her. But the deer didn't bolt, and late in the evening she is still there. I call several friends and ask them to send healing energy and prayers to/for the little deer.

In the morning, the deer is gone. At noon, my friend calls me to tell me her dream:

A baby deer is with her mother. She has a bandage on her left rear ankle."

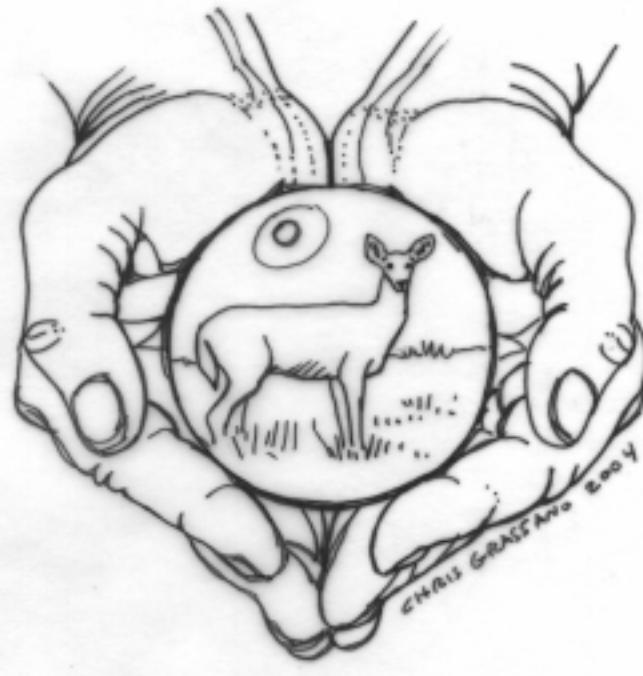
I cry tears of relief. The deer is safe with her mom.

Two days later, in the early morning, I open my front door to see the deer sitting directly in front of me. She stands up and very deliberately stretches her left hind leg, gently bringing her foot to the ground. She stands down on all four legs, slightly favoring the injured leg. Again in two

days, she comes, showing me she can nearly bear full weight on the injured leg.

I give thanks and know that love and healing do survive in the universe and "I get by," as in the Beatles sang, "with a little help from my friends." ☺

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injured deer is in the yard and ask that they please not startle her or chase her away.

Finally, it is dark. I communicate to the deer to continue to wait until all traffic has cleared. The landlady's sister comes banging on my door, wanting to approach the deer. She cannot hear me and in order to stop her from banging, I yell at her to leave the deer alone, making a substantial amount of noise myself.

The Role of Group Dynamics in Facilitating Dream Groups

by Christina Robertson



INTRODUCTION

DURING THE SUMMER OF 2002, as a Ph.D. student at Saybrook Graduate School, I had the opportunity to participate in an Experiential Dream Group Leadership Training Workshop presented by Dr. Montague Ullman, M.D., given at his home in Ardsley, N.Y. I attended the weekend session with my husband, John Creveling. Because we both have graduate degrees involving group process and have always been interested in the dynamics of any group of which we are a part, John asked Dr. Ullman what impact knowledge of group dynamics had on conducting dream groups. Dr. Ullman replied, "It is not about group dynamics—it is about the dream."

While I agree that knowing and following a method—in this case the Ullman method—of dream analysis is the most important competency for a trainer to have, I think a basic knowledge of group dynamics could also be very helpful. I will discuss Dr. Ullman's approach to dream analysis and give examples from the group he conducted to illustrate certain points, considering group composition, the stages of group development (forming, storming, norming, and performing), and 'task' and 'maintenance' functions. Hopefully, this will help any facilitator of dream groups.

Group Composition

A consideration for any leader is the composition of the group—the

size, how homogeneous the group is, and if members of the group know one another previous to their participating in the dream group.

There were thirteen participants (including Dr. Ullman) who attended the Dream Group Leadership Training. While 12 participants is considered by many to be an ideal size for personal growth workshops, Ullman (1996) believes the optimal size for an ongoing dream group is six to eight, including the leader. Less than that number, there is a diminished power of group input and there may be too much pressure for each member to come up with a dream; more than that number, there may be too long a wait for participants to have an opportunity to present a dream to the group.

Because some people were members of other dream groups, there were subgroups within the group. About half of the members had previously attended groups led by Dr. Ullman. There were three couples in the group, two of whom were married. Two of the group members knew each other through their affiliation with a graduate school. When members of a dream group know each other well through their affiliation in other groups, the facilitator may have to work harder to build group cohesion and identity.

Eight members of the group were women, five were men. Ullman (1996) prefers dream groups comprised of both sexes and says his groups are usually predominantly female. The

age of group members ranged from a person in her early 20s to Dr. Ullman who is in his early 80s. About half of the group members were in the middle-age range (40–60 years of age). Ten members of the group were Caucasian; two were of Asian ethnicity. All of the group members had at least some college education.

Ullman (1996) states that homogeneity with regard to educational level and cultural background has favorable and unfavorable aspects. When a group is homogeneous, people may feel more at ease with one another and be more comfortable sharing common problems. On the other hand, people from different backgrounds can offer different perspectives and broaden horizons. Ullman believes it is unfortunate that group dreamwork attracts "a predominantly white middle-class segment of the population. There would be much to learn about dreams and dreamwork if greater effort was made to include ethnic, racial, and other minorities" (p. 204-205). Of course, in conducting groups where members are of different backgrounds, being able to speak and understand a common language is a necessity.

Stages of Group Development

All groups, regardless of whether they last for one weekend or one year, have some kind of sequential development process. While the duration of a group's life influences the amount and rate of a group's devel-

opment, groups run for a few days or even hours, follow essentially the same course of development as do on-going groups run for a period of a year or more.

A number of group development models exist. Some are very simple and 'user friendly.' Others present numerous phases and sub-phases which make them too complex to serve as 'easy' tools for group facilitators. However, every model which discusses developmental stages—regardless of the number of stages or sub-stages presented—depicts the same general process. There is an initial process when a group is formed that can be anticipated, e.g., the establishment of norms to govern the group's performance and behavior, conflict that occurs among group members, and maintaining focus on performing the group's task. Catchy terms which describe and summarize the stages of group development are 'forming, storming, norming, and performing' (Moran, Musselwhite, and Zenger, 1996; Tuckman, 1965).

The importance of group leaders (and group members) having a knowledge of the phases of group development is that at any given stage of group development, some interventions intended to help the group accomplish its task may be more appropriate than others. A list of interventions leaders can use at the forming, storming, norming and performing stages of group development appears at the end of this article.

Forming Stage

During the 'forming stage,' an appropriate intervention is for the group leader to ask every member to give his or her name and reason why they are attending the group. More time may be needed for this activity if the group is meeting for the first time, if the group is very diverse, and if members have very different objectives. Meeting all the objectives of the group may be unrealistic in the time available. Some objectives may not be appropriate.

It is up to the facilitator to set realistic expectations for the group during the forming stage.

If a dream group is ongoing, an intervention where members introduce themselves would need to be repeated any time there is a new member of the group. When we first gathered at Dr. Ullman's home, he asked us to go around the room and introduce ourselves. Dr. Ullman introduced himself as leader and group member. It was clear from the beginning that Dr. Ullman was a special member of the group—while he was a member, he was also the leader who had special expertise and experience to offer. Thus, in the forming stage, activities were typical of those in the forming stage of most groups. Dr. Ullman asked us to introduce ourselves and share our interest in dreams—a bond we all had in common!

Because sessions can be microcosms of the total group process, after the group has been apart for a period of time the leader may ask group members to go around in a circle and say something to enable each person to enter in. This facilitates the forming stage where the issue 'to be worked' is inclusion and membership in the group.

Ullman (1996) states that the leader has a twofold goal in the initial session of a dream group. The primary goal is to see that the dreamer gets as much help as possible through various interactions that will occur between the dreamer and the group. The second goal is to get across to the group a clear demonstration of the way the process works. Demonstrating the process leads into the second, or 'norming' phase of a group's process.

Norming Phase

During the norming phase, the facilitator of a dream group sets the 'foundation' or 'rules' for how the sessions will be conducted. Because in most cases the leader is the most 'powerful' group member, it is his or her responsibility to establish guidelines, making it safe for the dreamer to share a dream, establish norms

for how group members will respect the dreamer and one another, and inform group members of the process to be used to explore a dream.

Dr. Ullman established the ground rule that the person who shares the dream is in control and is responsible for setting limits. The dreamer can choose to stop at any point during the process. He also provided us with an outline of the stages.

Ullman (1996) uses a four-stage process to understand dreams. In Stage I the dreamer shares a dream as he or she remembers it. At this point, the dreamer does not include any associations or ideas about what the dream means. As the dreamer recounts the dream, members of the group write the dream down, so they are sure they have all the details as given in the dreamer's own words. The group then has an opportunity to ask the dreamer questions restricted to the content of the dream.

In Stage II of Ullman's (1996) process, individuals of the group 'make the dream their own' by seeing what feelings they can bring to the imagery of the dream and possible meanings they can think of that would fit the imagery—for them. Members of the group do this by saying, "If this were my dream I..." During this stage, it is emphasized that these offerings are projections of individuals—no attempt should be made to 'force' them on the dreamer.

In Stage III of the process, the dream is returned to the dreamer who is invited to share his or her thoughts and feelings with the group. Ullman (1996, p. 52) states, "This is the first step in a continuing interplay between the dreamer and the group, with the goal of deepening the dreamer's grasp of the dream."

The dreamer is then asked to examine what may have happened recently to provide a 'context' or impetus for the dream. Next, the dream is read back to the dreamer, one scene at a time. "The point of the playback is the same as the search for context—namely, to elicit more data from the dreamer and thus facilitate more felt connections

to the dream" (p.77). The dreamer is free to add associations that occur to him or her as the dream is being read back. The last part of Stage III is the orchestration, where "group members organize the associative material given to them by the dreamer in a way that offers a more focused sense of what a dream may be saying about the dreamer's life" (p. 90). To summarize, Stage III consists of a search for context for the dream, the playback of the dream, and group members orchestrating their projections.

Stage IV gives the opportunity for the dreamer to take a second look at the dream and for group members to offer any additional comments. In ongoing dream groups where there has been an interval between the session in which the dream was presented and the subsequent session, Stage IV is continued and starts the next session. It enables the dreamer from the previous session to offer any additional insights and "to take a fresh look at the dream after some time has elapsed" (p. 110).

Storming

Sooner or later, every group will experience some 'storming' or conflict between group members or between the members and the leader of the group. Dr. Ullman's group was no exception.

One group member asked a question that some members thought was inappropriate, given the stage of the dream analysis process. Even though Dr. Ullman stated the question was acceptable, an underlying conflict was felt and, in fact, was discussed as a possible context for a dream, which had a conflict theme that was presented by a group member the next day. Rogers (1970) points out that negative feelings in a group often surface when group members attack the leader for 'failing' to give proper guidance.

Another group member consistently took more time offering his dream orchestrations, even though Dr. Ullman continued to stress the

importance of being more succinct. At other times, he seemed to challenge Dr. Ullman and almost seemed to be competing with him. Challenging the leader in an attempt to express one's individuality is a normal part of the storming phase of group development.

In his book, Ullman (1996) states, "Hidden rivalry and competitive strivings may emerge and have an adverse effect." Despite any conflicts that emerged, the group was able to stay on track and did an excellent job of helping one another understand their dreams and learning how to facilitate dream groups.

