

# Dream Appreciation

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**A dream is not a work of art in the usual sense of the term. It is, however, something quite analogous. The dream comes into being from the same creative source.**

## ON DREAMS AND ART — PART I AN ANALOGY

By MONTAGUE ULLMAN, M.D.

*"It is the work of the dream that the unconscious is so consummate an artist. The motive — the exact symbol — is the forte of the unconscious, and, in this sense, all art aspires to the perfection of a dream."*

The Psychoanalyst and the Artist, p. 192

By Daniel E. Schneider, M.D. The Alexia Press, Inc. 1979

All art begins in a flare-up of creativity which is then externalized in one way or another. True art is something uniquely personal which is then transformed into something meaningful to others. It becomes socialized. Beethoven's music began in his head. This transformation process begins with getting the right notes jotted down. The end-point is an orchestral management played before an audience. The mood and feelings of the creator resonate in highly personal

ways in those who hear it. The socialization of art involves a collaboration.

A dream is not a work of art in the usual sense of the term. It is, however, something quite analogous. The dream comes into being from the same creative source. The transformational process begins with the dreamer awake noting the imagery and the story being told. Images have been creatively rearranged to metaphorically capture the range and depth of the emotional currents at play in the course of the night's periodic episodes or dreaming. The dreamer awake is in an entirely different state of consciousness than when asleep and dreaming. The dream is a creature of the night and has its own emotional agenda, often at odds with the dreamer's waking agenda (we are a bit more honest about ourselves

when we are dreaming).

Awake, the dreamer is once again an actor on the social stage. He or she is an accidental beneficiary of a message from the unconscious domain. The feelings may remain and some of the content may be transparent, but for the dream to really come into its own, interaction with others is needed. That's where the dream-sharing group comes in. As in the full socialization of the arts, collaboration is required.

Talent and craft are the components of art. Talent is inborn. Craft has to be learned. Learning one's craft is a mutual endeavor between a master craftsman and a beginner. The painter learns about the use of color, design, perspective, etc. from other painters, living or dead. The actor learns his or her craft by attending acting classes. The

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#### **Note:**

Monte's website is: [www.pp.htv.fi/msiivola/monte](http://www.pp.htv.fi/msiivola/monte)

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dreamer had best turn to a dream-sharing group to learn the art of working with a dream. We are all endowed with enough talent to dream every night of our life. What we have to do is learn something about the content of dreaming, why that content is valuable, and how to retrieve it.

What is it we all have to learn about dreams? To summarize what I have covered extensively elsewhere (*Appreciating Dreams*), there are the three basic features of dreaming consciousness, namely, the form in which information is presented, the nature of the potential healing function of dreaming, and finally, there are the skills that have to be mastered by the helping agency.

### Basic Features

1. A dream starts in the present. We all move into our future with more or less emotional baggage from the past. The feelings and preoccupations we go to bed with surface during the dreaming phases of sleep, and determine the issue to be explored.
2. That exploration takes the form of linking

those feelings to their source in the past.

3. What the dreamer comes up with is a

conscious social domain (what we don't know about some of the fall-out from the values and social institutions that have an

impact on our lives), and the cosmic dimension (what we don't know about our place in the universe).

impact on our lives), and the cosmic dimension (what we don't know about our place in the universe).  
 selves with what we have not taken a good look at. The dream speaks the truth about ourselves if we can find the courage and support we need to face it. Finally, there are the skills that have to be mastered by the helping agency. There are only two. One is the art of listening to everything a dreamer has to say without prejudging whether what you hear supports your a priori ideas about the meaning of the dream. The second is the art of putting questions to the dreamer that are helpful without ever being intrusive. These sound simple but, like all skills, they require considerable practice before they are mastered. When properly applied, they make room for the dream to say whatever it has to say. Their importance will become more obvious as I develop the analogy between dreams and art.

