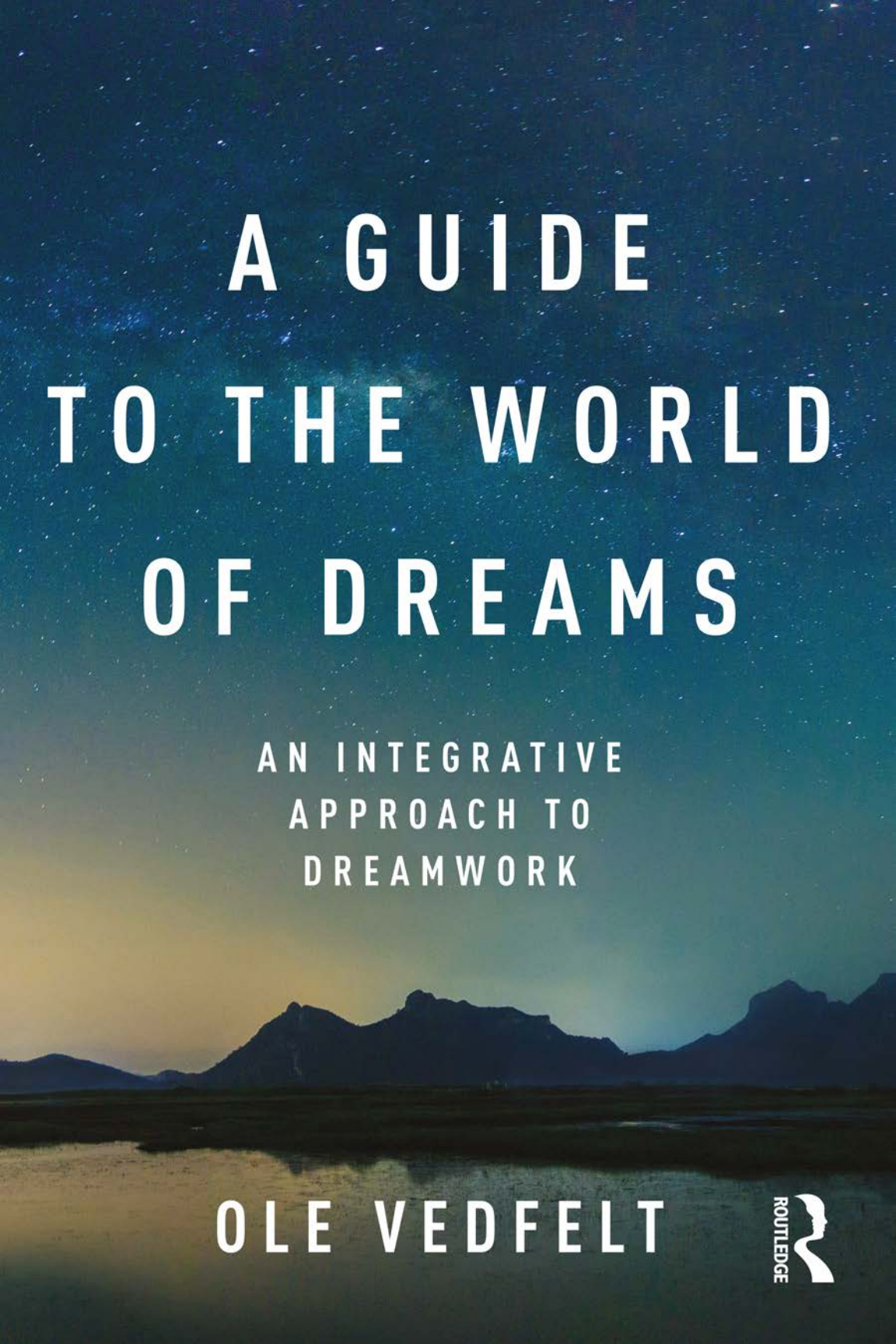
A GUIDE
TO THE WORLD
OF DREAMS
AN INTEGRATIVE
APPROACH TO
DREAMWORK
OLE VEDFELT
ROUTLEDGE

A Guide to the World of Dreams

In *A Guide to the World of Dreams,* Ole Vedfelt presents an in-depth look at dreams in psychotherapy, counselling and self-help and offers an overview of current clinical knowledge and scientific research, including contemporary neuroscience. This book describes essential aspects of Jungian, psychoanalytic, existential, experiential and cognitive approaches to dreams and dreaming, and explores dreams in sleep laboratories, neuroscience and contemporary theories of dream cognition.