An important question for facilitators of dream groups to consider is, What steps a leader can take if a subgroup or member does disrupt the progress of the group? One thing a group leader can do is to speak to the individual privately. If this does not work, the leader can simply state his or her perception of what is occurring in the group as it occurs. For example, the leader might say, "Joan, I feel you are challenging me and the group members." Sometimes just verbally observing the disruptive behavior of a member will stop it. If this does not work and the facilitator believes that other group members are clearly being disturbed by the person's behavior, he or she may ask, "Does anyone else feel that Joan is being overly challenging?" Sometimes having members of the group state that they also perceive a member's behavior to be detrimental puts group pressure on the individual to act more appropriately so that the group is able to complete its task most effectively.

Task and Maintenance Functions

There are two aspects group leaders need to attend to regardless of which stage of group formation the group is experiencing—task and maintenance. The task aspect considers if the group is sufficiently aware of its goal and has the structure and guidance it needs to do its work. An example of a task function

would be setting time parameters and seeing that the group adheres.

The maintenance aspect of group dynamics considers if members of the group feel safe enough to participate, if everyone is included, and if there is enough group cohesion for the group to function.

Both task and maintenance functions are necessary. If a dream group were to focus primarily on task, the group climate might seem efficient yet uncaring. It might not feel 'safe' for group members to share their dreams. On the other hand, if a dream group were to focus primarily on maintenance functions, people might feel comfortable but the goal of sharing members' dreams might not get accomplished! The 'ideal' for optimal group performance is a high task and high maintenance environment.

Establishing Trust

One dream shared in Dr. Ullman's group was particularly significant for me, for it illustrated the importance of a leader establishing trust with the group and among the group's members. A participant I will call Celeste, seemed particularly insightful in her observations, metaphors, and orchestrations when others were sharing their dreams. I was surprised to learn, when she was discussing her life context for her dream, that there were many things in her life that she did not think 'were working.' The dream was particularly poignant—touching and somehow hopeful for this woman who I thought had so much to contribute and the potential to lead a very rich and meaningful life.

I was particularly struck with how caring, compassionate and patient the group was, considering that we spent almost four hours on the dream—two hours the end of one day, two hours the beginning of the next day. The participant who was practicing leading the process did so with skill and sensitivity. Dr. Ullman paid close attention to the dreamer to ensure she was able to handle the emotions that surfaced as she was discussing the meaning her dream

had for her life.

Ullman (1996) discusses the issue of safety and if the dreamer is at risk when sharing his or her dream. He states,

"The success of the process depends on the development of trust: trust in the intrinsic value of dream imagery, in the group, in the leader, in the reliability of the process, and in oneself to get to where one wants to go with the dream. (p. 190)

Obviously, this cannot occur unless the group functions effectively. The fact that the group was able to stay with the dreamer and honor her process, was an indication that despite times of conflict, the group had arrived at a point where it was able to perform with optimal effectiveness to achieve its goals, particularly in a very sensitive situation with one participant."

Conclusion

Returning to the question, 'What does an understanding of group dynamics and group process have to do with effectively leading a dream group? I thoroughly agree with Dr. Ullman's statement, "It is not about group dynamics; it is about the dream." The dream is the primary focus. Yet, groups being what they are can either be very effective or very ineffective in helping members to understand and appreciate their dreams.

I found it interesting that Dr. Ullman stated he did not start to lead dream groups until he was in his late fifties. Although he may never have had any formal training in group dynamics, his process works. The way he clarifies the roles for group members, and the way he establishes and reinforces the norm of total respect for the dreamer, indicates that he has grasped a knowledge of group dynamics and facilitation either through intuition or experience—probably both!

Ullman (1996) states that dreams can be the source for emotional healing and that three things must be present for healing to occur. First, dreamers must be aware of and clarify a current tension. Second, dreamers must be aware of how the past has paved the way for that tension to appear. And third, dreamers must be aware that there is something within themselves that can attest to the honesty of a new vision of themselves, based on the information they are bringing together to resolve the tension. The dream enables these three things to occur.

Members exist to receive the dream, to give support, provide perspective, and to keep the dreamer honest. Thus, the dreamer can benefit greatly from members of the dream group. As Ullman (1996, p. 225) states, "Group dreamwork can and does create the conditions for a kind of natural healing process to take place. It is as if the impulse to self-healing is always alive in us, awaiting only a favorable social climate to become manifest." Leaders of dream groups who understand group dynamics and how to monitor task and maintenance functions can help a group achieve optimal performance so that the experience is, in fact, about the dream! ☺

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Interventions for Leaders During Various Group Stages

Forming—During this stage the leader can:

- Identify the goal of the group
Mention his/her dual role of leader/member
- Provide professional background and dream group experience.
- Give group members opportunity to introduce themselves and tell their interest/experience in dreamwork.
- Discuss the theory/background of Ullman's process .
- Outline Ullman's stages of the process.
- Stress dreamer is always in control/can stop at any point.

Storming—During this stage the leader can:

- State behavior he/she finds disruptive to the group.
- Ask group members if they find a given behavior disruptive.
- Monitor the emotional climate of the group.
- Talk privately to a very disruptive member.
- Reinforce that the dreamer is always in control.
- Restate member roles during each stage of Ullman's process.
- Remind members which questions/statements are appropriate and inappropriate during various stages of Ullman's process.
- Stop the group and deal with the conflict if necessary.

Norming—During this stage the leader can:

- Reinforce the rights of the dreamer.
- Continue to monitor the emotional climate of the group.
- Remind the group of roles, guidelines and limits.
- Serve or appoint someone as timekeeper.
- Reinforce member and group contributions.

Performing—During this stage the leader can:

- Repeat actions listed under the 'Norming' stage when needed.
- Help the group stay on task.



By Victoria A. Vlach

Freeing the Authentic Self



An Interview with John Goldhammer, Ph.D.

John Goldhammer, Ph.D., is a psychotherapist, teacher, dream researcher, lecturer, and author. His book, Under the Influence: The Destructive Effects of Group Dynamics, examines the negative effect of group influence on individual identity and draws on his experience as a former member of a spiritual cult. His most recent book, Radical Dreaming, offers a way to identify the internalized expectations of others and live from one's Authentic Self. Dr. Goldhammer spoke with Dream Network about his experience and the Radical Dreaming process.

Victoria Vlach: In Under the Influence, you talk about the religious group—almost a 'cult'—that you were in, whose founders presented themselves as dream experts. It's ironic, in a sense, that your interest in dreams led you into this group and dreams led you back out again.

John Goldhammer: It has been such an amazing journey for me! Dreams brought me back to myself. Looking back, I had a lot of dreams that were clearly saying there's something wrong. I had been working with dreams the whole time and my psychological immune system was ringing loud and clear, but I didn't know how to interpret the dreams. I was part of the group for 15 years and it totally dominated everything I thought about life. What helped me 'out' is my dreams.

Victoria: What made the shift for you and helped you leave the group?

John G: Well, the shift came for me just in the last couple of years. Here I was in this spiritual group that claimed they had the answers and the wisdom regarding how one should live his/her life and I was feeling worse, more depressed... even suicidal. All my energy was going into what the group thought life was about and I wasn't doing anything, going anywhere or making any progress. I had already been reading Jung and others and the last couple of years I started re-reading—really studying—and what I learned helped me get out of the group. One thing I like about Jung is that he was very 'anti-group'. He realized the danger of 'group think.' I started looking at my dreams more symbolically and tried to take them out of the context of the group. I began interpreting my dreams for myself, rather than letting the group or the founder interpret them for me. The minute I started to do that,

my dreams began to make sense to me again and I began moving out. It took a year or so to get away after I decided to leave, because these people had been my friends; that was a big deal, moreso even than leaving "the group."

Because of that experience, I had to figure out what had happened to me. I researched all kinds of groups and discovered that the patterns I experienced in my group were often found in many groups. Groups seem to fall into these certain patterns, which then become cult-like or destructive in certain ways; conversely, I could also see what makes a healthy group.

Victoria: And what makes a healthy group?

John G: Whatever kind of group it is, a healthy group is not afraid of critical thinking. They look at it as a benefit, encourage critical thinking among members, and are not afraid to look at themselves and their own faults. Healthy groups are not afraid of tension and conflict, as long as it's not hurting anyone. There's an ethic of having respect for one another and a willingness to respectfully disagree with one another... and members feel safe to explore those differences. Such groups don't hold secrets, either. With secrets, people start assuming things and gossip grows. Another aspect is that a healthy group never becomes more important than the individual. When the group becomes more important, people start rationalizing away their own sense of right and wrong. In extreme cases that gets into the causes of terrorism and how horrible evil can be rationalized. Those are some of the significant characteristics. If a group worked on practicing these ethics, it would be a fairly healthy group. It might have some exciting, even stressful times, but members would be healthy, growing and respectful of one another.

Victoria: Referring back to your experience of being drawn to one group because of the founder's ex-

pertise with dream interpretation, what about dream groups which form around a particular "name" approach or method of understanding dreams, e.g., Jung, Taylor, Delaney, Moss, Ullman, etc.? What do you suggest for such groups that want to stay focused on a favored approach and also honor the authenticity of individual participants in a healthy way?

John G: You bring up a real dilemma. I think a healthy group approach would be to explore several different methods and try out elements of each. I have learned, through my own, often stumbling, direct experience that to try to make one technique the "only" technique is a mistake and is very limiting. I appreciate the many excellent dreamworkers who have and are making valuable contributions to the art of dreamwork. We each have a contribution to make, adding some new insights to the vast and awesome art of dreamsharing.

When I facilitate dream groups, I make a real effort to point out how Jungian psychology would look at a particular image, or Fritz Pearls, or James Hillman ala *Archetypal Psychology*, etc. I also have my bias and my focus with *Radical Dreaming* techniques. I have tried to free the interpretation process from formal dogma—or any pre-judgements about what dream images signify—something that is a real struggle at times, given people's often preconceived ideas about dreams. I can't count how many times I've heard, "Well that ocean in your dream means the unconscious..." Or "That woman represents your anima," etc. I think that's part of the problem with dreamwork: people look for someone else to interpret their dreams. So I would ask, "And so.... then what?" or "So what?" I do my best to help each person connect with what feels genuine and real as a part of who they are in their heart and soul, encouraging their dream images to speak for themselves within the context of their lives.

"Working with the dreams and our own life in a creative manner can have a tremendous impact on society. In this sense, dreamwork becomes a social responsibility, even an antidote to destructive ideologies, as in the case of religious and political extremists."

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Victoria: What else would you suggest to help people move from relying on dream 'experts' to trusting their own interpretation?

John G: I would say that the approach to dreamwork is really important. Approach it with respect and even a sense of reverence... a sense that you're entering sacred ground. Dreams are a tool that is right here, available to everyone, to help each of us directly address our individual creative evolution of consciousness, our healing and, in so doing, affect the evolution of society as a whole.

I tell people that it takes practice, like learning another language or like suddenly realizing you aren't using a whole set of beautiful tools you had packed away somewhere. You get out the instruction book and you learn by using them. Be very patient with yourself, keep your dream journal, work with, explore, and think about your dreams. Gradually you become your own expert. I have been very happy in recent years because I've noticed a progression, then a client will start to tell me, "Hey, I'm getting pretty good at doing this, I don't need anyone—you, even—helping me. I'm noticing I'm figuring it all out, and it's making sense."

Victoria: The Radical Dreaming process has six steps. Of these, you consider step four (Freeing the Authentic Self) the most critical step in the process. Would you say more about what this involves, how it happens, etc.?

