

Jungian Dream Interpretation

By

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Your dreams have unconscious knowledge of the past, present and future. A symbol comes through your imagination, emotion, and intellect. These symbols that are chosen by your unconscious give you a message or messages so you will have a better understanding of yourself. Dream interpretation can be a form of healing and growth for the dreamer.

All people dream every night. Many do not remember their dreams or say that they never dream. Usually this means the person is too tired or exhausted to remember their dreams. There is no negative or evil dream. No matter what occurs in the dream, it is meant to give you a positive meaning of what is happening in your life. Freud said that dreams were "the royal road to your unconscious." Freud's interpretation of dreams took a person many times into their past and to what had happened to them.

Jungian dream interpretation is directed towards the future. These dreams show you what is about to happen or develop. They anticipate. Jung did take the past into consideration; especially, if a person had several dreams that usually pointed back to a certain age. Then the client would be asked to tune into the memories of that age range.

If there is a key word that you could pin point with Jungian psychology, it would be transformation. This word fits his psychology the best. Transformation must have a direction and that's what dreams are about usually with a Jungian interpretation. The most difficult part of this interpretation is to recognize the dream images as aspects of oneself. That resistance usually pops up in the client as ignorance.

I once had a male client who had a dream about a dinosaur with a very long neck. I have a grandson who is really into dinosaurs so I knew that this type was a vegetarian and also with the long neck that the animal could see further than other animals. The client absolutely refused to see this image as something that could relate to him and I could not get him to break down his resistance to the image.

*****I kept it in mind during future sessions with him but it's very important that the client be able to take in the image that the dream gives. Just be curious. Why would I get such a weird image? Put photos of the image on your refrigerator or mirror and just live with them for a few weeks. See what else would come up in future dream/s or during your conscious life? Does a television (TV) program about dinosaurs happen to pop up on your TV screen after this dream? If so, watch it just to see if your mind makes any connections.

Many times the first thing about dream interpretation is to educate the client. Most clients and or people in our culture are results oriented. They want a quick result or understanding. Jung says that dealing with the dream is more important than understanding the dream. I try to hit a happy medium with my clients as this isn't the

early 1900s when people have more time in their life to dwell on psychological dream interpretation.

I have a dream worksheet that I ask people to work from. Some people keep a pad and pencil by the side of their bed and/or a tape recorder. If you tape record your dreams, you will be instantly surprised by the depth of your dream voice. Because usually will be half asleep and “it” will not sound like “you.” You are to try to instantly push the recorder button when you’re still half asleep and remember what you can. Usually if you begin with the last thing that happened, you can go backwards into the dream. But any way you decide to do it – recording or writing - just go for it instantly upon awakening and before leaving your bed.

The dream worksheet is typed below. Please try to fit your dream/s into this style of remembering. Keeping a dream journal in this manner will be most helpful if you do. A complete dream follows a classical drama structure. First a stage is set. Characters are presented and they introduce a situation that may present a conflict or show a situation.

DREAM WORKSHEET

Title or Theme: _____

Date of the Dream: _____

1. Setting: Where does the dream take place?
2. Characters: How would you describe the characters? What attributes do they have? When did you know them if they relate to people in your life? (There is resistance here sometimes. If Aunt Millie is in your dream and was not liked in the family, you may have trouble describing her because why should someone so negative be in your dream? Never mind judging why she is there. Just write everything you can think about her. Your unconscious picked her for a reason. Let’s try to find out what that reason is).
3. The Action: What’s Happening?
4. What associations and/or connections can you make from your behavior the day before and/or any family of origin situations from your past and the different characters in the dream? Is this dream showing you a new way to handle something?
5. What was the last image of the dream? The last image of a dream usually is saying that this is where the energy is trying to go. So sometimes if you can only remember the last part of the dream, work on that, and ask yourself, “ Where does this last portion seem to be taking me?” Another important aspect to recall is what you were feeling during the dream.

Below is an example of a recent dream of one of my clients who gave me permission to share it with you. What this client was feeling turned into a spiritual experience for him.

The client is a 48 year old male who recently suffered a heart attack. Previously, before the attack, he thought he was in generally good health and was surprised by the episode. To help him to understand what had happened to him, he began looking at

how he was living his life before the attack and what changes he can make in terms of his beliefs, attitudes and habits to create a healthier outcome for himself. According to Carolyn Myss, (1993) our physical illnesses and dysfunctions are directly related to, and are symbolic of unresolved emotional, psychological or spiritual stress that we have been experiencing over a long period of time.

For example, what physically happens during a heart attack mimics what may be happening in other areas of our lives. During a heart attack, blood is unable to squeeze through the coronary arteries because they have become clogged with cholesterol and plaque, leaving them too narrow for the blood to pass. The heart muscle then becomes starved for the much needed oxygen-enriched blood and suddenly shuts down.

In the case of my client, the buildup of “emotional congestion” occurred from the stress of focusing solely on his desire for money and position in his career. Ultimately, his life became starved of the love and the joys of everyday living. Ironically, we tend to associate love and joy with the heart.