Vedfelt clearly and effectively describes ten core qualities of dreams, and delineates a resource-oriented step-by-step manual for dreamwork at varying levels of expertise. For each core quality, key learning outcomes are clarified and resource-oriented; creative and motivating exercises for practical dreamwork are spelled out, providing clear and manageable methods. *A Guide to the World of Dreams* also introduces a new cybernetic theory of dreams as intelligent, unconscious information processing, and integrates contemporary clinical research into this theory. The book even includes a wealth of engaging examples from the author's lifelong practical experience with all levels and facets of dreamwork.

Vedfelt's seminal work will be essential reading for Jungian analysts, psychotherapists, psychologists, counsellors, and psychiatrists. The book's clear method and real-life examples will inspire readers of all backgrounds, encouraging them to explore how increasing their understanding of dreams can stimulate everyday creativity and enhance their professional life.

Ole Vedfelt is leader of the Institute for Integrated Psychotherapy and Cybernetic Psychology, Denmark, and supervisor for the Danish Psychologist's Association. He is certified as a Jungian analyst, gestalt therapist, body psychotherapist, and meditation teacher. Ole has 45 years of professional experience with dreamwork.

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A Guide to the World of Dreams

An Integrative Approach to Dreamwork

Ole Vedfelt

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2017
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business.

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Names: Vedfelt, Ole, author.
Title: A guide to the world of dreams: an integrative approach to dreamwork/Ole Vedfelt.
Description: Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY : Routledge, 2017. | Includes bibliographical references.
Identifiers: LCCN 2016055046| ISBN 9781138948075 (hardback : alk. paper) | ISBN 9781138948082 (pbk. : alk. paper) | ISBN 9781315669717 (ebook)
Subjects: | MESH: Dreams–psychology | Psychotherapy–methods | Psychoanalytic Interpretation
Classification: LCC BF175.5.D74 | NLM WM 460.5.D8 | DDC 154.6/3–dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2016055046

ISBN: 978-1-138-94807-5 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-138-94808-2 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-1-315-66971-7 (ebk)

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Cenveo Publisher Services

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Preface

All human beings dream and all cultures have found meaning in dreams. Dreams have created the foundations for theories reaching deeply into the human psyche. Today we know that we dream for approximately two hours every night and that our dreams are vital to our mental health.

For more than 40 years I have studied and worked practically with dreams. Throughout that time dreams have fascinated and challenged me with their boundless creativity, their ability to spotlight what is most important to us and their never-failing enrichment of anyone who approaches them with serious intent.

As a scientist, psychotherapist, workshop leader, teacher and supervisor, I have scrutinized and worked with all the most important dream theories and methods. I have examined and analyzed approximately 35,000 dreams – my own, my clients' and the dreams of both professionals and laypeople who have participated in my workshops. This has continually provided practical opportunities for testing theories and techniques, and also for sharing my knowledge.

My objectives with *A Guide to the World of Dreams* are to create a clear and current framework for the understanding of dreams and to bestow the necessary practical techniques and tools on people who are interested in working with dreams.

In Part I of this book I summarize the essential knowledge of the most prominent psychological dream schools. Further, I highlight research from modern dream laboratories and the latest knowledge about the dreaming brain. The various dream schools do, however, have differing fundamental values, personality theories and cognitive interests that rather complicate the clear application of their potentials. This challenges us to expand our understanding of dreams to a more flexible, multifaceted and integrated perception of the mind firmly planted in the twenty-first century.

Part II describes how a new understanding of consciousness and our own unconscious intelligence can creatively integrate the poetic polysemy and complexity of dreams in a practical manner. I describe the ten Core Qualities of Dreams, supported by our valid knowledge about dreams without being confined by older, theoretical frameworks.

