



**Exploring a Jungian-oriented  
Approach to the Dream in Psychotherapy**

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## **Abstract**

*Everyone dreams. Dreams are a universal experience and speak in a universal symbolic language that is nonetheless specifically tailored to the individual psyche of the dreamer. The dream offers unique access to the deepest parts of the Self that have not yet come into conscious awareness and, as such, is an invaluable resource for psychological growth and healing. This research will explore the purpose and process of working with the dream as a guidance system towards individuation from a Jungian-oriented perspective. The study explores why the dream has previously been ignored, and even dismissed, and how it may be time to re-evaluate the value of dreamwork within a changing paradigm of psychotherapy. Five experienced psychotherapists from both Jungian and Integrative modalities participated in the research. A qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews and a thematic analysis generated three distinct themes: the Purpose of the Dream in Psychotherapy; the Process of Dream Interpretation; and Dreams and Psychotherapy – A Shifting Paradigm. These themes were then discussed in the context of the literature and the research findings.*

*“Who looks outside, dreams;  
Who looks inside, awakes”*

C.G. Jung

## Chapter 1 Introduction

*“The dream is a little hidden door in the innermost and most secret recesses of the psyche, opening into that cosmic night which was psyche long before there was any ego consciousness, and which will remain psyche no matter how far our ego consciousness may extend...All consciousness separates; but in dreams we put on the likeness of that more universal, truer, more eternal man dwelling in the darkness of primordial night.” – C.G. Jung*

### 1.1 Background and Rationale

The title of this research project is *Exploring a Jungian-oriented Approach to the Dream in Psychotherapy*. C.G. Jung claimed that psychology is a “science of consciousness, in the very first place” and in the second place, it is a science of the products of the unconscious psyche (1976, p. 6). The dream is an expression of the unconscious or inner life. According to Jung’s formulation, dreams are “the natural reaction of the self-regulating psychic system” (p, 124). Just as the body uses homeostatic mechanisms to keep its vital functions in balance, the psyche “has a control mechanism in the compensatory activity of dreams” (Stevens, 1990, p. 49). For Jung, the goal of psychic development is *individuation*. In order to achieve a “wholeness of the personality” (Jung, 1995, p. 221) we must first heal the split between our inner and outer worlds, or our conscious and unconscious personalities. This study will explore the purpose and the process of dream interpretation in the realization of this goal.

Dream analysis, from a Jungian perspective, is the principle therapeutic tool in the investigation of unconscious mental activity as expressed in dreams. The function of dreams, according to Jungian analysis, is to “promote a better adaptation to life by compensating the one-sided limitations of consciousness” (Stevens, 1990, p 49).

According to Jung, “*dreams are the commonest and universally accessible source for the investigation of man’s symbolizing faculty*” (italics in original) and the chief source of all our knowledge about symbols (1990, p. 70). The production of symbols in dreams connects the conscious and unconscious aspects of psyche and as such “can be considered a most valuable function” (p. 89). This study will examine a variety of approaches to the dreamwork and will also consider other ways of accessing unconscious content in psychotherapy.

The dream points the way to intimate relationship with our deepest self. However, the concept of soul is resisted by many modern psychological approaches (Hopcke, 1999). Psychology students are taught that “dreams are meaningless by-products of brain processes” (Moss, 2009, p. xxi). The loss of connection to the inner world due to the seduction of the consumer fantasy is referred to in Johnson (1986) and Warnecke (2015). And Moacanin (2003) describes a pervasive disregard for the dreamwork. This study will include a subtle enquiry about how we have reached a point at which “we try to get by without acknowledging the inner life at all” (Johnson, 1986, p. 10).

There are, however, a number of shifts occurring in our time which indicate a growing regard for inner work in psychotherapy (Storr, 1990) with the potential to reinvigorate the dream as a therapeutic tool (Storr, 1998). Neurobiologists and anthropologists have confirmed an emerging alignment between the realms of science and spirituality (Haule, 2011) and continue to explore the uncharted potential inherent within the unconscious psyche (Stevens, 2009) which offers exciting prospects for the future of the dream in psychotherapy.