Since dreams are also symbolic, he wanted to explore how the dreams he was having could help to guide him in his healing process.

During a recent session with me, he shared a dream with a feeling “he wanted to capture.” He had this dream right before the east coast’s most damaging storm, hurricane Sandy, which everyone had been busy buckling down for. That particular day my client had been to see a new doctor who was referred by another helping professional. The doctor was particularly thorough and spent over an hour with him. Feeling relieved and in good hands he thought, “Wow, someone is really going to help me figure out what happened [to cause the heart attack]!”

The dream he had that night takes place on a bus – a greyhound bus. The client stated he doesn’t like buses. His family was somewhere in the vicinity but did not seem to have an important role in the dream. Sitting on the seat beside him was actor Hugh Laurie, whom the client described as a “gross, horrible person you usually want no part of when you see him on the TV show *House*. He’s sitting there and we finally get to the destination and both of us turn to kiss. It isn’t a sexual feeling in any way.”

“It almost felt physically warm. I’ve never felt it before. It wasn’t physical or sexual. It was this warm caring, loving feeling that I just haven’t been able to get out of my mind. And, I’ve never felt it. When you are young and you have a new love and you get so excited – it wasn’t like that. It was this whole body warm feeling that I felt was just pouring out of me. It was unbelievable and so cool.”

“I attribute it to...I think acupuncture is helping open me up. Seeing this doctor that day I felt that this was someone who’s “on it” (the heart attack) for me.”

Then we started to analyze the dream. The client doesn't watch *House* on television but sometimes his wife does so he's seen parts of it. "I can't stand his character on the show. I don't like him although maybe I appreciate him as a physician."

We then discussed that he doesn't like being on buses and he doesn't like the situation he's in with having the heart attack. He's putting his positive feeling about the doctor that day onto the fact that the *House* doctor is very intelligent. The doctor he saw that day also had this characteristic.

The bus was a Greyhound bus. Greyhounds are dogs that race. This client related that to the way he had been living before the heart attack – the feeling he was never going "to get there" in his career. He was going faster to try to succeed. The client ended the session saying that he hoped everyone in their life could experience the feeling he had in the dream.

He, of course, was going to continue to see this new doctor since his unconscious did more than confirm his original positive feeling about the doctor.

A few days later I received a message from this client. He had recently read the October 15th, 2012, issue of *Newsweek*. It is entitled "Heaven is Real. A Doctor's Experience of the Afterlife" and takes up four full pages in the middle of the magazine.

This Near Death Experience (NDE) took place in 2008 when Dr. Eben Alexander was in a coma for seven days with a non-active neocortex as part of his brain. Just like the Pam Reynolds story of the 1990s, there was no way his or her brain was producing "chemicals" that caused the NDE. This is the usual disbeliever's viewpoint on NDEs.

The message said: "Karen, I had to write to you immediately. I've just finished reading the *Newsweek* article by Dr. Alexander. The love he describes at the bottom of Page 31 describes exactly how I experienced my dream. Beginning with, "She looked at me with a look..." This is the same overwhelming look that came from Dr. House in my dream (with no words). It gave me the most overwhelming feeling of love that I've ever experienced in my life. It went through me and created the most amazing warmth and floating sensation that feels addictive in its power. I just had to share this with you."

And, so I leave you now with all this information. I hope it is helpful to you with your dreams and those dreams of your loved ones. I would like to point out that there are many ways to interpret dreams. In Jungian dream interpretation, all characters in the dream are said to symbolize aspects of oneself to show us what we may not be consciously aware of. So, what else can you get from this client's dream that neither he nor I concluded during that session? Have a wonderful holiday season!

Blessings to all, Karen

In the “rat race” together (greyhound bus) having to deal with people I don’t particularly like, (Dr. House) but who are intelligent and who I can learn from and who hopefully can help me in my career. I really need a break (like the new doctor in waking life who is taking an interest in really helping me) because I feel like I work so hard and get nowhere. (stress). I will continue to deal with the horrible, gross, Dr House because he might be my savior, I will “stick out the storm”. Family is there, but are not a first priority for me, getting ahead is number one.

Storm (heart attack) finally happens. I reach my destination, (wisdom) I realize I need to make changes in my life to include the people who love me (family, other supporters who care about me—the feeling I understand from the new doctor). –complete opposite from Dr House, who gives me stress. But by comparison, as if to hit me over the head with a 2x4, he showed me (the kiss) what I really need in my life. I thank him for helping me to recognize real love and joy (The art of forgiveness, also associated with the heart)

Love and joy comes from the spirit, which I had been blocking. To make sure I pay attention, Dr. Eben Alexander validated for me what I need (more 2x4 therapy). In the end, its three doctors (my new Dr, Dr.House and Dr. Alexander, three scientists) who teach me to integrate the spirit with the physical so that I might live in harmony with myself. Heal my heart.