The Core Qualities can be viewed as responses to a series of fundamental inquiries pertinent to dreaming life. Why should we pay attention to our dreams? Can the oddness of dream language be translated into something we can better understand? What do the figures and characters in our dreams mean? How can dreams help us to act more constructively when we are awake? Can we immerse ourselves in our dreams in ways other than through rational understanding? How do dreams respond when we pay attention to them? Numerous other questions are also discussed.

In Part III of the book I expound upon the principles for practical dreamwork and provide tangible exercises for dreamwork in accordance with each of the ten Core Qualities.

There are also many examples of how dreams can be enlisted to enhance the lives and develop the personalities of people at all ages. Hence, a step-by-step and transparent model helps elevate novices to more advanced stages, employing methods that can be followed by anyone who wants to learn to work with dreams.

Below, I give a more detailed overview of the three parts of the book and all 17 chapters.

Part I – Knowledge of Dreams

In the first chapter I summarize the essential knowledge of the psychoanalytic, Jungian, existential, experiential, relational and cognitive schools of psychotherapeutic dreamwork. Further, I provide an overview of varieties of contemporary dreamwork for counselling, personal development groups, self-help or even social functions.

Chapter 2, on dreams and the natural sciences, discusses the results from the dream laboratories. It describes the activity of the dreaming brain and details dream theories based on natural science.

Chapter 3 presents my overriding and integrative view: we dream because we are complex beings who process information in multiple ways that provide us with differing perspectives on our lives. I postulate that our unconscious mind contains complex intelligent systems that process information on high levels of personality organization and that this work is reflected in our dreams. I present fundamental principles for dealing with complex phenomena and describe human personality as a multileveled, cybernetic network where multiple parts simultaneously process information in parallel to each other.

Part II – The Ten Core Qualities of Dreams

In Chapters 4–13 I describe the ten Core Qualities of Dreams. The overriding paradigm for this integration is the theory of information processing in complex networks. Based on this background, I show how these ten Core Qualities are based on valid knowledge from the psychotherapeutic dream schools and from natural scientific research, including contemporary neuroscience. Each of the

core qualities is exemplified by individual dreams and dream series. These dreamwork examples from men, women and children of all ages cover a large variety of important life issues. For each core quality, key learning outcomes are clarified. The step-by-step descriptions of the core qualities carry dreamwork to increasingly complex levels.

Core Quality 1 substantiates the idea that dreams deal with matters important to us. The dreaming mind is self-organizing and has the necessary complexity for processing information at higher levels of personality organization than normal waking consciousness, which is mostly preoccupied with everyday issues. Clinical and neuroscientific research suggests that dreams are activated by motivation and reward-seeking systems in the brain and psyche. The first steps in dreamwork are to find resources and motivate dreamers to tune in to the spirit of searching behind all dreams.

Core Quality 2 looks at the symbolic language of dreams as a way of expressing important experiences that cannot be represented verbally or by linear logic. The creation and intuitive understanding of symbols, as well as clarification, amplification and dynamic dreamwork with symbols, are elaborated.

Core Quality 3 describes how dreams personify important complex subsystems in the dreamer and the interaction between these subsystems. Personifications in dreams reveal a dreamer's conceptions of others, as well as more or less unknown aspects of the dreamer's own personality. The chapter deals with the continuities between the dream self and waking self at all ages, with the objective (exterior) and subjective (interior) levels of interpretation, as well as with the significance of gender in dreams.

Core Quality 4 examines dreams as test runs of future possibilities. Dream narratives are seen as virtual reality simulations. Understanding various types of storylines and dramatic structures provides important tools for dreamwork.

Core Quality 5 dreams are online to unconscious intelligence, introduces concepts of levels and states of consciousness to describe various degrees of immersion in the creative matrix of dreams through experiential dreamwork. Methods such as association, drawing, role-play, imagination and bodywork are presented. Further, the chapter explains how to approach the dynamic powers of dreams in regulated and graduated ways.