John G: Freeing the 'Authentic Self' refers to working with dream images to ascertain what, if any, dream elements do not belong to the dreamer. For example, a dream may present a self-defeating view of life that one learned from a parent or a group of some sort. It also involves becoming aware of symbols and images of the 'Authentic Self.' It is like a sculptor removing everything that is not necessary from a block of marble. The process commonly proceeds over a series of dreams—rarely just one dream. One must then make space, creating room for those aspects of one's authentic nature in waking life. This usually creates uncomfortable tension and anxiety as our real potential collides with the waking ego's propensity to build and maintain security and to have the future all planned and figured out.

Victoria: The 'Authentic Self' is a major theme in both books. How would you summarize this concept, for those not familiar with the term?

John G: I use the term "Authentic Self" not in the sense of any personality theory but to describe the constellation of qualities that define the essential nature of who we really are—including our fate, our destiny, our purpose—characteristics that combine to make us unique individuals. Instead of a final goal to be attained, the Authentic Self is a creative work-in-process, like the seed becoming a unique tree. I have observed that a sizeable portion of our dreams "intend" to nudge us into our potential, into a creative, authentic life. Unless we really know who we are and who we are not, we can easily end up not living our own life.

Victoria: Radical Dreaming incorporates many role-playing and interactive techniques found in a variety of dreamwork modalities. What is so 'radical' about this process and how is it different from other dreamwork?

John G: It differs in significant ways. I look at Radical Dreaming as drawing on elements of many differ-

"I have found that dreams want the individual to be a creative intervention in society. I have yet to hear or read about a single dream that tells anyone what to do about a specific issue in society or in a community. However, I have worked with uncountable clients' dreams that first, facilitate the individual reconnecting with his/her own creative potential and then, help him/her find a place in society and the world for their unique gifts."

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ent dreamwork techniques, with some new approaches that I hope will add to our collective store of knowledge about the awesome potential of our dreams. Most dreamworkers maintain that all aspects of the dream belong to the dreamer. A primary difference with Radical Dreaming is that everything in the dream does not belong to the dreamer. I use the term "radical" to allude to the individual's need to overthrow conformist influences and programming—often from society, family, media, etc.—in order to live one's own life, maximize one's innate creative potential and make a real difference in the world. Another "radical" difference is the approach to identifying and working with images of one's essential nature or true self. As people separate themselves from self-defeating exterior influences and begin to identify their own truth, they become freer to live out of their own Authentic Self.

Victoria: How does someone identify those aspects of a dream that are part of cultural programming and

exterior influences so they can live more from their Authentic Self?

John G: Well, that comes from working on the dream as you go through the steps in *Radical Dreaming*. In my experience, dreams do not just reflect societal values; what they definitely do is to show the dreamer those attitudes and values that are self-defeating and promote conformity. Our dreams usually deal with the values and expectations of outside groups by pointing out problematic influences that have been internalized. They can say, "Here's a collective idea that has been internalized and right now it is blocking you from going forward in a creative life."

Dreams are a kind of immune system, protecting us from bad ideas or self-defeating, self-negating ideas, habits, things that we do to ourselves. One of the big discoveries I've had with *Radical Dreaming* is that there is also a tremendous psychological immune system that is very protective and I see dreams as a very real part of that psychological immune system. It makes sense that, if we're going to survive as a species, the immune system needs to be operating on every level—not only genetically and physically—but also psychologically. Working with the dreams and our own life in a creative manner can have a tremendous impact on society. In this sense, dreamwork becomes a social responsibility, even an antidote to destructive ideologies as in the case of religious and political extremists.

That's what's so amazing about what dreams do for us. They help us identify and get rid of these ways of approaching life that have not come from us but have been imposed on us. A lot of those things come from society, from other people, from schools and institutions. We've been told we should do this or that, or live our life a certain way. We're trying to survive in society and we need to be involved in the world and the groups around us, so dreams are a warning system of the psyche saying "Hey, something has been inter-

nalized that is really self-destructive." It's very difficult to separate ourselves from what we've internalized. We need to be involved in the world, but if we can't also be creative and authentic, then we're not going to make too much of a difference.

Victoria: So, by working with our dreams more authentically, society can be transformed?

John G: I have found that dreams want the individual to be a creative intervention in society. I have yet to hear or read about a single dream that tells anyone what to do about a specific issue in society or in a community. However, I have worked with uncountable clients' dreams that first, facilitate the individual reconnecting with his/her own creative potential and then, help him/her find a place in society and the world for their unique gifts. Society, or any 'group,' is an abstraction comprised of individuals who may have common ideals, geography, etc. Dreams may indeed inspire creative projects or appear to predict some outer world events. But I am convinced that such events—while interesting synchronistic connections—should not distract from the essential value of the dream, which is its transformative value for the individual. This transformative essence, in turn, enables the individual to actually make a difference in the world while realizing his/her own creative potential. That is how society is going to benefit from who we are, by each of us having the courage to live authentically and creatively.

Dreams, in my own experience as well as that of many others, show that all of us, all life—including inanimate matter—is deeply interconnected. Our dreams re-connect us to others and to our world. I've often thought if extremists, terrorists, etc., only understood their dreams, they could not harm anyone. It's so fascinating to me because I never expected it: I realized the two books I've written are actually connected in an interesting way. One

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is about group dynamics, but then the *Radical Dreaming* is saying that the way you become valuable to your group, culture, or society, is by becoming, by being, uniquely yourself.

I think that there's a broad illiteracy of dreams' real value in the world; most do not really know or understand their value and how to really work with their dreams. Then, even the people who are really serious, really trying, are caught in a certain dogma or theory, whether it's Freudian, Jungian, etc. It is hard, because we tend to gravitate to 'experts' who tell us "This is how to interpret the dreams," and often, unfortunately, it involves a whole system. So if one particular kind of a figure shows up in your dream, well, that must be the shadow, or this mythology. Well, that might be kind of interesting, and it might remind someone of that mythology, but unless the person can just take that image and put it into practical use in his/her own life, it doesn't really do anything for them. I believe one has to learn how not to put labels on the dream. I went through my own

struggle with that when I started writing *Radical Dreaming*... I started having all these dreams saying "No, this is the person's experience, don't put any labels on it."

Victoria: I like that phrase, "...dreams want our life to be a creative intervention in society."

John G: Dreams do it by starting with the individual. If we are doing something we really love, there's usually something uniquely creative and particular about how we do it. Whatever we are doing, there's a unique spark or genius that I believe is in every person. Our particular collection of gifts—who each of us is as a unique, authentic individual—that is what our dreams bring out. When we begin to live through our own center of authenticity and uniqueness, we feel fulfilled, our life has purpose and meaning and we are making a difference.

Victoria: Dr. Goldhammer, I believe you are certainly making a difference! Thank you so very much.

John G: Thank you, I've enjoyed it. ☺

Dream Inspired Poetry



Through Walls of Glass

I dream of standing
in a crystal
box,
a house of windows
locked
frozen
expanded to thin, icy walls
that glisten in the sun.

And there,
through walls of glass,
I watch you saunter up from the beach
and enter,
next door,
your own transparent prison.

Now, caught in a fragile paradox of protection
that needs protecting, you must face an unrelenting
choice:
to stand and watch me through walls of glass
or to look the other way.

I continue to watch you.
am fishing for the deeper
pain:
that of seeing
or that of not being
seen.

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Sea of Dreams

Consciousness yields and s
I
i
P
on a slick

ice-covered creek that spills
into dream's deep dark-deviant sea.

Within the psychic whirlpool,
repressive thoughts drown in truth's lagoon,
where hope and fear and true desire
float to its surface as buoys.

Beneath those turbulent, sacred waters,
we dreamers are baptized each night,
healed by a spirit that retreats again
as dawn breaks on our thirsting world.

Shari O'Brien

Dream Collage





The Dialogue of Becoming Human

© Excerpted from a novel-in-progress by David Sparenberg ©2004

Synopsis:

The protagonist of my novel, Maxim Jattwa Ederman, inhabits an unspecified world, remarkably and even disturbingly similar to our own. It is a world where the awakening person seeks purpose and meaning to individual existence, seeks a sense of place, friendship, love, and an encounter and discourse with a God who can be trusted. It is also a world lost in ignorance, dominated by deceit, violence and greed. Following a large, detailed, 'alchemical' dream that is reinforced by external, waking events, the story hero sets out on a pilgrimage to experience the content of his 'identity as destiny.' He arrives at a corrupt and teeming megapolis called The Semblance, which is short for The Semblance of the Cities of the Plain. Here he meets new friends—an African street singer, a Gypsy violinist, an alchemist seeking immortality—various 'romantic' fringe dwellers clinging to the Old Culture and the Old Ways. In The Semblance as well, Jattwa confronts the organized evil that profits from injustice and spreading chaos, as he witnesses a series of violent deaths. Traumatized, he flees into the remaining vestiges of planetary wilderness, searching for healing in solitude and communion with nature. Notwithstanding the healing that does occur, Jattwa realizes that his solitude also contains the disease of isolation. Here again, in chapter 16, a major, motivating dream occurs. This dream chapter, called The Blue Androgyne, reintroduces significant alchemical/archetypal symbolism and prepares the way for the coming of the main female character and love portion of the novel. Beyond this, the quest must and does indeed continue, traveling from the sea to a mountain monastery and eventually into a strange, surreal realm, where dream nightmare and nightmarish eco-history

merge and pose an ultimate challenge. I will not reveal the dramatic ending, because that is intended to be a breathtaking surprise.

I open my book with a foretelling quotation from Joseph Campbell: Modern romance, like Greek tragedy, celebrates the mystery of dismemberment, which is life in time. For the world, as we know it, as we have seen it, yields but one ending: the crucifixion of our heart with the passing of the forms that we have loved." Indeed, a significant theme in the story is the struggle, internal and external alike, between the God-man who is crucified in consciousness through the suffering of creation and the man-god who must sojourn between light and darkness, seeking a gnosis that might result in enlightenment.

The project started on Oct. 24, 2003 and by Jan. 24, 2004, three months later, I find myself completing chapter 18, out of an outlined projection of 28-30 chapters. My intention is to have completed the novel by the Spring of '04 and perhaps even located an agent and publisher. As it stands presently, I consider that this book may become volume one in a trilogy. If that proves to be so, then volume one will be subtitled The Book Of Questions, and volume two subtitled The Book Of Lives. The latter would recount a series of transmigrations through the spiritual and cultural history of humankind. I have not yet gotten to a title for volume three, but would hope I would be at a place where some honest answers might emerge, to help us all with the nightmares and dreams of the 21st century, which we will either hide from, in the Governance of the Lusts, or meet bravely in our converging quests for freedom and integrity.

"Modern romance, like Greek tragedy, celebrates the mystery of dismemberment, which is life in time. For the world, as we know it, as we have seen it, yields but one ending: the crucifixion of our heart with the passing of the forms that we have loved."

Joseph Campbell

PART ONE

Chapter One: ECCO HOMO

JATTWA KNEW WHAT MEN KNOW or come to know in the course of time: whosoever lives, eventually, inevitably dies. What is dying, what death, the grand question? Death is either oblivion, the ultimate terminus—eternity's singular absolute in the complex plethora and expanse of the universe—rendering all illusions, acts, artifacts and inclinations absurd, then null and void. Or, to the contrary, death is life's clarifying scripture: a hermetical translation into another alphabet and vocabulary; creation's perfect glyph, but breathlessly articulated, colorlessly veiled, in a deliberately initiatory Arcanum.