The application of the knowledge outlined above is the craft that is involved in dream work. This involves a collaboration between the dreamer as artist and the members of the group as artisans. A sculptor might model his work in clay and then work with artisans to bring the work to its proper dimen-

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perspective on the issue that is a bit more interestingly honest than was available awake.

### Form

Creativity is at work in accomplishing this task. Out of the store of images available to us, we are adept at creatively rearranging those we need to pictorially capture the emotional currents at play at the time. The result is a story told in a sequence of metaphorical images.

### Range

The content of the dream can arise out of any of the four domains in which we live our life — the biological domain (stimuli arising from our bodily tissues), the unconscious psychological domain (what we don't know about ourselves), the un-

### The Healing Process

The function of the dream, in my view, is to respond to novel stimuli that arise day or night that require attention. They may be banal such as a dream in response to the urge to urinate, or of greater or lesser significance in response to situations arising in waking life. The latter come into our dreams when they touch on unfinished business from the past. By unfinished business I mean aspects of ourselves we have not yet faced. The function of the dream is to reconnect us with those disconnects that continue to affect our lives. By reconnect I mean honestly confronting our-

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sions and appearance. Without the help of the artisans, the work of art might never have been properly externalized. A musician needs instrumentalists to give voice to a symphony.

Those who are familiar with the process I use in group dream work know the "craft" that has to be mastered to be of help to the dreamer. I am going to offer a brief outline of the process, and then reframe the roles of the dreamer and the group to further develop the analogy between dreams and art.

### The Process

#### Stage I:

A dream is presented to the group.

#### Stage II:

The group works with the dream as their own, sharing their feelings and ideas about the imagery as their own projections.

#### Stage III A:

The dreamer's response. The dreamer is free to respond to the work of the group and to offer his or her own associations.

#### Stage III B 1:

The dialogue begins.

The group asks open-ended questions of the dreamer to help recover recent feeling residues that triggered the dream.

#### Stage III B 2:

The dream is read back to the dreamer in the second person and the dialogue ensues to further clarify the images.

#### Stage III B 3:

The group again offers their projections in the hope of helping the dreamer make further connections between dream and waking reality. These comments are what I refer to as orchestrating projections.

In returning to the analogy of art and dreams, both arise as a creative upsurge from an unconscious domain. In both, craft then comes into play to affect a transformation to the finished product. Both enter a public domain in collaboration with an audience.

In the musical analogy to follow, the dreaming psyche is the composer. The dream is the initial manifestation of the creative impulse. Let's look upon this as the theme with the final product being an orchestral piece set to music. The dreamer

wakes up and recalls or writes down the dream. The musician transforms the melody to notes on paper. The dreamer needs the words and feelings to bring to life the metaphorical power of the imagery. The musician needs the appropriate orchestral arrangement. The dreamer achieves his or her goal through collaboration with the members of the dream group; the musician through his collaboration with the instrumentalists.

The craft involved in each instance requires knowledge. In the case of the dreamer, this means understanding the way the

dream weaves recent and remote feeling residues together to form unique, pictorial, metaphorical images. In the case of the musician, this means the mastering of harmony, rhythm, key structure, etc.

In both instances, knowledge is not the endpoint. Craft, in the form of mastery of knowledge is the means only. The endpoint is of a different order. For both the dreamer and the musician, there is a sense of reaching deeper into our own being and doing it in a way that has meaning for others.

In dream work, the last stage of the process,

### **LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM**

A Leadership Training Workshop in group dream work will take place at Monte's home October 27-29. This experiential three-day workshop will cover the underlying premises and key principles on which Monte's group dream work is based. It will explore in depth the kinds of problems that occur at each stage of the process as well as the technique of leading a group.

Even if you have attended one of Monte's Leadership Workshops before, this can be a helpful way to "fine tune" the process.

DATE: October 27, 28, 29

PLACE: 55 Orlando Ave.

Ardley, New York 10502

These workshops fill up quickly, so for information or to register call Monte Ullman at: (914) 693-0156.