Core Quality 6 develops the concept of practical intelligence and pattern recognition as a useful tool for dealing with the complexity of dreams. It shows how past and present, as well as future, experiences are possible meaningful contexts for the understanding of dreams. Further, it introduces the concept of searching for 'goodness of fit' patterns that match the context of dreamers' lives.

Core Quality 7 views dreams as forms of high-level communication. Dreams strive proactively to optimize dreamers' personalities and relations to the world. Our dreams respond to any serious endeavor by our waking consciousness to understand them and to realize their optimizing tendencies. Such mutual feedback loops are found in the day-to-day work with dreams, as well as in long-term dream series. They affect the personality by bringing it into greater balance.

Core Quality 8 deals with the experience of dreams as condensed information. These condensations are not random mixtures of thoughts left over from waking consciousness but rather syntheses of important information that can be unfolded in creative dreamwork.

Core Quality 9 describes dreamwork with all the experiential modalities in dreams – thought, imagery, body sensing, emotion, feeling and movement – all meaningful channels for information processing. Methodically combining multiple modalities may improve the efficiency and control of dreamwork.

Core Quality 10 provides deeper insights into the psychological energy landscapes of dreams. Their dynamics are described in accordance with information processing in parallel distributed networks. This makes it possible to evaluate the intensity and information density of various parts of dreams and guide dreamwork along the creative edge between order and chaos, until harmonization occurs between conflicting energies and contents. This chapter places a special focus on how to understand and process further peak experience dreams which mark turning points in dreamers' lives.

Chapter 14 concerns traumatic dreams and presents research and psychological theories relevant to this issue. I provide ample examples, plus dream series describing how traumatic dreams can be processed based on an understanding of the ten Core Qualities.

Part III – Principles and Exercises for Practical Dreamwork

Chapters 15 and 16 present principles and exercises for practical dreamwork related to the core qualities. These recommendations can be used in psychotherapy and counselling, as well as for self-help and in groups for personal development.

Chapter 15, Working with Core Qualities 1–5, elaborates fundamental ethical principles for dreamwork. It shows how to work with dreams in a safe, resource-oriented and motivating way while respecting the age and readiness of the dreamer for dreamwork. Tools are provided for unfolding the meaning and power of dream symbols and to communicate about dreams verbally and nonverbally. Progressive steps for interpretation are outlined. I describe exercises for working with the dream characters and the dream narratives of dreamers of all ages. Further, I provide a detailed model for the composition of comprehensive dreamwork encompassing experiential, analytical and cognitive behavioral dimensions.

Chapter 16, Working with Core Qualities 6–10, outlines a schematic model for relating dreams to the contexts of dreamers' lives. This chapter summarizes how to respond to the self-organizing capacity of dreams and to their active feedback on any serious considerations of the dreamer. It further expands the understanding of levels of communicating in groups, depending on the setting, as well as the skills of dreamers and the participants. Practical exercises for using imagery, bodily aspects and emotion in dreamwork are detailed, as well as the principles

for advanced dreamwork skills. I explain the principles for identifying and relating to peak experience dreams, lucid dreams and parapsychological experiences in dreams. Finally, inspiration for practical work with dream series is provided and related to the sequence of the ten Core Qualities.

The epilogue highlights how Dreamwork with The Ten Core Qualities can stimulate social skills and innovative abilities for the benefit of society and the future of humankind.

A Guide to the World of Dreams offers readers a multilevel experience. This book provides an updated and integrative description of dreams, dream science and dreamwork that can be utilized by psychotherapists, counselors, teachers and students of psychology as a basic textbook or sourcebook. Yet the themes and examples in the book still remain universal and firmly adapted to modern human life. Thus the book also reaches out to anyone who wishes to gain knowledge about the fascinating world of dreams and employ their own dreams in improving their lives, their relationships and their personal development.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my many clients, workshop participants and students who have contributed to deepening my understanding and pedagogical presentation of the subject through their feedback on my work.