The origin of a life can be understood, observed, approached with intellect, remembered and even apprehended by body and emotions. The trajectory of the years can be traced out with imagination's fingernail, or reduced to scientific explanation. But death is ever and everywhere mystery. Notwithstanding millennia of inquiry—the articles of faith—the grand question mark is undiminished. It looms forever large and even largest. The silent footsteps, the unrelenting pursuit by death of the living continues to motivate and organize so much of the social world. So very much that is basic, profound; so much more that is distraction, delusion, collective extravagance. Yet every step in the pilgrimage of sentient existence, what is it if not

an added term of liberation into uncertain but personalized distinction? "We are sculpted from context into relief; ever toward the terrible freedom of becoming free standing vectors of life! What is our mortality; what immortality?" Thus Jattwa would call out, feeling his blood pounding in his temples, his hands clenched into anguished fists, dramatizing his heated words.

Yet after tedious decades of fresh wounds and festering wounds, healings, and struggling laboriously for the sweet yield of integrity, was it but for dissolution? And to have every "I am" of humankind's becoming consumed in an apathetic holocaust of cosmic or chaotic nothingness? "Or is God death? And God only to be known with sustained intimacy on the nether side of death's non-negotiable collection?"

The love-death dance of God is haunting, without mercy. From the dawning of consciousness onward, the mysteries have engendered cultures of fear and architectonics of awe. And transmigrations.

Jattwa yearned to experience life and explore love. To be familiar with the soul and come to terms with death's rendering. To know the manners and customs of the man-made world, with its hubbub lore of stories and kaleidoscopic images; its myriad falsehoods, truncated motifs, and restless stirrings after what?, even the intimation of truth: the wide thoroughfares of history and the narrow dead ends of forgotten lives. Nature: with the ways to God and the bliss of sanctified, mind-altering visions. And to gain, too, down to his bones in trust, that special power and incarnate mythology of identity as destiny: the dialogue of an individual's becoming human.

He was called Jattwa Dreamer, because his eyes were a blessing, awake or asleep, deep with nuance and wonder. He listened to slender murmurings of inner and nocturnal voices; subtleties of intuitive

guidance. Often the ineffable, the unseen, was believed in by him as much, if not more, than the flat heft and smooth solidity of a riverbank stone. In spirit, he possessed the relentless courage of heroic virtue. Yet an innate sensibility, a reverence, it had been remarked, cleansed him of bitterness and bloodlust.

A quiet, reserved man, with preternatural sensitivities, Jattwa lived in a river stone and mountain timber house, made by his own hands, built securely on one bank of a fleet rushing river, wide and forever singing. There were long breaks of linden trees along both riverbanks. And snow topped mountains towered in the eastern distance, adding steep verticality to the far horizon. In the season of Spring, the lindens would bud in harmony, playing their green nubs against the elegant white bodies of neighboring birch trees. In the season of Fall, the lindens dropped their colorful, heart-shaped leaves onto the floating mirror of the bi-locating river: she (like an elemental divinity) who is always in passage and changing; she—like unto an inspirational theme in the musicality of landscape—constant, present.

Jattwa's house was at one edge of a small town. The confluence of two rivers—one wending to the coast, the other traversing the length of the narrow, green valley—bordered the southern and eastern sides of the Arcadian community of eccentrics and recuperative neurotics, of tree huggers, crafts people, potters and weavers, eco-poets and tree stump philosophers. In this safe haven, this rustic place off the beaten path of time and trouble, Jattwa dwelled, living his reclusive, contemplative, yet all too often, melancholy life.

The wind blew mild down the rivers' valley, like the breath of a sleeping woman. Sheep wandered and fed over the rolling hills. Rain fell gently and often, giving color to sweet clover, and rise to gardens of

savory herbs, vegetables, and pretty, aromatic flowers.

At dust and dawn, and often upon the midnight hour, Jattwa humbled himself in prayer; wholly opening his tender, passionate heart; addressing the unknown God he longed to meet and surrender his bountiful love to.

Often, at the close of his midnight adorations, Jattwa would sit out of doors, wrapped in his favorite woolen cloak, studying the deep, dark sky. Especially when the moon was full, breathing with the hidden life of night, he watched until his meditations merged with the aesthetic of metamorphic clouds and the visual music of star and moonlight. Gradually, sleep and the dominion of dreams invited him. Gladly then the man voyaged to that other reality of free play and ancestral discovery.

PART TWO

Chapter Seventeen:

WOMAN

THE WOMAN WAS OF MEDIUM HEIGHT AND WOMANLY, very womanly, even exquisitely proportioned. Nothing overdone, nothing underdone. Pure. Natural. Beautiful. Her hair was long, dark, yet with an auburn sheen that shimmered like an aura in sunlight. Her eyes were large, warm, expressive, emotional, soulful. There was a gentle delicateness and subtlety in the movement of her eyelids, with their accompanying thick lashes and overarching, wing-like brows. Her lips were full, sensual; her cheekbones high and well defined. And her complexion, which combined the coloration of ripened olive with that of the damask rose, hinted at an ancestry from the lands surrounding the middle sea.

Her name was Inna-Inna Blanca Benoit. She lived alone, orphaned, in a cottage on high ground, away from the strand, but overlooking the endless expanse, with endless

rocking, of the living ocean. Her home was made of stone, decorated with bits of curiously shaped driftwood that three generations of Benoit women had helped to collect and fit into window casements, doorways and walls. The ocean offering sculptures of genealogy to memorialize the family line. Behind the house was a garden, which grandmother Blanca had first cultivated, rich in its variety of savory and medicinal herbs, succulent vegetables, and pretty flowers that invited bees, moths and butterflies, painting the ground with a full palette, refreshing the air with sweet perfumes. Beyond the garden was arbor, trellis, a running wooden fence, gray from weather and age, all thick with the knotty tendrils, snaky coils and broad, heavy leaves of high yielding grapevines: Concord, Black Fredonia, Catawba.

Inna's father and brother had both been fishermen, both had died as conscripted soldiers in one of the so-called 'holy wars,' which stuffed the coffers of a few resource-profiteers, while condemning entire generations to wholesale slaughter and atrocities. Within two years of losing first her son then her husband, Inna's mother had succumbed to grief and cancer—the other plague of the ensanguined era resulting from the Pure War Campaign, the Wish, against earth, air and planetary water. The young woman, like countless others in the wounded world, was alone, surviving as best she could.

But Inna managed and somehow even triumphed over circumstances, being, by nature, resourceful and gifted with exceptional intelligence. Indeed, native intelligence—inquisitive, instinctual, alert—never deserted her. This; along with the inheritance of the family home and lineage firmly rooted in the Old Culture was the woman's saving grace, as well as the bane of existence and cause for her solitude.

Early on, many men had pursued this beauty, with her searching eyes that glowed with pool like infusions of honey-amber light, and were threshold to her charm, her passionate soul, her erotic flesh. Every young man longed to win her as a lover, only afterward to withdraw; daunted, intimidated; outraged, by the seriousness of her mind, the independent profundity of her spirit. So true and oft repeated was this pattern of attraction followed by rejection, abandonment, that as years passed by rumors spread that Inna possessed uncanny, possibly occult powers: that she could predict future events, communicate with animals and trees, interpret dreams, hold intercourse with elemental spirits, and even summon back the disembodied dead. That eventually her beauty—notwithstanding the way it enthralled the senses and aroused carnal desire—became more formidable than inviting.

Once, for a brief interval, a few carefree months, she had entered into relationship with an older man. He was pleasant-natured, thoughtful and respectful: neither simple nor crude. Moreover, the good man considered himself extremely fortunate to look upon, touch and share in the aesthetic ecstasy of Inna's exquisite beauty. She was fond of him too, and trusted. Unfortunately, the gentleman was physically frail and often ailing. Although this did not disturb Inna, the man felt he had to prove himself able, more manly, to match the robust vitality of a healthy, younger woman.

One day her lover drowned on a storm tossed sea, trying to master a boat he could hardly handle even in placid and clement weather. Of course, such accidents are not looked at as accidents by those who live with the ocean. The great water takes back from the ones who take their livelihood from her. The drowned are the ocean's tribute, which she garners into the liquid cold of her belly-vault, howsoever and whensover the mood

comes upon her.

Since this tragic death, Inna had dwelled alone. She maintained herself with a bit of fishing, a bit of gardening, through weaving blankets, robes, shawls, to barter with her neighbors, and by providing herbal remedies: teas, poultices, fairy-charms and 'dream talk' for people of the coast. For others, too, those further away, who heard of her good reputation and learned to trust the practical sagacity of the sea-woman's country doctoring.

Inna had grown more reserved. The strong, quiet dignity and deepening of her thoughts and emotions through suffering had enhanced her still youthful beauty. Yet she embraced the conviction that who she was was her destiny. That it was unlikely that anyone in the wide world would or could ever come to know and intimately share the complex abundance of her identity—as either person, or as a woman.

She kept a cat, usually as silent as its meditative mistress, and a wild eyed, stiff-haired, Nubian goat, whose bleating complaints and compliments brought on songs and bouts of girlish laughter. ☺



David Sparenberg is first a poet, then a playwright, a storyteller and now a novelist in the making. The writing here is from his novel-in-progress THE DIALOGUE OF BECOMING HUMAN, which will be completed in the Spring of 2004. The author invites reader feedback and can be contacted via email at EarthArts2000@aol.com. David lives in Seattle, WA. 115 21st Ave. E. #2, Seattle, WA 98112. Phone 206.722.3584

SHE

She arrives.
And her dream is daylight;
her dream is night.

She arrives.
And her face is a mirror.
She is one with the land.

The land listens to her:
to the trace of her footsteps,
the sigh of her breath,
to the sound of her heart.

She arrives.
She is deep with the earth
and the
earth deeply loves her.

He wonders
who she is, strong and
quiet beside him.

Her eyes are beautiful:
the gift of embrace
in the black-gold of night.

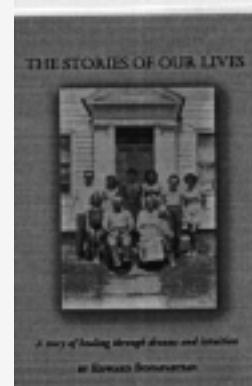
She arrives, her flesh,
her soul,
out of air and eternity,
out of earth and the sea.

David Sparenberg

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DREAMING FOR OTHERS OVERDUE FOR A MIRACLE

by Carol Oschmann



Carol Oschmann with her Husband

"Miracles happen, according to my mother," Al related to me over dinner. "She's got a relative who went to that Lourdes Shrine. Had a healing." He leaned back as the waitress put a plate of food in front of him..

"You don't have to go to Lourdes," I said. "I've had a few miracles happen right here."

"Tell me how, where? I'm overdue for one." Al actually pushed his plate aside and gave me his full attention.

"I get messages in my dreams for myself and for others," I answered.

"And then what?" Al paused, waiting to hear more.

"People ask me to dream for them. They ask questions about retiring, buying boats, running for office, or whatever is foremost in their minds. My dreams provide the answers to their questions."

"How do you know for sure the dreams are for them?"

"Each time I dream, some fact about their life I didn't know before is shown to me." I pushed my salad with my fork thinking what else I needed to tell him.

"I need a dream," Al said. "Two months ago, my partner in our restaurant business took off with all our money. Cleaned me out. I'm living off my mother. I'm 56 years old, for crying out loud. How do I start over? Where are my retirement funds coming from?"

The rest of the evening passed quickly with Al sharing many of his fears and worries with me.