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the orchestrating projections of the group, is the effort to so fine-tune the imagery to the point where what the dream has to say is heard loudly and clearly in the way the dreaming psyche of the dreamer meant it to be said. In the case of the musician, he or she is now the composer-director of an orchestra playing the piece the way it should be played.

Even painters and writers, both lonely professions, need others. Painters gravitate to a school. Writers draw on other writers. In each instance creativity and craft must meet. Creativity is the individual spark. Craft is mastery of publicly available information about the subject matter at hand. Craft is the bridge between the private and the public.

A further word about orchestration as it applies to group dream work. Each player is addressing the collaborative goal of following the dreamer as a composer-director. This is true regardless of how many virtuosos or potential soloists there may be in the orchestra. A merging occurs between players and composer as the emotional collaboration evolves. It is the same felt

sense of communion that occurs in an audience listening to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

Let us now focus on the group in terms of the question: What does someone with a genuine interest in art bring to viewing or experiencing a work of art?

In the way sculptors often rely on artisans to transform their clay model into its final form, the members of a dream group work in collaboration with the dreamer to transform the remembered dream into something that speaks loudly and clearly in its own voice, a voice heard as well by those who helped bring it into being.

Just as an artisan has to approach the task with an aesthetic sense, so the group has to come prepared to work the medium characteristic of the dream. That medium is the organized flow of metaphorical imagery. Most of us learn about metaphor in our first contact with poetry. There are some of us, however,

who are what my friend and colleague Jon Tolaas calls "metaphor-blind." Those afflicted with this find it extraordinarily difficult to go

beyond the very literal rendering of the dream image. A horse is just a horse in a dream despite its many possible metaphorical possibilities. This affliction is more common among men.

Women generally are closer to their feelings and let them move more freely into the realm of metaphorical meanings.

Just as there are art-lovers who gravitate to art museums, there are oneirophiles (lovers of dreams) who gravitate to dream groups. There has to be a common spark of interest in dreams if the group is to stay together long enough to master the process.

The group is faced with the challenging task of loosening up the hold the dreamer's waking consciousness has on the unconscious domain that gave rise to the dream. In

order to do this, the group members have to move a bit away from their own egos and rely more on those messengers from the unconscious such as intuition and empathy.

The process provides three ways of achieving this. In Stage II, where they are working with the dream as their own, their task is to bring their own creativity into play. That involves giving free reign to their imagination, their capacity for empathy, and their intuitive sense as to where the dreamer is at.

In some strange way we do not yet fully understand, unconscious domains resonate with each other more spontaneously and effectively than do our conscious domains. Put differently, it is as if we are tapping into a single universal unconscious domain.

The second way at the disposal of the group is through the opening phase of the dialogue where open-ended questions are put to the dreamer to amplify the recent emotional context and to recover the feeling residues responsible for the occurrence of the dream on that particular night. Intuitively-based skills are involved in recognizing from the dreamer's response

*Continued on page 6*



*DREAMWORKERS' CORNER*

## A TRIBUTE TO MONTAGUE ULLMAN'S DREAM-TELEPATHY RESEARCH AT MAIMONIDES

By MENA POTTS, Ph.D.

At the international Association for the Study of Dreams symposium in Washington, D.C., this past July, tribute was paid to Montague Ullman for his research in parapsychology at the Maimonides Medical Center.

The symposium panel consisted of Stanley Krippner, Director of Research at the Maimonides Dream Laboratory; Robert Van de Castle, "Prince of Percipients," who was one of the most remarkable subjects of the studies; Mena Potts, who completed an internship in Ullman's Experiential Dream Group Process during her doctoral program in Dream Psychology; and Dominic Potts, a retired medical-legal trial attorney who provided legal perspectives on post-study evaluations.

The symposium recognized and honored Ullman for conceiving the idea, in the late 1950s, of applying the newly discovered REM techniques to the laboratory study of ESP dreams. Ullman then received a grant from the Parapsychological Foundation to conduct a pilot

study at their facilities, with the participation of parapsychologists Karlis Osle and E. Douglas Dean. Eileen Garrett, the president of the foundation, was the first experimental subject.