Special thanks to my wife, Lene Vedfelt, who is a psychotherapist and educational supervisor of the Vedfelt Institute, and who has backed me up and supported my working processes. Lene and I have enjoyed many valuable and inspiring conversations about this book's theme. Special thanks to my translator Paul Englar for his empathic and never-faltering work with the translation of this book into English. Also, great thanks to Henriette Løvdal who, besides being a psychotherapist and having an MA degree in the literary sciences, also has extensive experience in publishing. Henriette has provided valuable and inspiring feedback in the early stages of developing this book.

Ole Vedfelt
September 2016
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Part I

Knowledge of Dreams

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Chapter 1

The Dream Schools

The discovery of the healing powers of dreamwork on the mind has played a decisive role in our modern comprehension of dreams. Starting with Freud and Jung, and continuing until today, psychotherapeutic consultation has functioned as a kind of laboratory for the exploration of dreams and their meanings to the dreamers. This has provided the basis for a number of schools of dream interpretation that, each in their own way, have contributed to our understanding of the nature and function of our dreams.

Freud and the Unconscious

Sigmund Freud's publication of *The Interpretation of Dreams* in the year 1900 was a breakthrough for psychotherapeutic research. His declared purpose was to describe a psychological technique that could explain any dream as "a psychological structure full of significance" (Freud, 1900 p. 1). For Freud, dreaming was the "royal road to the unconscious" (Laplanche and Pontalis 1973, p. 475).

In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud sketched the outlines of multiple issues that have occupied dream research ever since. He provided the foundation for the utilization of dreams in practical therapeutic purpose and he developed a model for unconscious processes.

Consciousness and the unconscious

Freud described the mind in *The Interpretation of Dreams* as being organized in layers with consciousness on top and unconscious layers beneath. The deeper you delve into the unconscious, the more fundamental and early-formed character traits and experiences you uncover. During the day, consciousness is occupied with outer impressions that are converted into action and thought activity. During the dreaming process contact to the outer world is partially disconnected. A surplus of mental energy thus appears that activates primitive, unconscious urges and floods consciousness with memories.

According to Freud, the deeper layers of the unconscious contain childish and often sexual wishes that are unacceptable to consciousness (Freud, 1900 p. 1).

Between consciousness and the unconscious is a layer that he calls 'preconscious'. In principle, it is accessible to consciousness, but it is separated by a censorship function that disguises impulses from the unconscious (Laplanche and Pontalis 1973, p. 325). In the dreaming state, this censorship is somewhat weakened, yet it still manages to disguise these wishes to such an extent that they do not waken the dreamer. Thus, dreams have two functions – a safety valve for forbidden desires and sleep preservation (Nagera 1969, p. 56 ff).

Freud called the original, uncensored dreams 'latent dreams'. They provide an illusion of the satisfaction of suppressed wishes. Dreams that are experienced after being censored he called 'manifest dreams'.

Besides memories from childhood, "the material and sources of dreams" are impressions from the preceding day – day-residues – which contribute to our dreams. Day-residues may be insignificant impressions that are used as the building blocks for manifest dreams. Impressions deriving from emotionally significant events are more important, yet, according to Freud, the dream-censor disguises these impressions (Freud 1900).

Less common sources of dreams are bodily conditions and states during sleep, such as fever, poor digestion, cold, heat and pain, etc.

Freud described four 'dream mechanisms' that he believed created dreams out of unconscious raw material.

- 'Condensation' means that the individual elements in dreams are connecting points for several dream-thoughts at a time.
- 'Displacement' refers to those forbidden thoughts and feelings that are moved from one object to another such as, for instance, in a waking state when we dump our anger on a less dangerous person than the one who is the true object of our aggression.
- Later, the dream takes on a clarifying form by allowing abstract thought to be depicted as images, symbols and cohesive stories. Freud called this 'considerations for representability'.
- Finally, Freud believed that our dreams, very cleverly, receive one final 'secondary revision' to appear less strange to our waking consciousness. According to Freud, this is a superficial phenomenon that does not provide deeper access to the meanings of dreams (Nagera 1969, p. 52).