## **Exploring a Jungian-oriented Approach to the Dream in Psychotherapy**

This research topic investigates the purpose of dreams and the process of dream interpretation from a Jungian perspective. The researcher will explore the past decline of the dream, the current trend away from the depth psychology model, and the growing regard for inner work in psychotherapy, by applying a critical analysis of the available evidence.

### **1.2 Aims and Objectives**

*Aim: To Explore a Jungian-oriented Approach to the Dream in Psychotherapy*

The specific objectives of this research are:

- To explore the purpose and process of working with the dream
- To consider the future of dreamwork in psychotherapy.

## Chapter 2 Literature Review

*“But why should one consider dreams, those flimsy, elusive, unreliable, vague, and uncertain phantasms, at all? Are they worthy of our attention? Our rationalism would certainly not recommend them, and the history of dream interpretation before Freud was a sore point anyway; most discouraging in fact, most “unscientific” to say the least of it. Yet dreams are the commonest and most universally acceptable source for the investigation of man’s symbolizing faculty.”* – C.G. Jung

### 2.1 Introduction

This research will explore a Jungian-oriented approach to the dream in the therapeutic process. The purpose of the dream, the process of dream analysis, the collaboration between Freud and Jung, the decline in dreamwork, and an emerging alignment between science and spirituality are areas of interest which will be investigated with reference to the relevant literature.

### 2.2 Jung and the Dream

In his memoir, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1995), Carl Gustav Jung relates his life story through the prism of his dreams. Jung’s story describes the self-realisation of the unconscious with dreams being the “fiery magma out of which the stone that had to be worked was crystallised” (1995, p. 18). Jung dedicated his life to investigating the nature and function of dreams in the psychic life of the individual “for it was here that the deep layers of the unconscious most readily expressed themselves to an individual mind” (as cited in Beebe et al., 2001). Berger and Segaller (2000), in a book that accompanied the seminal documentary on Jung’s life and work entitled *The Wisdom of the Dream*, describe how from early childhood, Jung developed a conviction in the wisdom of the dream as a powerful guiding force in his life, and the messages they communicated “were simply experienced as fact” (p. 41). Jung’s visions and dreams formed the *prima materia* of his scientific work, the

essence of which involves the concept of a unified psyche composed of conscious and unconscious content.

The dream expresses a truth, or what Jung termed “the autonomy of the unconscious” (as cited in Berger and Segaller, 2000, p. 55). In describing how the dream exerts a will of its own that supports truth, Jung added: “The dream not only fails to obey our will but very often stands in flagrant opposition to our conscious intentions” (cited in Berger and Segaller, 2000, p. 55). Jung maintains that the therapist “must follow nature as a guide” and the therapeutic process is “less a question of treatment than of developing the creative possibilities latent in the patient himself” (Jung, as cited in Moacanin, 2003, p. 43). This position has been commonly misunderstood by those who would criticize Jung’s *failure* to provide a theory of dream interpretation. Jung’s insistence on a flexible approach to the dreamwork protected the vital nature of the dream from becoming “eternally fixed or hopelessly petrified” (Jung, as cited in Storr, 1990, p. 127). This issue will be further explored in *Section 2.5*.

Jung (1990) maintained that for mental equilibrium and optimal physiological health in general “it is much better for the conscious and the unconscious to be connected, and to move on parallel lines, than for them to be dissociated. In this respect the production of symbols can be considered a most valuable function” (p. 89). Jung distinguished between *signs* and *symbols*. He found that “the Freudian school operates with hard and fast sexual “symbols” – which in this case I would call “signs” – and endows them with an apparently definitive content, namely sexuality” (Jung, as cited in Storr, 1998, p. 185). In Jung’s view, “[T]he sign is always less than the concept it represents, while a symbol always stands for something more than its obvious and immediate meaning” (Jung, 1964, p. 41). According to Jung, a rational thought cannot be given “symbolic” form but remains a sign linked to the conscious thought behind it” (p. 41), while a symbol hints at something not yet known.