Subsequently, in 1961, the project was continued at the Maimonides Dream Laboratory at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, New York. Prior to this time, parapsychological research had relied primarily upon daytime experimental techniques. At Maimonides, dream research was conducted with sleeping subjects monitored by electrophysiological and neurological equipment.

In 1964 Stanley Krippner was appointed Director of the Maimonides Dream Laboratory and the formal experimental dream studies were then begun. The hypothesis tested by Ullman and Krippner was that a subject's "dream protocol on any given experimental night would reflect the influence of telepathy by the appearance in [a subject's] dreams of correspondences to the target material

viewed by [an agent]." This hypothesis was supported by both the major and pilot studies conducted.

The experiments established an historical precedent in the study of paranormal dreams. The Ullman-Krippner research marked the first endeavor to investigate dream telepathy under scientifically-controlled conditions, employing sleep-monitoring technology.

A decade of dream research at Maimonides yielded significant results, described in numerous published studies, including a technical monograph by Ullman and Krippner, *Dream Studies and Telepathy: An Experimental Approach* published by the Parapsychology Foundation in 1970, and a book, *Dream Telepathy: Experiments in Nocturnal ESP*, by Ullman and Krippner with Alan Vaughan, first published by Macmillan Publishing Co. in 1973.

Ullman, who was in the audience during the panel, was invited to make comments upon the panel's review of the Maimonides research, fol-

lowing which he was accorded a standing ovation by the attendees.

*Editor's Note: Although the subject matter of this panel does not directly relate to Monte's dream group methodology, to which this newsletter is dedicated, there are many people—myself included—who were first drawn to dreamwork and to Monte because of his ground-breaking research at Maimonides. ♦*

### **DON'T FORGET MONTE ON THE WEB**

Those of you who enjoy checking out sites on the web, don't forget to visit Monte's site at:

**[www.pp.htv.fi/msiivola/monte](http://www.pp.htv.fi/msiivola/monte)**

There you can find not only back issues of *Dream Appreciation*—in case you missed any—and also other articles Monte has written.

Many thanks to Markku Siivola for all the work he has done to make this site a reality!

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*Continued from page 4*  
when feelings are close to the surface and where further questioning can help them emerge. In a sense, it is an exercise in selflessness, setting your own ego aside and being fully available for the dreamer. That kind of openness to the dreamer results in being more open to messages from your own unconscious as you pursue a line of questioning. Any movement away from your ego domain makes for greater sensitivity to the dreamer in his or her struggle to go beyond the ego domain. All this applies to the questioning that takes place when the

dream is read back aloud to the dreamer in the hope of sharpening the imagery by eliciting further feeling residues.

The final instrument available to the individual members of the group is the opportunity to offer the dreamer whatever orchestrating projections they have come up with. As they take into account all that they have heard the dreamer share with them about the dream, they may come upon connections between dream and reality the dreamer may not have seen. They can offer them to the dreamer as their orchestrating projections. It is an insight that arises spontane-

ously, and can't be forced. Again, the group member is standing apart from his or her own persona and feels more like a vehicle for the transmission of a felt understanding that may be of help to the dreamer. It is as

if the members of the group are in an orchestral arrangement, fine-tuning each one's individual instrument so that the piece can be played in a way true to the composition created by the composer-director. ♦

*Dream Appreciation* is published quarterly for people interested in working with dreams and the group process developed by Dr. Montague Ullman.

Comments, suggestions, questions and letters are welcome. Contact the Editor, Wendy Pannier, by phone at (610) 925-0758, by fax at (610) 925-0759, or by writing 105 Taylor Lane, Kennett Square, PA 19348. Our e-mail address is [dreams@kennett.net](mailto:dreams@kennett.net).

We encourage you to share this information with others, as long as proper credit is given.

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