Freud developed a therapeutic method he called 'free association' that provided opportunities to get behind the camouflage of manifest dreams. The dreamer is brought into a relaxed, introverted state and tells all thoughts and imaginings for each part of the dream that spontaneously occur in his or her consciousness, no matter how strange, illogical or unpleasant they may seem (Freud, 1900 p. 56). From the material produced in this manner, Freud primarily focused on sexual symbolism and childhood experiences that seemed relevant to his psychoanalytical theory.

The 'ego', 'id' and 'superego' are all terms contained in a model of the psyche that Freud developed later in life. The ego is the source of the will – the

individual's image of him/herself. The ego in dreams, connected to our sense of identity, represents the dream-ego. The superego represents society's demands on the individual – conscience and morality. In dreams, parental figures, other authority figures and institutions that make demands on the individual belong to this category. The id is representative of unconscious drives – everything in dreams that is wild, animalistic, uncontrolled and forbidden (Freud, 1920).

Freud also believed that the early developmental phases in childhood were very important to the understanding of dreams. According to Freud, a small child goes through several developmental phases in the course of the first three years of life: an 'oral' phase, where urges and feelings of pleasure are focused around the child's mouth; an 'anal' phase, centered on the rectum and a 'phallic' phase where focus is on the genitals (Freud, 1905). A child's experiences during these phases become the prototypes for personality traits that may last a lifetime. Through their symbolism, dreams may refer to these phases (Hall, 1954).

Freud has taught us that dreams contain important knowledge of unconscious childhood experiences. He contributed to the understanding of the sexual symbolism of dreams and created a method of free association.

C. G. Jung's Depth Psychology

Carl Gustav Jung, the Swiss psychiatrist, has been as equally important to dream research as Freud. Jung perceived dreams and the unconscious as forms of creative activity that contain age-old wisdom.

He acknowledged portions of Freud's work, yet did not believe that dreams were disguising forbidden – largely sexual – wishes. While Freud paid particular attention to what dreams could tell us about the past, Jung mainly focused on future developmental potential.

In *Man and His Symbols*, Jung (1964) provides an excellent, accessible image of his understanding of dreams. Other good sources are articles entitled 'General Aspects of Dream Psychology' (1948), 'On the Nature of Dreams' (1948a) and his book, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1961).

Jung agrees with Freud that the psyche is layered. Consciousness is found on top and beneath this is the 'personal unconscious' that somehow corresponds to Freud's understanding of the unconscious. However, according to Jung, beneath this personal layer is found a much older layer which he called the 'collective unconscious'.

The collective unconscious is made up of universal patterns of experience and behavior – the so-called archetypes. Archetypes can be universal models for motherliness, fatherliness or other important roles in life. They can also be models for common human life situations or typical patterns of personality development. To Jung, archetypes are the most important sources in our dreams. Dreams are, according to Jung, created by the unconscious. The deeper and more archetypical the layers they derive from, the more meaningful and intense they are (Jung 1964a).

The function of dreams is to "complement" consciousness with unconscious knowledge and "compensate" for narrow-mindedness (Franz 1985, p. 14).

One central concept for Jung is that every human being contains a potential developmental plan that gives each personality uniqueness. Jung called the realization of this plan the "process of individuation". In dreams, symbols are created that support this process. This is especially evident during vital transitional phases in life where dreams can be very intense and loaded with archetypal symbols.

Jung was especially interested in human development at a mature age after adaption to society and consolidation with the external world are more complete. His model of the individuation process, as reflected in dreams, is as follows: adaptation to society leads to the identification with a social 'mask' (persona), which typically appears as human figures or sceneries in dreams that are conventional, established and petit bourgeois. When awareness of the persona is achieved, the dreamer is confronted with what Jung called the "shadow-side", – the dark sides of the personality. Jungians also often use the concept of the shadow in a narrower sense, for example as murky personality traits represented in dreams by figures of the same gender.

The next step in the process of individuation is achieving awareness of the innate qualities of the opposite sex. For men, these are female qualities called the 'anima' (Latin for soul). For women, male qualities are called 'animus' (Latin for spirit). When these aspects of the opposite gender have been recognized and integrated, symbols appear in dreams that reflect the wholeness and unity of the personality. Jung called this the "Self" (Jung 1928). These steps in the process of development appear in dream series.