That night as I lay back on my pillow, a vision of Al's essence,

something basic to his being, swept through my consciousness. A night of dreams had begun.

Someone pounded on my door, rudely waking me.

After checking the doors to my home, reality finally became clear. No one was there. I should have known it was a dream vision. My dog would be barking if someone was at the door! I wrote it on the pad of paper I always keep next to my bed.

As I lay back, fears about Al entered my mind. What did I know about him? At dinner he boasted of his Mafia connections — people he'd known in high school. He mentioned names we'd read in the newspaper. Were they just old acquaintances? What, or who, was I letting into my mind? Still, God had clearly brought him to me. God would protect me. I went to sleep.

My dreams that night showed Al repairing faucets in an apartment while the residents watched. Next, he was repairing something with wood. All night he went up and down stairs, carrying tools. Then I saw him smiling his way to a bank with full pockets.

Early the next morning, Al was at my door.

"So, that's what I saw in my dreams," I related over coffee. "Does it mean anything to you?"

"Yeah. I trained to be a carpenter, first job out of school. Over the years, I bought a few apartment houses and then sold them to start the restaurant. I've torn out walls and fixed all kinds of plumbing."

"There are multiple dwellings in

this area that should be easy to buy. Is that a possibility?" I asked him.

"Sure is. You got the answer," Al was thinking out loud. "Fixer-uppers are perfect for me. Make the repairs, collect the rents, and who needs to retire?"

"Carol, I'd like to pay you. You've helped me more than you can imagine. I have actually been considering suicide. Now I have a reason to go on."

"Having a chance to help is payment enough."

"How about a sliding glass door, right here, and a deck?"

"Thanks, but I don't think I can afford the lumber right now," I replied..

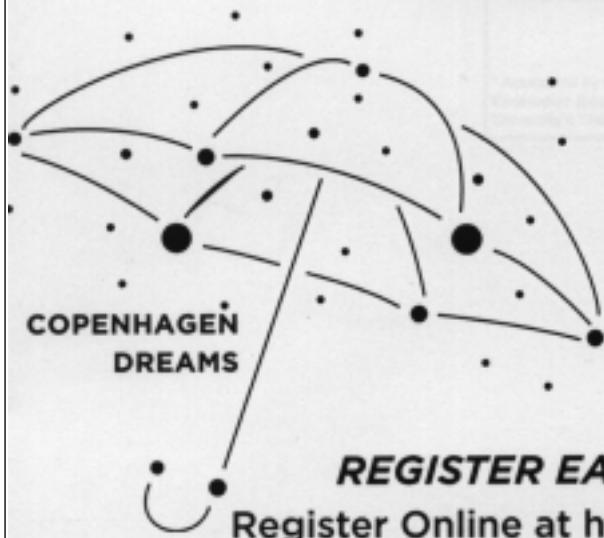
"I'm a carpenter, remember? That means I've got connections." He jotted a name and phone number on a piece of paper. "Call this guy. Mention my name and that I need wood for a job. He'll give it to you at wholesale price. Come on. Let's go out and measure up what you'll need."

Once again, in sharing my dreams, I was able to give someone a gift. My own reward is the realization that God, the angels, some superior being, offered me the opportunity to solve a problem in another's life. This time I received a bonus! A sliding glass door and a deck!

In the several years since all this happened, I've learned that Al is now a building inspector for the city, which seems just about right, considering what I saw in the dream. ☺

Contact Carol at cjoschmann1@aol.com

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EXCITEMENT GROWS OVER ASD'S COPENHAGEN CONFERENCE

When Olaf Gerlach Hansen first volunteered to coordinate the Association for the Study of Dreams 21st Annual Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, he had no idea that the event would be celebrated by another major arrival in his life, the birth of his first son shortly before Christmas. □

Still, Olaf has a lot of experience in organizing international conferences, so he soldiered on, with the support of an excellent conference committee. Registration for the conference (in Euros or dollars) can be done online at www.asdreams.org or through the ASD's central office.

"The interdisciplinary nature and combination of natural, social, religious, therapeutic, artistic and human interest in dreams of ASD captures me," Olaf says. As Director of the Danish Center for Culture and Development, his work revolves around intercultural communication.

"ASD is a postmodern, post-colonial laboratory in creating a foundation for

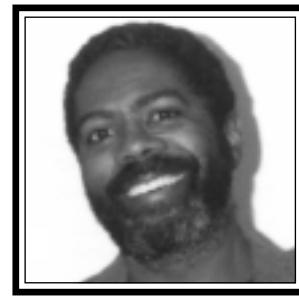
multiple new models around the world," he notes, and this conference is his own contribution to the creation of these new models.

Pre-conference planning involves translation of ASD's information into a multitude of languages and the encouragement of conference presenters from Nigeria, Turkey, Russia and many other countries, who will speak on subjects as widely varied as "Dreams in the Koran" and "Shamanic Dreaming in Northern Europe."

In Copenhagen, conference sessions will be held from June 18-22, 2004 at the Royal Academy of Arts, with its beautiful view of the water, while conference participants will be housed in local hotels (deep discounts for early conference registrants). Questions about the conference can be directed to the ASD central office in California by calling (toll free in the North America) 1-866-DREAM12 (866-373-2612) or by visiting the conference pages at the ASD web site.

Awakening Personal Meanings

with Symbol Phrases,
Systems Effects,
and More



By Evelyn M. Duesbury and E. Bruce Bynum

MANY OF US USE DREAM DICTIONARIES for finding meanings to one-word symbols. One-word symbol meanings can be helpful and fun to use, but there is also danger of taking dream dictionary meanings as absolute. Dream symbol meanings often vary depending on particular situations, and vary greatly from person to person, which is why understanding your own personal meanings for dream symbols is so important to interpreting your own dreams.

An important key in understanding your own dream symbolism and your personal meanings in dreams are what we call "symbol phrases"—learning the meanings of your symbols by examining the context beyond simple one-word objects. To understand the importance of symbol phrases just consider how often we use context in our waking life. Even a simple "Hello" can carry infinite meanings based on the event that precipitates this one-word greeting, the listener's thoughts and attitudes about the person speaking, and so on. The same is just as true for dreams.

We will tell you more about symbol phrases later, but first a quick background of how we became co-researchers and how Evelyn became so deeply steeped in dreamwork that it led her to the six-step Personalized Method for Interpreting Dreams (PMID™) (1)

that she teaches and we research today.

A dream about a "quiet Black man with an unshaven beard" led Evelyn to inquire of Bruce Bynum's interest in helping research the PMID™ dream interpretation method. Dr. Bynum said yes. We now conduct ongoing projects with students; so you see our research is not limited to the experimental lab. Dreams accommodate to essentially any theory (2) and the PMID™ dream interpretation method accommodates to essentially any type learning - especially self-facilitation.

Evelyn's dream about a "many-colored 'dream' cloth" over her shoulders (prompted by her husband's question "Wonder if Ev's dreams could be helpful to her"), gave her confidence to begin intense work with her dreams. In the process, Evelyn developed the PMID™ dream interpretation method. Although she was a highly rated accounting professor at the time, she followed her heart (and her dreams) into earning a counselor education masters degree to support her credibility for teaching dreamwork. Today teaching others how to interpret their own dreams is the "loveliest and most fulfilling work I have done."

Now back to explaining what symbol phrases are and how they greatly accelerate your understanding of your dream symbols.

Awakening Personal Meanings with Symbol Phrases

We have found the dreamer's ability to bridge the gap from defining one-word symbols to defining the phrase that contains the symbol is very often a major key to capturing the "unique-to-the-individual meanings." An example of a one-word symbol is door. One universal meaning of the word, door, is "opportunity." An example of a symbol phrase is "I lock the car doors," which one dreamer understood to mean, "I think I have to protect myself from danger without my husband with me 'on the road of life.'" Another dreamer understood "I closed the door" to mean he had overcome a difficult relationship issue that was represented in his dream.

The phrase that contains the symbol helps the dreamer connect definitions to the context of the dream, the context being pre-dream events, pre-dream thoughts and experiences with people, places and objects. Selecting key symbol phrases is a judgment evaluation by the dreamer as to which dream phrases are the most personally meaningful. Dreamers' spontaneous feelings are the best gages for

knowing the relative accuracy of meanings she or he has developed.

Next are examples of symbol phrases that dreamers selected from their dreams. For purposes of these examples, we added words to the definitions to show dreamers' connections to the context of their dreams.

~~~ ~ ~ ~ ~

"Decide to be friendly with person:" Way to overcome trace of stressful emotions about the person in this dream is to think friendly thoughts about her. (She was also implicated in a dream that I revisited last night.)

~~~ ~ ~ ~ ~

"Did not spend time with my friend Sara Emerson:" Reprimands me for skipping meditation yesterday after I decided my uninterrupted work was more important. Sara's last name "Emerson" reflects my appreciation for Ralph Waldo Emerson's philosophy to think from the highest perspective, something meditation helps me do.

~~~ ~ ~ ~ ~

"Does not want to hear what I have to say:" Be cautious about reminiscing in remorseful ways. In the dream, a childhood friend thinks I am going to talk about activities that she might have been involved in. Last night I almost went into talking remorsefully about this friend.

~~~ ~ ~ ~ ~

"Finally tell Joleatha that I need to bring my spouse home:" Successful overcoming of unfounded worry thoughts about whether my spouse was upset by my actions early this morning. Joleatha tends toward gross overreaction.

~~~ ~ ~ ~ ~

"Healthy mom urges me to dress well:" After working through mothering issues, get on with wearing those personality characteristics.

~~~ ~ ~ ~ ~

"House being cold:" The sadness and heaviness that was felt through-

out our house when we argued last night.

~~~ ~ ~ ~ ~

"I missed our very fine little girl friendship:" These words that I say to a childhood friend in the dream lets me know the true way I felt when my very fine childhood friend began preferring other friends. Last night I thought about the friendship but decided not to talk remorsefully about it.

~~~ ~ ~ ~ ~

"Lack of food:" Lack of food seemed to me to be saying I'm not getting enough emotional nourishment. All there was, was booze. I'm wondering where's the meat (the substance). This ties to my last night's worry thoughts about Victor's alcohol consumption.

~~~ ~ ~ ~ ~

YOURGUIDINGDREAMS.COM offers our DreamScan™ (latest technology to instantly finding meanings to one-word symbols), for use as "thought-starters." DreamScan™, free to visitors on the site, is fun to use, and many of those meanings reflect the context of the dream.. HOWEVER, the best way to find "unique-to-the-individual" meanings is to go beyond one-word symbols to defining symbol phrases. YourGuidingDreams.com gives instructions to members for defining symbol phrases.

### The Dreamwork Systems Perspective

PMID™ step 6 uses a dreamwork systems approach to understanding dreams about relationships. A dreamwork systems approach is mindful of family systemic models, except, instead of the family or other major relationships coming together in personal counseling sessions, an individual studies series of dreams about various major relationships, primarily the family. (See the PMID™ steps in the box).

## Personalized Method for Interpretation Dreams (PMID™) Steps

**Step 1:** Connect your dream contents to current events and circumstances (most often, same day) to determine the context or theme of your dream.

**Step 2:** Connect your pre-dream thoughts (most often, same day) to your dream contents by treating the dream as a responsive answer to your pre-dream thoughts.

**Step 3:** Develop your personal experienced-based definitions of dream symbol/symbol phrase meanings (or associations about) each dream character, place, object or circumstance.

**Step 4:** Explore the emotions you felt during your dream. Compare to your waking emotions. Also, periodically compare to previous dreams for changes in emotions over time about a relationship or issue being studied.

**Step 5:** Explore dream for possible suggestions of how to change thoughts, attitudes or behavior leading to understanding and reduction of key issues.

**Step 6:** Who is the primary relationship in this dream? Comment on your dreaming reactions to/relationship with any person(s) in this dream. Also, comment on whether this dream reflects current effects from past or recent experiences with another or others. If so, compare how you related/reacted in the past with your current reactions in similar circumstances.

To demonstrate the dreamwork systems perspective, we present a synopsis of Katharine's series of dreams. After each of the first four dreams and interpretations, Evelyn gave feedback (through the instructor-facilitated university course) on Katharine's PMID method use. Katharine interpreted her remaining dreams without facilitation.

To set the background for the primary relationship issues Katharine faced, we take a couple sentences

from Katharine's first dreamwork. "I have recurrent emotions of guilt and responsibility. I often feel like I need to keep everyone happy and not cause conflict, and that I must take on other people's views on certain things." Then, well into her work with dreams, Katharine wrote, "A common thread (in my dreams) seems to be that I am not responsible for other people's feelings and I cannot carry that burden of feeling like I need to make people feel a certain way." Dream series follows:

~~~

Dream One: "Family Crash."

