

Understanding and Using Dreams

Introduction and Syllabus

Fall 2017

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There are two primary goals we have in this class:

- To increase our knowledge of the history of how clinicians have understood dreams and viewed the place of dreams in therapeutic work
- To expand our capacity to listen and think about technical choices when a dream appears in a session

To achieve this, we will spend some time discussing a number of papers that present theoretical views of dreams and consider the usefulness of these theories in our own clinical work. The class sessions will often be split between a consideration of the papers and a detailed exploration of a particular clinical example.

The course is divided into two four-week segments.

During the first segment, we will read the sections of Thompson and Cutlove's chapter on modes of listening to dreams. We will explore the classic wish fulfillment model, self states, trauma dreams and dreams as communication.

During the second segment, we will dive into reading parts of Freud's Interpretation of Dreams. We will focus on some of his core concepts and how he came to them through the investigation of his own and his patients' dreams.

From the outset, we will use part of each class to approach our own dream examples by applying to them Freud's model for analyses of dreams. Consider this part of our class a laboratory that is different from what happens in the

treatment room but **is** still a related experiment. We will take turns presenting a patient's dream (see below) and then discuss it using the following format:

- 1) Apply as a group some of the associative techniques to see if it can clarify the wishes and defenses of the patient.
- 2) What is the relationship between the manifest content and latent content, and what do we mean by those terms?
- 3) How can we develop a strategy for making the latent content as clear as possible to ourselves?

As you are anticipating the class, it will be helpful to begin focusing on case examples in your practice. Perhaps you can begin to develop case examples by jotting them down.

During the course, we have two written requirements:

- 1) We want written feedback after each class in the form of an email to the two of us by the Friday of the same week of the class. We'd like you to answer two questions:
 - a. What did you learn?
 - b. What questions and reservations do you have about the week's readings?
- 2) We would like you to keep a journal for 2-3 weeks out of every 4 week phase wherein you reflect on a dream or dreams from your clinical work. The goal of the journal is to apply what you are reading to a clinical case. We will collect these at the midpoint of the course and at the end. (These are due on November 17 and December 15)

Cases for our discussion:

Once or twice in the seminar, you are expected to present a dream example. Please describe the dream as a patient told it to you and any associations that emerged in the hour (and/or that you have to the dream including what you know about the patient). Please be prepared to say just a little bit about the context (e.g. when in the treatment and what is going on- please don't spend too much time on the context). One of the teachers will bring a case example for the first class, and we will assign weeks for case examples on the first day. Please plan to bring printed copies for everyone of the manifest dream, itself, when you are presenting.

In the following list of readings, we can make available those articles marked by an *. The other articles and the Freud reading are all available on PEP web.

As we examine the readings, please bring printed copies of the articles to examine in class.

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

* Thompson, J. Mark and Cotlove, Candace. Chapter 4, "Listening", in The Therapeutic Process: A Clinical Introduction to Psychodynamic Psychotherapy. New York: Jason Aronson, 2005

The Thompson and Cotlove reading focuses on analytic listening using several different models for listening. We will read the chapter over a period of weeks as background for the topics we'll be discussing.

Session 1: October 24 Wish Fulfillment/Defense

Concepts: Manifest dream and latent dream, day residue, dream-work

- 1) * Thompson, J. Mark and Cotlove, Candace. pp. 93-107
- 2) Greenson, R (1970) "The Exceptional Position of the Dream in Psychoanalytic Practice" in Psychoanalytic Quarterly 39:519-549

Session 2: October 31 Trauma

How do we think about traumatic dreams? Do they have elements of wish fulfillment?

- 1) * Thompson, J. Mark and Cotlove, Candace. pp. 107-112
- 2) * Brunkow, Katherine (1996) "Working with Dreams of Survivors of Violence: Facilitating Crisis Intervention with a Psychoanalytic Approach" Chapter 12 pp 212-225 in Fostering Health and Growth a Psychoanalytic Social Work Approach edited by Edward, Joyce and Sanville, Jean Jason Aronson
- 3) Adams-Silvan, A., Silvan, M. "A Dream is the Fulfillment of a Wish': Traumatic Dream, Repetition Compulsion, and the Pleasure Principle" Int. J. Psycho-Anal., 71:513-522 (1990)

Session 3: November 7 Self-States, Dreams and Affect-

From the perspective of self psychology, how might we think about the dream as a reaction to threats to the sense of self? How about the ideas of dreams as an attempt to organize our emotions and thoughts?

- 1) *Kohut, H (1977) Restoration of the Self pp 108-111 IUP
- 2) * Thompson, J. Mark and Cotlove, Candace. pp. 113-119
- 3) Fosshage, J.L. (2007). The Organizing Functions of Dreaming: Pivotal Issues in Understanding and Working with Dreams . Int. Forum Psychoanal., 16(4):213-221

Session 4: November 14 Dreams as communications/ mixing models; Technical implications

- 1) * Thompson, J. Mark and Cotlove, Candace pp. 119-124
- 2) *Luepnitz, D (2009) Interpreting dreams in psychotherapy with couples: moving between the upper and the lower worlds in Systems and Psychoanalysis: Contemporary Integrations in Family Therapy pp 37-71 edited by Laskas, C and Pocock, D Karnac Books
- 3) * Thompson, J. Mark and Cotlove, Candace. pp. 127-132

Freud, Sigmund (1900) Interpretations of Dreams

Session 5: November 21 Using Associations; Manifest Dream/ Latent Dream
In this session, we will focus on the concepts of manifest and latent content and day residue.

- 1) Freud pp 96-100
- 2) Freud Chapter 4 Distortion in Dreams pp144- 162. We will discuss “R was my Uncle” pp 137-`45

- 3) Pulver, S (1987) The Manifest Dream in Psychoanalysis: A Clarification. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 35:99-118

Session 6: November 28 Day Residue / Dreams and Memory

- 1) Chapter 5 Section A pp163-188 (Botanical Monograph dream pp 169-176)
- 2) Palombo, S.R. (1988). Day Residue and Screen Memory in Freud's Dream of the Botanical Monograph. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 36:881-904

Session 7: December 5 Dreamwork

In this session we will discuss the ideas of dreamwork and “means of representation.” How is sleeping mentation different from waking mentation?

- 1) Freud Chapter 6 page 277-309 Condensation and Displacement

Session 8: December 12 Means of Representation and limits of Representability

- 1) Freud Chapter 6 pages 310-338; 339-349

Other Readings of Interest:

- 1) Fosshage J.L. (1988). Chapter 8 Dream Interpretation Revisited. *Progr. Self Psychol.*, 3:161-175
- 2) Ogden, T.H. (2003). On not being able to dream. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.* 84:17-30
- 3) Da Rocha Barros, E.M. (2002). An Essay on Dreaming, Psychological Working out and Working Through. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal* 83:1083-1093
- 4) Ogden, T. H. (2017) Dreaming the Analytic Session: A Clinical Essay *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 86: 1-20

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