Even if Jung primarily explored dreams in relationship to the process of individuation, he also considered the dreamer's particular life situation and entire life history.

Jung (1938/1939) supplemented dream interpretation with a method he called "amplification". In amplification, the meaning of a dream element is expanded by drawing parallels to symbolic material from mythology, religion, and the initiation rites of tribal peoples, etc. He devoted a great deal of his life to the study of the symbolism in alchemical texts, which he found shed light on the dreams and inner developments of modern human beings (Jung 1944).

Jung also employed an experiential method which he called 'active imagination'. Through this method the dreamer relives their dream in their imagination and can therefore enter into dialogue with dream figures. This is done with the understanding that these figures reflect sides of the dreamer that can be explored more deeply and developed further. Joan Chodorow (1997) has collected and presented Jung's key writings on active imagination.

Jung explored the universal symbolism in dreams. He found that dreams stimulate the development of the personality at a mature age. He called this personality development "the process of individuation".

Focus on the Dream-Ego and the Waking Lifestyle

Freud was especially interested in dream revelations about events in childhood. Jung explored the potential for self-development that pointed the way forward in the course of each individual's life.

Other dream theorists like Alfred Adler, Erich Fromm and, later, Calvin Hall focused on how dreams help us manage our current, everyday lives. They emphasized the connection between dreams and waking lifestyles and found that dreams are problem solving and prepare us for the upcoming day. Among these theorists, Hall has had the greatest influence. He was dissatisfied with the fact that dream theories were primarily built on the clinical experiences of individuals in therapy. He classified the content and compared it to information about the dreamers' ages, genders and personality profiles, etc. This research demonstrated a clear connection between the manifest dream content and the dreamers' waking personalities. Hall discovered that dreams contain a great deal of material from our everyday lives. Hall presented his viewpoints and research in his book *The Meaning of Dreams* (Hall 1953a).

Hall has also demonstrated that, viewed over long timespans, people have a high degree of consistency and continuity in their dreams, to the extent that certain types of relationships, psychological and behavioral reactions, and even objects and issues, are constantly repeated (Hall and Nordby 1972).

According to Hall, dreams are created by the ego and its defense mechanisms and not the deeper unconscious layers as Freud and Jung described. Dreams give precise pictures of how individuals see themselves and reality. If you dream about something, you must have thought about it. In his descriptions, he is mostly interested in the dream-ego.

For Hall, symbols were not disguises, they were "a kind of mental stenography." Even if a pistol might symbolize male genitalia, as a symbol it suggests much more. It is a precise and condensed description of an aggressive perception of the dreamer's sexuality (Hall 1953a).

Hall based his individual interpretations on dream series, which he believed could provide an accurate image of the personality. This can be done by comparison with statistically normal material. Just as knowledge about the dreamer can be harvested from what has been dreamed, it can also be interesting to look at what has not been dreamed.

The task of dreams, according to Hall, is problem solving – they are the result of hard, creative thinking work in a sleeping state (Hall 1953 p. 233–34). He found Freud's and Jung's theories useful, yet insufficient.

Hall's methods have since been developed and modified: as practical tools for working with individual dreams; as sociological methods for investigating dreams and lifestyles of larger groups; and also as a means to confirm dream theories statistically. There are, for instance, studies that suggest that universal dream themes exist and that dreams reflect gender differences, gender roles, age and political attitudes.

According to Hall, we often repeat certain themes and symbols in dreams that, when seen as a whole, provide a picture of our personalities and waking lifestyles.

Existential Dream Interpretations

Inspired by existential psychology, a wide range of psychotherapeutic schools work with dreams. Existentialists are critical of Freud's and Jung's theory systems which they believe lead to an over-interpretation of dreams. The existentialists recommend a 'phenomenological method' with a greater openness to the immediate experience of the reality beyond theoretical abstractions and preconceived ideas (Boss 1977).