Katharine is driving, the whole family is in the car, she loses control and the car crashes. The night before the dream, Katherine felt guilty for letting her family down because she could not go with them to a football game.

~~~

### Dream Two: "Victorian

Mansion." "Victorian vs. present day," could symbolize being out of place... me caretaking my mom... which is out of place." On one floor are children who "died at about age four." "I can remember at a very young age, about four, being left at daycare, and being so upset that my mom was leaving, and wanting to cry, but not letting myself, because I knew that would make it hard for her to leave." The night before this dream, Katharine worried about her mom's "too quiet" attitude.

~~~

Dream Three: "Blocked Path."

Katharine is the only family member brave enough to leave the house to make a delivery to a neighbor.. Dead animals in her path ("possibly any negative emotions/ situations my family is unwilling to deal with") prevent her from getting back to the family. The family watches with "we told you so" looks on their faces. "I feel guilty... and very alone... and scared."

~~~

### Dream Four: "Bullets."

A roommate is shot. Katharine tries to stop the bleeding. The night before the dream, Katherine tried to stand up for a roommate who did not defend herself.

~~~

Dream Five: "Going Back to High School"

—a breakthrough dream. Katharine gathers courage to give a dead cat back to a high school boyfriend after he leaves the dead cat in her locker. "As I walk back down the hall, I feel very relieved and freed." The night before the dream the friend, now several years past high school, "pouted" when she declined a date with him, as he did during high school days. "I need to put Marshall's childish behavior back on him and... refuse to carry around that worry."

~~~

### Dream Six: "Painting in the Basement"

came one night after Katharine, for the first time, told a long-time friend, Paige, that she disapproved of Paige's treatment of a young man. In the dream, Katharine invites Paige to "paint in the basement." Paige resists. "Me eventually going back upstairs: "Represents me (Katharine) realizing I can't force Paige to look deeper into herself...."

~~~

Dream Seven: "Nobody Believes Me"

(a dream she had before the course, but was "too freaked out" to work with it, came again during the course). Katharine first watches a sister bury a dead person in the back yard. Finally, Katharine comes out from "Hiding behind a bush: My own fear of not knowing how to confront my sister" and "Stands next to my sister: This represents me confronting my sister, but also supporting her with this problem." Before the dream, Katharine asked her parents to talk with this daughter about a disorder that seemed quite plain to

Katharine. "They didn't believe me."

(They don't believe her in the dream either.)

(Dreamer's Summary): "Common with other dreams is the focus on me expressing myself more even if it is scary because I am not used to it. In "Family Crash," I am in the driver's seat, and in the "Blocked Path" dream, I am the one to be brave, and in "Nobody Believes Me," I am the one to take charge and go stand by my sister. This message is very clear to me that I have the power to change things that I don't like, even if I may not necessarily change how others respond. I can change my own actions, which does affect the system."

A major aim for the PMID™ method is to help people in the current generation make healthful differences in their own lives, thus terminating potential unhealthful patterns. For several years, co-author E. Bruce Bynum has suggested a "personalized" view of an extended familial system. In his explorations of dreams with individuals and with families in therapy, he has found people in close association, such as the family, resonate with each other in such a way that dreams of each family member express the family's emotional situations. This shared matrix that exists within and between us, interlaces us all in an enfolding field, in a Family Unconscious. Though dreams of each family member reflect the family constellation, individual's dreams differ, depending on the individual's particular skew or perception of the family constellation and conflicts (4, 5).

Though we concentrate on relationship dreams, the PMID™ Method is equally useful for "everyday" guidance in common activities, such as home, work, recreation, career, education, and health. Simply eliminate PMID™ Step 6. Examples of what we call everyday dreams are the two dreams published by Dream Network (6).

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How to Become Involved in Understanding Your Dreams with the PMID™ Method

Would you like to use the Personalized Method for Interpreting Dreams (PMID™) as you record your dreams in your personal dream journal? If yes, use the six steps shown earlier in this article.

Or, would you like to use one of www.YourGuidingDreams.com options to help you work with the PMID™ dream interpretation method? If yes, go to www.YourGuidingDreams.com to select from these two options.

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Dreams are "personal." Your dreams are personal. All member dreams and interpretations are kept confidential and are available for viewing only by the individual dreamer member and select members of YourGuidingDreams staff.

Whether you use the website, or record your dreams in a journal, the PMID™ dream interpretation method could benefit you. Think about it. You likely already sense that many of your pre-dream events and thoughts connect to your dreams. You possibly have heard about comparing dreaming emotions and waking emotions, and that dreams contain solutions. The PMID™ dream interpretation method does all those and more—from inviting you to define dream symbol phrases based on personal experiences, to inviting you to explore whether stressful reactions to others stem from your reactions in prior experiences. ☺

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Evelyn M. Duesbury, MS Counselor Education, teaches the PMID dream interpretation course for University of Wisconsin- Whitewater through the University Distance Education Dept.

E. Bruce Bynum, Ph.D. ABPP, is Director of Behavioral Medicine, University of Massachusetts Health Services, Amherst, MA.



Therapeutic Dreamwork

A Case Study with Mythic Dimensions

by Greg Bogart, Ph.D.

Abstract:

This clinical case study shows how a series of dreams guided a 3 1/2 year psychotherapy treatment. The client's dreams illustrate the intelligence of the unconscious in addressing issues of prolonged bereavement, depression, sexuality, love, creativity, and helping clarify the individual's vocation and life goals. The study demonstrates how dreams promote individuation through the emergence of a personal, spiritual symbolism. Dreams are recounted featuring the Father archetype, the Anima, figures such as The Silver Man, The Old Homeless Man, The Dead Bear, Duke Ellington, and the symbolism of archaic male initiation rites. The author notes recurring symbols through the series of dreams, and how the dreams allowed the client to work through emotionally charged memories and moods. The study illustrates in practical terms the catalytic role that dreams can play in psychotherapy.

Introduction

The case study that follows demonstrates how dreams can help a psychotherapist guide a client, one step at a time, through the labyrinth of personal change. Dreams illuminate developmental tasks and stir up rich, juicy material for therapeutic exploration. Dreams pinpoint what the client needs to revisit from the past, what the client is feeling right now, and reveal emergent potentials, new directions, new possibilities. They move the therapeutic process forward with a powerfully healing influence.

The technique of dreamwork I utilize is simple. I ask questions about every image and every person appearing in the dream. I ask the client, What does this remind you of? I try to avoid foreclosing the meaning of a dream and always remain open to alternative meanings, multiple interpretations.

Carl Jung referred to the dream as a text:

"Every interpretation is a hypothesis, an attempt to read an unknown text.... A relative degree of certainty is reached only in the interpretation of a series of dreams, where the later dreams correct the mistakes we have made in handling those that went before.... I... urge my patients to keep a careful record of their dreams and of the interpretations given.... At a later stage I get them to work out the interpretations as well. In this way the patient learns how to deal correctly with the unconscious without the doctor's help." (cited in Storr, 1983, pp. 178-9).

Jung believed that through dreams we can access the wisdom of the deep unconscious, which guides us and anticipates the future. In Jung's view, the relations between the ego and the unconscious occur through symbolism, through what he called the "uniting symbol" (p. 225). "In symbols the union of conscious and unconscious contents is consummated. This union of opposites is the

transcendent function... This rounding out of the personality into a whole may well be the goal of any psychotherapy that claims to be more than a mere cure of symptoms" (p. 226). The dreams I describe below illustrate vividly the union of opposites and the rounding out of the personality into a whole, as well as the transformative and catalytic role of dreams in psychotherapy.

Dreams are the psyche's means of self-healing. Before introducing the main case study, let me describe a brief example. A man named Joe, who was very discouraged and depressed about his relationships with women, having recently been dumped by a woman who left him for another man, had this dream: "I was swimming underwater. The water was very clear and warm with a lot of rich plant life growing in it. I saw a rose that was my mother's. The rose was on the surface and began to sink down toward the bottom. I saw how deep and vibrant its red color was. It had no thorns. I caught it before it reached the bottom. It came to rest in my hand and when I touched it, it began to open up and blossom in my hand with a very powerful and loving energy. Later it began to rise to the surface again." Joe and I explored our associations to each part of the dream. Being underwater suggested being submerged, immersed in water, in his emotions, in the unconscious. The water is warm and life-giving, suggesting it is safe and life-enhancing to explore the unconscious. The Rose is a symbol of the Self, flowering, individuation. He said, "It reminds me of deep, honest love." I said, "It is a symbol of your true Self and that at your core you are a man of deep, honest love." He said, "It reminds me of unshakeable, unfailing love, like my mom's love for me." The red color of the rose suggests heat, passion, smoldering with feeling. He said, "I'm angry about being derailed from being trusting, loving. I want to love someone with all my heart." The rose with no thorns evoked feelings of being defenseless, innocence, having no aggression, no thorns. It is an image of vulnerability, of true, honest feelings. I said, "The rose coming to the surface suggests bringing into conscious awareness from the depths of yourself the awareness that in your essence you are a man of deep, honest, open love." One month after having this dream of the Rose, Joe met someone, fell in love, they quickly moved in together, and he completed his stint of brief therapy. End of story!

The Case Study

The case I will present now involves a lengthy series of dreams that portrayed a client's inner world of memories, emotions, and emergent potentials. This client's dreams illustrate the intelligence of the unconscious in addressing issues of bereavement, depression, sexuality and love, creativity, vo-

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cation and life goals. This case study illustrates how dreams promote individuation through the emergence of a personal, spiritual symbolism. We'll note how certain symbols reappear and evolve through this series of dreams, and how the dreams allowed working through of chunks of material, specific memories and moods. Often work with a dream led to weeks or months of exploration of a particular issue or feeling. The dreams I will recount were like an underground stream that irrigated the therapeutic process—nourishing, providing focus and emotional depth. Through these dreams we encounter the intelligence of Psyche, the unconscious, that living, breathing, self-organizing medium that is the focus of our work, and the object of our fascination, as therapists.

My client, whom I will call Chris, began seeing me when he was 28 years old, and I have been working with him weekly for three and a half years. He is an artist, and the son of an artist. Chris has a college degree and is currently employed doing building maintenance for a large business firm.