Jung maintained that “dreams are the most frequent and universally accessible source for the investigation of man’s symbolizing faculty” (p. 8). Jung (1990) writes that dreams originate “in a spirit that is not quite human, but is rather the breath of nature” (p. 88) as characterized by the ancient myths and fables.

### **2.3 Resistance to Jung**

Jung’s conviction in the reality of the psyche and the wisdom of the dream was not universally shared. For Jung, the dividing walls between conscious and unconscious are transparent, while others “find these walls so opaque that they see nothing behind them and therefore think nothing is there” (1995, p. 389). The split between the *rational* versus the *irrational* aspects of psyche emerges throughout the literature as having presented an obstacle for an understanding of Jung’s psychology. Stevens (1997, p. 220) describes how Jung has been dismissed by some critics as a *mystic* for his “lifelong concern with transcendent values”, and Singer (1994, p. xxxvii) notes his “intense preoccupation with the unknowable”. Haule (2011) explains that a “mystic” may also be understood as one “who is experienced in and has learned to use altered states of consciousness as essential tools for psychological and spiritual growth”, and as such then Jung really *was* a mystic! In his memoir, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1995), Jung reveals the pain of rejection: “I have suffered enough from incomprehension and from the isolation one falls into when one says things that people do not understand” (p. 14). While Jung’s scientific credentials are valid they are often overshadowed by “the apparently outlandish interests and researches” (Samuels, as cited in Berger and Segaller, 2000, p. 162) undertaken by Jung. Pointing the way to a right understanding, Samuels suggests that “Jung’s clinical, scientific work must lead the reader – or patient – into the esoteric psychological material” (p. 162). Haule’s (2011) observation that we “do not merely resent our irrational feelings and thoughts, we fear them” (p. 3)

elucidates the intensity of response that Jung inspired in some for his dedication to the investigation of the irrational.

While the reality of the inner life is essential to a Jungian understanding of psyche, Jung was aware that what he knew would not be universally welcomed “for it is difficult for people of our times to accept the counter-weight to the conscious world” (1963, p. 222). Samuels has assessed Jung’s contributions to the art and practice of psychotherapy, and concurs that any psychological theory that doesn’t take account of the *religious instinct* is deficient theory. Jung, according to Samuels, also provides us with a model for life’s journey that’s not mystical, but “a way of enrichment for anybody, that does not require their moving out of their ordinary human level” (as cited in Berger and Segaller, 1989, p. 13). However, Moacanin (2003) suggests that Jung is still not properly understood nor have his contributions been adequately recognized by Western psychology. Jung correctly predicted the difficulties that would present with articulating a view “that goes against the grain of our intellectual tradition” (p. 38). Jungian analyst Edward Edinger (as cited in Berger and Segaller, 1989, p. 17) contends that psyche has “a non-personal dimension to it, a historical dimension and even a cosmic dimension”, and Jungian psychology is concerned with finding a way to live in relation to that non-personal dimension. This view, however, goes against the grain of modern psychological rationality-based approaches. Jungian-oriented psychotherapist Robert Hopcke (1999) explains how many psychologists find Jung’s relativization of individual rationality “unacceptable and frightening” (p. 38). However, in response to “misguided criticisms” of Jung’s approach, Hopcke notes that Jung simply maintained that there was “more to psyche than meets the modern rational eye” (p. 39).

