



**Utilizing Dream Work to  
Enhance the Therapeutic Process**

Handouts

Yolanda Koumidou-Vlesmas, LCSW  
Executive Director  
516.568.0306  
[www.koumidoucenter.com](http://www.koumidoucenter.com)

## DREAMS

### Techniques for Dream Interpretation:

- Be curious.
- Where is the energy in the dream for you?
- What is the hardest part with this dream for you?
- Bring in the symbolic/archetypal.
- Symbols books can affect interpretation.
- The symbolic can be a doorway into the deeper.
- Symbols: Do we push them on the dream as an interpretation? Do we rely on a lexicon to find the meaning in a dream? Do symbols open us up to knowledge and enrich us in our limited viewpoint. It's best to use them with a desire to "open a window" rather than to feel like a "know it all".
- Be sure to leave the interpretation of a dream open. Don't get caught in a standardized interpretation.
- Some dreams can be seen as archetypal dreams and can be given a "collective" interpretation.
- Let yourself have some knowledge regarding what are the different types of dreams.
- Remember though, that the final decider is the dreamer, and can be helped by answering - "How does this idea or that idea about the dream feel?" rather than "Does that make sense?"
- Precognitive Dreams – pay attention to the dream's message and follow through in the practical world – like getting a health check.
- Take an anniversary, like New Years Day or before a Voice Dialogue intensive, and look at the themes in your dreams.

### Remembering Dreams:

- Jot them down on a pad or book near your bed. Keep pen and paper next to your bed.
- Write date, circumstances, and the dream. Some people like to title their dream.
- Look at your dream later in the day, and the connections of meaning can come to you.
- Tell your dream to someone, and you might find that the connections to meaning can come more easily. Look later at your dream
- Some things can get in the way of dreaming – caffeine, alcohol, pot, not enough sleep, alarms or children waking you up, a Pusher/Listmaker that comes in right as you wake up.
- When you wake up, type it as an email to yourself.
- Ask your Dreamkeeper to "please remember my dream(s) tonight."
- Get facilitated – The part that believes you cannot remember your dreams, and its opposite.
- Don't discount the value of any dream you get. An image, just a few words or sentences can be very profound. Don't censure.
- Empower your clients/students so they can "hold the power to remember".
- Write down the dream or the dynamic of feeling.
- Tell yourself – "I will remember and wake-up and be able to write it down."
- Ask for a dream and this can help you get to sleep too – "Unconscious, I need to get to sleep. Will you work on this for me and bring me a dream?" Then relax and release and sleep may more easily come.
- When you wake up, you might be able to catch a piece of the dream, and if you stay quiet and still, (or go back to the position your body was in when you first woke up) you can oftentimes pull in some more and more of it into your memory.

### **Working with Dreams & Holding onto the Lessons**

- With actors and others, dreams help them connect with their talent.
- Let the dream images talk. This comes from the mind.
- Let the dream images make sounds and use movement to express themselves.
- A primary self from a dream (like the dream ego character) might be met using words and a disowned self in a dream (like a lion) can be met with sound and movement.
- Once the body expresses the energy, the mind may have new realizations and cognitions.
- Let person describe where the energy in the dream image sits in the body, and how the energy feels – open or closed, expanded or contracted, warm or cool, etc?
- Look at the overall setting. The overview can give a strong message. How do “I” interpret this dream? What part of you is interpreting this dream? How would a different part interpret this dream?
- Elements of nature in a dream can tend to be archetypes.
- Work the different images in a dream, without attending to whether they are opposites or not. Watch for overwhelm with this method. Still work the Aware Ego process.
- Holding onto the lessons: Take it into a physical form. Do an action that connects to the “learning”.
- In a dream group, people can throw out their own personal associations. This can free things up for the dreamer to engage in the dream.
- Ask questions: “If I were you, I’d like to…” “If it were my dream…” but watch the self that says this, so it is not just a clever way of being the Knower. “If this were happening to me…”
- What isn’t happening that you would expect in real life.
- Are dreams connecting us to the universe?
- Psychodrama: Different people take roles and the dreamer can shift in and out of parts.
- Give your dream a title.

### **Books about Dreaming**

- The Jungian-Senoï Dreamwork Manual, A Step-by-Step Introduction to Working with Dreams by Strophon Kaplan-Williams
- Man and His Symbols by Carl Gustav Jung
- Sigmund Freud: Interpretation of Dreams by James Strachey
- Inner Work: Using Dreams and Active Imagination for Personal Growth by Robert A. Johnson
- Re-visioning Psychology by James Hillman
- A Blue Fire by James Hillman and Thomas Moore
- Dream and the Underworld by James Hillman
- Archetypal Psychology by James Hillman
- The Hero with a Thousand Faces by Joseph Campbell
- The King and the Corpse: Tales of the Soul's Conquest of Evil by Heinrich Robert Zimmer and Joseph Campbell
- The Dragon's Teeth by Hal Stone, PhD
- The King Must Die by Mary Renault