In our first session together (10/11/99), Chris informed me that, when he was six years old, his father died at the age 41 from cancer. His father was a follower of Christian Science and refused medical treatment. Chris said, "Dad's death was never dealt with. Mom was overwhelmed with four kids. There was no funeral. I saw shrinks throughout high school and college. I have problems with lack of focus. I lost the momentum to do art after college because of the pressure of working to support myself. I've been experiencing a total creative block. I want to unfold my creativity, but I'm stuck. That is making me very depressed. I have very few friends. I also have a lot of issues in my three year relationship with Ann. I am confused about my sexual attraction to men." These were the main presenting issues. I quickly learned that Chris was preoccupied with his father's death, and that his artwork is filled with material that refers to this event.

About a month later Chris brought me this first dream (11/8/1999): "I am driving in a car in traffic in a suburban neighborhood. A little boy runs in front of me, 4 or 5 years old. I jump out of the car. There are two kids there. I grab the younger child, being really tender. I hug him very close, and tell him he has to be careful or he could get hurt. The streets are dangerous; they aren't for kids to play in. The younger boy runs off, playing mischievously. I am shocked by his fearlessness." Chris comments, "The two boys were like a part of me, unsupervised, roving. I didn't have a lot of adult supervision as a kid." "What did these kids look like?" "The younger one was 4 or 5 years old with a blonde, Dutch boy haircut; he looked just like me. He seemed aloof, in his own world. I remember being very aloof." I said, "Do you mean that after your dad's death you were numb?" "Yes, I acted that way because I didn't want others to see I was in pain. I was totally unemotional. I forced back

tears, tried to be strong." "In the dream you are looking at yourself as a little boy and embracing this part of yourself." "It reminds me of how my mother gave me a watch and I deliberately destroyed it by throwing it against a wall. I had a lot of pent-up anger, and I took it out on this watch my mom gave me." Tears flow as Chris recounts this episode. The kids in the dream also remind Chris that as a child he always had imaginary friends; he remembered playing alone a lot. I ask Chris what it felt like to hug the boy: "I felt like a protective parent." In the dream Chris is extending kindness toward himself, forming a relationship with this four-year-old part of himself.

The next dream (11/28/99) highlights Chris' anxiety about his desire for closeness with other men, and also, incidentally, seems to illustrate Freud's tripartite model of the id, ego, and superego. Chris dreams, "I am in a park where I see lots of men around, who are hanging out together, sitting on blankets, some walking hand in hand. I am interested in them but I am not a part of the group, just witnessing, observing. All of a sudden there is a thunderous roar of surveillance helicopters whose pilots are patrolling and filming everything. The men in the cockpit are taking photos or video of the men in the park, spying on them. The pilots are hooting and hollering at the men below, laughing like giddy little kids. They act like they are in charge."

Chris's comments that the men in the park holding hands remind him of an incident when several gay men whistled at him in Golden Gate Park. The dream evoked feelings of sexual curiosity about men, a theme that would occupy several therapy hours. Freud would say these impulses emanate from the id, and are a cause of internal conflict for the dreamer. The men in the helicopter cockpit (the pun is no doubt fully intended by the unconscious) are surveying the scene, and seem uncomfortable and childish in their reaction to the other men being affectionate with each other. They are symbols of the superego, internal judgement. They are homophobic authority figures, who act like they're in control. Chris says, "These men remind me of my brother, who is extremely homophobic." They are hovering above, assuming a position of superiority, as if they're better than the men below. The pilots are like voyeurs, with cameras. They remind Chris of, "A part of me that watches, witnesses when around an openly gay environment." Witnessing suggests the perspective of ego consciousness trying to mediate the conflict between id and superego, impulse and restraining judgement. The men hovering and watching from above contrast with the men on the ground, who, Chris said, represent community and overcoming isolation, not just men attracted to men. Chris is in the middle trying to sort this out and gain some perspective.

Dreams always have multiple meanings, not just one, and our interpretations should never become too literal or single-minded. I was interested in Chris' comment that

the men in the park symbolized men having a good time together, developing a strong sense of community, overcoming isolation. This image evoked comments from Chris about his loneliness and desire for friendships with other men. Since moving to the Bay Area three years earlier Chris still did not have a single male friend. He is feeling isolated, and attributes a lot of his difficulty to the homophobia he has faced—both in himself and in other men—living in the Bay Area. He said the dream also reminded him of men working together, artists sharing studios, and also therapist and client working together. After working with this dream there was an internal shift from homosexual fantasies to a longing for male friendship and for mentorship by older men, as well as acceptance of the emotional support and nourishment he derived from his regular therapy sessions with me.

Dreams of the Father

Two months later, Chris had this crucial dream (1/24/00): "*I am in the woods in the middle of nowhere. I have not brought any food, clothes, a tent or sleeping bag. What should I do? I am totally unprepared. I start eating sticks with twigs and briars and thorns.*" He says, "It reminds me of feeling alone and unprepared." I say, "Like a child without a father." I want to keep naming this for Chris. He said, "I don't know how to cope with the world. I feel unequipped for my life." "What does eating thorns remind you of?" "It reminds me of Christ with the crown of thorns. It reminds me of my dad, and how he martyred himself for his beliefs in Christian Science. The strength of his faith carried him through cancer eating his body." I said, "The dream also evokes the image of your own cross, your own suffering over the loss of your father. Jesus said, 'Father, father, why hast thou forsaken me?' The dream portrays your re-enactment of the Christ mythos, and the way you have been reliving your dad's suffering over and over again. There is a sense of your sharing or participating in his suffering. The dream is trying to unfold a resolution to this drama." This is an example of how the symbols emerging from the deep unconscious connect us to a mythic, transpersonal level of meaning. Chris has been fixated on his father's death, and the dream helps resolve this predicament by revealing its archetypal core.

Seven weeks later, Chris dreams (4/3/00): "I am walking through an underdeveloped part of town, on a dirt path. Paul Auster, the novelist, walks with me. He was like a mentor-father. I felt close to him. We may have been holding hands." Here again are men connecting. Asked his associations to Paul Auster, Chris said, "I had a sense of him as the greatest father in the world. He is an artist who is uncompromising, utterly dedicated. He found it hard to make a living from his art when he was younger. But he stuck with it and he made it. Father-son is a prominent theme in his writing."

So, too, father-son was a central theme in Chris' healing journey. Here he meets the Father-Artist, and ex-

periences closeness with this figure. He spent many therapy hours recounting events that he wished his father had witnessed and participated in. At the same time, Chris was establishing a positive bond to me as a trusted guide. Developmentally, Chris needed just the right amount of male attention and interest in his growth and unfoldment. Once this was internalized he was able to move forward and make major choices about the direction of his life.

The next dream a few weeks later repeats the theme of being unprepared (4/24/00): "*I am with friends from high school. We are climbing Mt. Fuji, at night. There is snow. We find a little cabin. I realized I am wearing shorts and a T-shirt. I was unprepared for the climb. I decided to go back down.*" Chris said, "Mt. Fuji reminds me of climbing the mountain of life." I ask Chris about his friends from high school. He said, "Interestingly, one of these people recently got a photo editing job without a lot of background. She had guts, she put herself out. I admire that. I know I have a talent that I haven't tapped. I have the resources inside me but I don't know how to make use of them effectively." Being unprepared on the mountain top suggests lack of foresight and planning, not looking ahead. Chris' dream poses the question, What is needed to climb the mountain, to reach the pinnacle of success and achievement? This echoes Daniel Levinson's idea that climbing the ladder is a central metaphor and developmental task of adulthood (Levinson, 1978). In the dream Chris retreats, climbs back down to safe ground. Chris wanted to make decisions about his career and life direction, but he wasn't quite ready. The path forward wasn't clear. It wasn't yet time to ascend the mountain. It would in fact take two more years before Chris made the decisions that began to shape his life direction. He needed a lot of time to work through the past before new possibilities emerged. As so often occurs, the block, the complex, the client's sense of frustration, often gets worse once treatment gets underway.

The Dream of the See-Saw Train

The next dream illustrates that sometimes it is the therapist's associations that lead the interpretation forward. Chris dreamed (5/8/00): "*Standing in front of a bridge. There are concrete walls as barriers at the outer edges of the bridge. I'm on the concrete wall hanging on to it. You got on a complicated contraption like a see-saw train from old movies; you pump yourself out to the bridge. Then you could cross the bridge. A little boy was next to me, about four years old. The boy was leaning back, starting to fall. I caught him. He didn't know what was happening.*" Chris was perplexed by this dream and didn't have any initial associations. I prompted him, saying that the Bridge implied transition, crossing a threshold. The pump suggests pressurizing a sense of motivation; "priming the pump," building up a charge of intention, purpose, desire, and ambition. I said, "Some-

thing about losing your father thwarted your sense of ambition. You felt it's useless, what's the point of trying?" "Yes. The little boy reminds me of Me. He was very serious, troubled; he wasn't sure he liked where he was. He reminds me of my childhood." I said, "To cross the bridge you have to hold this boy and keep him safe; you can't let him fall. To cross the bridge you have to prime the pump, build a charge, get over the lethargy and hopelessness. The loss of your dad left you feeling that there is no one to be proud of you." "The dream is saying that I want to take myself and my ambitions more seriously."

Sometimes the smallest dream fragment releases intense memories and affect (5/22/00). Chris dreamed: "I'm on a long bike tour in Connecticut. I rode around in circles. Chris said, "This reminds me of learning to ride a bike when I was 7 or 8. I was alone, I had training wheels. I rode around in circles a lot. A dominant memory of my childhood is riding a bike and being alone. I had elaborate fantasies about who I was with, a motorcycle gang or a group of friends." The dream takes him right back to that time, to the feeling of loneliness. I said, "This makes me think of a boy learning to ride a bike with his dad watching, cheering him on, celebrating his son's achievement of autonomy. The dream evokes a conscious memory of loss, of the absence you experienced, the loneliness of your childhood." Chris replied, "I spoke to imaginary friends a lot." And the session ended there. I wish I had asked him who his imaginary friends were. But I never did.

The Dream of the Homeless Man and the Lost Father

In his next session (5/29/00) Chris told me this significant dream: "In a café. I went to the bathroom. When I return my art equipment bag is gone, and my meal has been eaten. A man is sleeping in the window. He gets up. He is a black man, dishevelled, covered in blankets. He had the bag. I say to him, 'You've got my bag.' He scowled, looked me in the eye, handed me the bag, and walked away. When I saw he hadn't put up a fight I felt sorry for him and wanted to give him something, and I followed him. I found him sleeping in a car. Another black man with gray hair was nearby watching. I ran away. The guy was just watching. No one was chasing me, but I wanted to run."

Chris comments: "The art equipment symbolizes my career change issue, the whole issue of being an artist. It is stolen from me. The dishevelled, Homeless Black Man reminds me of the Other, someone who is foreign to me. It reminds me of the only dream I ever had about my dad." And now Chris recounts for me this pivotal dream: "He [my father] is this homeless looking guy with a poncho on. He has something under the poncho. Is it a

backpack or a hump? He is a mystery to me. Is he homeless or does he live somewhere? He is the Wanderer, the Oppressed, a person the odds are against." "What odds are working against you?" I asked. "My fears of failure, of lack of talent or business-savvy." "You feel that the loss of your father stacked the odds against you. His death feels connected to your lack of confidence, and fear of failure. You felt a lack of paternal support to help you out. This dream figure gives you back the camera, your career. In the dream you felt sorry for the man. Who do you feel sorry for?" "I feel sorry for me, and my mom. The homeless man reminds me of a man without a family, a family without a man"; in other words, it reminds him of his father, his family." The homeless man also reminded Chris of feeling rootless, his fear of never having a career and a stable life. The wandering man's hump reminded Chris of "disfigurement, mystery, something concealed from me. I didn't know what it was." I said, "Maybe your father's pain was hidden to you." "Yes. And the black man represents for me the extremes of human potential. People like Malcolm X and Bob Marley overcame poverty and became the best of all people. The black man in the dream represents being self-made, fierce, overcoming adversity. He reminds me of fatherless children, broken families, the struggle of women to keep it all together." Chris' feelings about his mother would soon come into vivid focus.

