

Dream Partnering

Dream partnering is a simple process to assist someone undertake his or her own journey of dream exploration. **It is not about telling the other person what the dream means.** This is a very common temptation but one to be resisted. I have heard it said that dreams are personal myths. Only the dreamer truly knows the meaning of a dream. All the symbols in dreams are personal although we will all experience archetypal symbols in our dreams from time to time. Although books of dream symbols may be helpful they only offer potential alternatives for consideration by the dreamer. It is important to write down the details of the dream or as much as you can recall as soon as possible after the dream.

The Dreamer

The dreamer has some responsibilities in order to maximize the gifts from the dream partnering process.

- Begin with a receptive attitude – invite dreams. Keep a dream journal.
- Honour the gift of the dream – write it down, or sketch the dream. Suspend your judgment, note all the details. Your journal should reflect the sacred nature of the dream.
- You want to see the dream in the context of your history of dreams. It may take several dreams for a theme to emerge.
- Respect the sacred nature of your dreams. Do not share on a casual basis as though you were discussing your previous night out on the town.
- The moment when you awaken is the most unreliable reflection on the dream's meaning because the ego self starts to wake up too.

Having a significant dream and not exploring it is like being given a gift and not unwrapping it.

The Dream Partner

The objective of the dream partner is to assist in facilitating the process of inner discernment

- See in your partner the potentiality that will unfold from the dream.
- Maintain a container for sharing the dream.
- Clear your own consciousness to make room for the dream.
- Hear it from the place of the listening heart.

The Dream Partnering Process

The dream partnering process is as follows:

1. The partner asks the dreamer about the environment surrounding the dream. Was anything significant happening in their life prior to the dream?
2. The dreamer tells the dream in the first person making it live as much as possible

3. The partner tells the dream back to the dreamer. The dreamer may find this prompts further recall.
4. The partner explores with the dreamer the energy, the feelings and the consciousness (perspective or attitude) within the dream. Dreams are about the dreamer, problems and relationships to the world and self.
5. The partner explores the symbols contained within the dream. Look at the dream figures. Ask who are they? What do they want? It is likely that each figure is some aspect of the dreamer. Ask the dreamer what each of these people means to them.
6. Then let the dream go and trust the inner guide. You may wish to engage in some active imagination where you imagine a conversation with the dream character. When the right meaning comes there is a sense of inner knowing. (An ah-ha moment.)

Some Other Issues About Dreams

There are a number of levels of dreams:

- One level is to give guidance about your outer life. It is the unconscious trying to lead you.
- Another level of dreams is junk mail. The dream is taking out the psychic trash.
- A third level is about the inner world. It is what is going on in your inner psyche.
- The fourth level is beyond the personal psyche. They come from the world of the collective unconscious.

Look in the dreams for symbols. They can become symbols for meditation.

Symbols can have a profound impact if we explore them. Dreams are autonomous. They cannot be willed by the ego.

Often dreams compensate for what is going on in your conscious life. (I also think they compliment what is going on in your soul journey.) Dreams help to heal.

Where there is a huge discrepancy between the unconscious and the conscious, dreams help to bridge the gap.

The associations and symbols of the dream belong to the dreamer. You are the best judge as they are based on materials from your own life. Let go of assumptions and trust the inner sense of recognition. Be aware of what you have recently been doing: reading, movies, conversations you have recently experienced – the dream will draw on these.

The dream is like a play or drama. It has an opening scene, middle and a conclusion. Dreams have a logic and an inner structure. Note the story, the feeling states as they change. Beware of personal reactions after the dream. They are often ego related.

A Wonderful Book on Dreams and the Active Imagination

Inner Work Using Dreams and Active Imagination for Personal Growth

By Robert A. Johnson