In connection with dreams, these viewpoints are most consistently described by French psychiatrist Medard Boss. Boss views human beings as creatures who are open from the outset but whose openness often takes a beating until we become alienated from ourselves and our own spontaneous experiences. This openness is expressed in our dreams that give poetic, condensed images of our life situations. They must be allowed 'free expression' to 'tell their own stories' and thereby provide dreamers with a more immediate, emotional contact with their own existence (Stern 1977).

Instead of analyzing dreams to determine which troublesome, unconscious motives the dreamer may be harboring, Boss uses a more appreciative form of communication. He highlights what dreams might be saying about an individual's resources and how that reflects non-realized life potential.

Some existential therapists, such as Irwin Yalom, place the main emphasis on what they call the ultimate concerns. Relevant in connection with dreams are themes such as the relationship to death, isolation, freedom and meaninglessness, etc. (Yalom 1980).

The fact that phenomenology is concerned with experiencing the notion of 'interpretation' with the greatest immediacy is already a stumbling block. Phenomenological dream theorists have described the therapist's role as that of an 'illuminator' who gets the dreamer to see what actually takes place in dreams. Therapists help by shedding light on overlooked nuances and 'draw attention to' or make suggestions. Emphasis is placed on spontaneity and creativity as opposed to intellectualizing experiences. It is a matter of 'lifting out' aspects of dreams and seeing what sets them in motion, and then letting this process determine the next step in the interpretation (Knapp 1979; Gendlin 1977).

The existentialists have suggested various ways of immersion in subjective experiences. Being more attentive to feelings and body sensations or telling the dream out loud several times in the present tense helps to make it more visceral (Spinelli 1989).

Existential and phenomenological dream interpreters highlight the value of being open to the direct effects of dreams on the psyche and of respect for the dreamer's own subjective experience.

Freud and Jung's Successors

After Freud and Jung, many outstanding therapists continued to develop and expand the understanding of the unconscious psyche and offered their contributions to a broader understanding of the many things dreams could do.

While classical psychoanalysis has primarily focused on inner life and unconscious drives, after Freud interest in exploring the relationships between people has continually increased. The so-called 'object relations theory' has been the most influential, in which the word 'object' actually refers to people. According to this theory, the personality is built up in the first years of life based on the ability to create lasting relationships with certain people. In the course of this development, inner expectations are created within the child, first in relationship to the mother, then the father, siblings and other close people (Rycroft 1968). The 'inner objects' are fantasies that control the individual from within. They also influence relationships in adult life, so that we constantly try to bring these old patterns into play through the interaction with other people.

The interaction between dream figures often reflects how we relate to others in unconscious ways. This is especially applicable to the relationships we have with people to whom we attribute parental qualities, such as supervisors and therapists. This is why dreams can provide important information about the course of therapeutic processes.

The research and experience of many clinicians are involved in object relations theory. The most well-known are English psychoanalysts Melanie Klein, Donald Winnicott and Wilfred Bion, as well as Hungarian-American child psychiatrist Margaret Mahler.

Other well-known Freudian successors, such as the American Erik Erikson, have been interested in the connection between dreams and psychosocial development (Erikson 1954). His fellow countryman Donald Meltzer found acclaim with his descriptions and particularly nuanced thinking about feelings and relationships in dreams (Meltzer 1983).

The further development of these theories has been called *The Relational Turn* (Mitchell and Lewis 1999). This movement has been criticized, however, for the loss of some of the original insights of the classical schools, and it has been suggested that the relational skills of the therapists can be masking authoritarian attitudes (Carmeli and Blass 2010).

Jungian James Hillman states that dreams contain something of such a different nature from consciousness that it cannot fundamentally be translated into rational language. Instead, he suggests that consciousness learns from dream language (Hillman 1979) – it thinks and expresses itself in symbols and metaphors.

Erich Neumann, a successor of Jung, has demonstrated how the magic and mythological forms of experience of earlier cultural stages are paralleled in the developmental stages of children and their inner world. He has also shown how this provides new perspectives on the understanding of dreams (Neumann 1963; Neumann 1973).