The Dream of the Church, the Pagan Altar, and the Sacrifice

7/3/00: "I'm at work. My office has moved and now it's a church, empty, closed down. I walk through the pews. Light is coming in through windows. I go down to the basement of the church. I was in this ancient pagan place of worship. The floor was a cave, painted blue. There was a design in the center of the floor, a pentagram or mandala, a large circle. In the back of the room was a sign that said, 'Do not go beyond this point.' This is where sacrifices are performed. They sacrifice sheep.' It felt creepy. It was like the basement when I was a kid. I wanted to leave." Chris says, "The scene reminds me of the Christian Science church. My dad died because he refused medical treatment. It also reminds me of a Pagan worship site, a very personal, sacred place, connected to the earth and a rebirth of spirituality. I wondered, were they sacrificing sheep or children? That reminds me of a sense of loss in my childhood and my feeling of a lost childhood." I said, "The sheep reminds me of Christ as the shepherd; also, being meek, innocent. So the dream evokes the sacrifice of the innocent." "That's what happened to me as a boy—the sacrifice of the innocent. My dad was innocent and helpless, too." "The dream suggests that you are entering forbidden territory, something off limits, perhaps your



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identification with your dad's suffering, and your own." Chris said, "My childhood was sacrificed. Parents make sacrifices for their children. My mom's whole life she made sacrifices for us. She sacrificed her childhood to work during WWII. Her grandfather was sacrificed by the Nazis. Then she lost my dad. I used to be wracked with guilt about all my mom went through. I always felt like anything I went though would be nothing compared to her life." Chris wept as he said this. The dream's motif of sacrifice jars loose memories and emotions that have been long buried. These intensely feeling-full moments in Chris' session were evoked by following his associations to this dream journey down into the underworld, to a blue cave with a sacred circle where rites were enacted involving the sacrifice of sheep, symbol of innocence, the need to be led, shepherded. Perhaps this attitude of innocence and meekness is what needed to be sacrificed on this internal altar. Only then could Chris hope to reach a place beyond the grief and survivor guilt that afflicted both he and his mother. Note the mandala painted on the floor of this sacred cave; an internal order is emerging within the psyche, even amidst the apparent chaos of the unconscious. ☩

(To be continued , Vol. 23 No. 2)

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THROUGH THE VEIL

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STEPPING THROUGH THE VEIL in the looking glass of time can involve episodes of lost time and evidence of extraordinary physical manifestations. These types of experiences have been sprinkled throughout my life. These 'through the veil' incidences have almost always preceded major life changes, often including a 'big' life dream as part of the hinterland phenomena.

While a majority of reported events of this type occur during night/sleep hours when the mind/body are in an unconscious state, I find the ones that occur during day/waking hours are even more fascinating. Having experienced both physical occurrences and lost time situations while fully awake (but focused), I felt as though I was ushered through a tear in the fabric of time with uncanny ease.

The most recent occurrence happened in March of this year and was dramatic and powerful. While concentrating on a computer screen during the last half hour of my work day, intent on completing a project before leaving, I felt something wet on my left ankle and foot. I pushed back from the desk to see what was going on and saw a wash of blood trickling from above my ankle to my shoe; it was pooling around my foot. Shocked, I was unable to grasp how this could possibly be happening, as I had no memory of injuring myself before I sat down at the computer hours before.

I could not get up without getting the blood on the carpet, and called for a co-worker to come and help, while I reached for a wad of tissues to wipe the blood from myself and the chair mat. I felt NOTHING, but the bleeding was profuse. I had no idea what had happened—my shoe and knee-hi sock were soaked; the bathroom was at the other end of building, so I hobbled there with my colleague pressing a rag on the wound. When I placed my foot into the sink, I saw two holes about 1/8" round scooped out or punctured in the skin; they did not hurt—no sensation at all—just non-stop bleeding! I thought maybe I'd been bitten by a snake, but that didn't make any sense, since there was no pain, swelling or redness. We wrapped gauze, paper towels and then another rag around the wound, in order that I would be able to drive home. The bleeding went on like this for nearly two weeks... on and off. After the bleeding slowed, a dark "lump" appeared underneath the skin, but when the healing occurred, the wounds covered over almost instantaneously; they never hurt or scabbed over... just healed to a smooth surface with no indentations after the bleeding stopped. Today, the skin is only mildly discolored, and you would never know such a wound was there.

After recounting this incident to a friend a few months later, she forwarded me a copy of the Mufon

Journal Filer's Files, #28 dated 7-7-03. In them was a reference entitled, "Canadians Report Heavy Concentration of Small Scoop Marks." The report from an Ottawa witness referred to characteristics of a small roundish scoop mark (on left wrist) found upon awakening: 1. About 1/8" or two millimeters in diameter; 2. The bottom of the wound is concave; 3. There was no pain associated with the wound, 4. The bottom of the wound was flecked with small bits of blood, 5. The bottom of the wound was slick and smooth, as if cauterized, 6. The wound looked like it had been done five minutes before I awoke and took two months to heal, now only visible with a jeweler's loupe. The only characteristics not shared with this person's experience was my own excessive bleeding and being awake when it happened. The individual sought medical help and the doctor indicated it looked like a 'punch biopsy' he described as being done using a laser scalpel-type device, and that it was the fourth or fifth case he had seen within recent weeks. This incident occurred in February, 2003, one month before mine.

As a footnote, I made a thorough search of my office underneath desks, chairs, tables and around file cabinets, but could not find a protruding nail or any other sharp object that would have caused such a wound. While I do not know what created such an injury, I find the

parallels with the Canadian incidents compelling. But, I'm left with the question: did someone or something pierce through the veil from the other side of time to my reality and perform a procedure on me? It is anybody's call.

Taking a journey through the veil to another reality can result in lost time. Many such incidences are reported, but the ones that occur during wakefulness intrigue me, since one of my brushes with losing time happened in a public place during full daylight hours. On a solitary trip I took to the beach one autumn, I booked a cabin at my favorite getaway for a week, and my dog and I settled in for some quiet, therapeutic and creative time. My days were interspersed with writing, knitting, meditating, walking on the beach and collecting agates.

One afternoon at about 2:00 o'clock, I decided to take the dog for a walk, and we headed down the long pathway to the shoreline. It was a crisp October day with wispy clouds overhead. Several large logs had washed up on the sand after a recent storm and provided an inviting place to sit and watch the waves. After a vigorous walk, I sat on the end of a log and my dog lay by my feet. I held her leash and focused on the horizon and glistening waves, as their rhythm lulled me into a meditative state. I was particularly drawn to a gold and silver elliptical cloud that had appeared near the sun. I watched it change shapes, compressing and elongating, almost as if it was breathing. This seemed to go on for several minutes and the next thing I recalled was wondering why the sun was so low on the horizon; it was approaching sunset. I looked at my watch and it was shortly after 4:30. I couldn't believe it! I had lost two hours of time and had no idea where I had been. The dog was sitting up and looking at me as I came to and I felt cold from the raw wind. The clouds had returned to the high, wispy dappled variety I had seen earlier in the day and were turning from gold to scarlet.

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The fact that the dog remained calm and obedient during this time astonished me. She was a hyper-mutt, young (under one year old) and would have barked or run up to anyone who might be walking on the beach, or taken off if she'd seen another dog. So where did we go? Was the unusual cloud formation a spaceship of some kind? Were we beamed up through the veil?

After each of these incidents respectively, major life changes transpired, accompanied by remarkable dream activity. Shortly after the scoop occurrence, I made a decision to take my writing in a new direction—a form I had never attempted before. It proved to be a natural fit and I am now enjoying some success with it. I also relinquished a line of service I had performed for years, which I believe cleared the way for my new professional endeavors.

A few months after the lost time event, I was divorced. And several months after that, I had a dream that *I was being escorted by two monks in an ancient Grecian landscape*. One later became my husband (who I recognized from the dream), and the other (who I met at the same time) remains a lifelong friend to this day.

Did the crossing over into these unseen realms prepare me for life changes or was it just a coincidence—a bizarre timing of events that would happen anyway? Both of my experiences carried a surreal quality that defies description. Were they merely waking dreams that manifested through lost time and physical aberrations to get my attention? I have considered all of these possibilities and have no specific answers.

In the events I described, I subscribe to the fact that in some way *something crossed through the veil to my world and I crossed through the veil to theirs.* ☽

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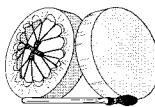
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By: Wanda Burch

Foreword: Robert Moss

Publication Date: October 8, 2003

Price: \$14.95, Trade Paper

Published by New World Library

In *She Who Dreams*, Wanda Burch proves that dreaming is healing. Our bodies speak to us in dreams, giving us early warning of symptoms we might develop, showing us what they need to stay well. Dreams give us fresh and powerful images for self-healing. Beyond this, dreams can take us—sleeping or hyper-aware—into realms where we can have direct access to sacred healers and teachers.

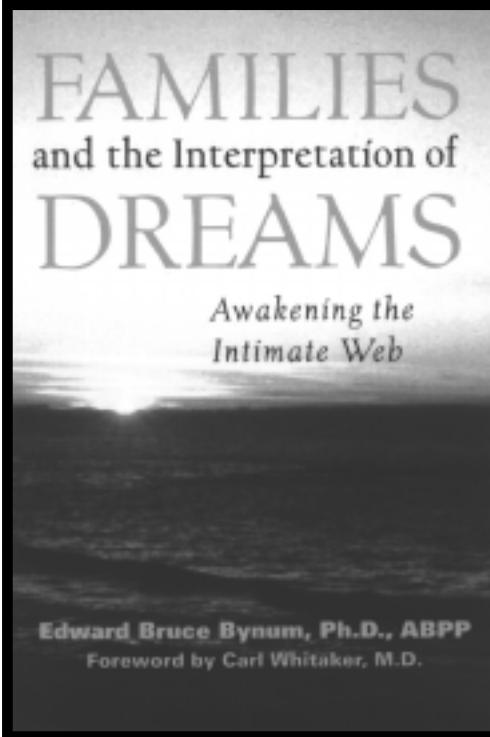
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Her message is that wisdom lives within each of us, and we can tap into that wisdom with some guidance. Wanda writes that "within each of us lies the ability to rise above the challenges of our lives and choose our own ways of living, of healing."

Wanda is a long-term survivor (14 years) of breast cancer who has always had a vibrant dream life. She works with Robert Moss, author of *Conscious Dreaming*.

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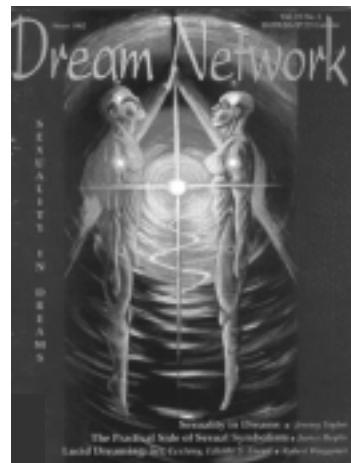
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