## 2.4 The Analytic Process

Stein (1995) asserts that “Jungian analysis literally begins with the psychological importance of dreaming” (p. 105). Jung insisted that there is no rule, let alone a law, for the interpretation of dreams and that it is “important not to have any preconceived, doctrinaire opinions about the statements made by dreams” (1995, p. 343). His understanding of the dream as a living entity would appear to have informed Jung’s crucial decision *not* to formulate a rigid theory of dreams. In Jungian analysis the main task is to help the dreamer understand their own unconscious material as expressed in the dream images or symbols. For long-term meaningful transformation to occur, a deliberate and conscious process of analysis must be matched by corresponding participation of the unconscious (Stein, 1999). Beebe et al. (2001) pose some pertinent questions in relation to dream interpretation, such as what happens if the patient has no associations to the dream material, and suggest that Jungian dream interpretation can be a hazardous art.

Kugler (1993) explores the paradox of interpretation where the human subject is both the object *and* the subject of the investigation. This article offers an interesting explanation of how the “reflexive process” – moving between subjective and objective levels of interpretation – facilitates the withdrawal of projections and allows the dreamer to develop the capacity to hold the tension between the literal and metaphorical dimensions of the inner and outer worlds. The newly revealed aspects of psyche may then be integrated into consciousness. However, this concept of ego consciousness reflecting on itself has been criticised as “narcissistic” by post-Jungian analyst, James Hillman (1989).

Johnson (1986) describes how a combination of technical and clinical skills developed over time, and a feeling of empathy for the dreamer forms the basis of the analytic process. Jung (1964) and Beebe et al. (2001) describe how *association* has a different meaning for Jung

himself and analytical psychologists generally. Rather than looking for *free associations* in the Freudian style of interpretation, the Jungian analyst works with *focused associations* linked to the dream images “that help to bring together the different dream elements into a coherent story” (2001, p. 216). Jung (1964) saw free association as reductionist as it fails to illuminate the dream’s message, but instead leads back to the *repressed wish* (or the “complex” in Jungian terminology). Jung’s concept of *amplification* involves staying close to each symbol to elucidate both its personal and universal associations, thus expanding the symbol to reveal the dream’s meaning. Singer (1994) describes how the dream content may reveal “something that was not known before, or one is reminded of some quality or capacity that has been all but forgotten” (p. 271), and that the Jungian analyst defers to the patient’s own associations to suggest meaning rather than by making assumptions based on theory. Jungian dream interpretation insists that “a dream is never exhaustively or definitively interpreted” (p. 219).

Stevens (1995) argues that dreams are “predictable episodic phenomena, associated with cyclic functions in the central nervous system, and have their basis in biology” (p. 114). Rossi (1971) says dreaming is “an endogenous process of psychological growth, change and transformation” and the dreams themselves offer us an opportunity to experiment with changes in our psychic life (as cited in Stevens, 1995, p. 114).

Although Jung resisted formulating a fixed theory, he did produce a large body of work on the structure, language and meaning of dreams (Samuels, 1986), insisting that the inner work of the analyst was to be the most important element in analytic training. Freud gave due credit to Jung for being the first to declare that every analyst must undergo personal analysis before qualifying as a psychoanalyst (Freud, 2001). Indicating a reciprocal support, Jung was concerned that “the actuality of the unconscious” (Storr, 1998, p. 168) was still a matter of

controversy even after the achievements of Freud and Janet, among others. However, “the attempt to analyse and interpret dreams is theoretically justified from a scientific standpoint” (1998, p. 169) when one considers dreams as direct expressions of unconscious psychic activity. Jung states that the interpretation of dreams “enriches consciousness to such an extent that it relearns the forgotten language of the instincts” (1990, p. 89). However, it is evident that opinion is still divided on the value of dream analysis in therapy, and according to Storr (1998) remains “a much debated question” (p. 168). This question forms the nucleus of this research enquiry.

## **2.5 The Matter of Interpretation**

The question of imposing a structure on the process of dream analysis is considered throughout the literature. Urbina (1981) advocates application of criterion-based interpretations of dream content to counter the haphazard nature of dream interpretation. This suggestion appears antithetical to Jung’s articulation of the dream as “a voice of nature” only to be understood as a direct expression of the dreamer’s unconscious (Fordham, 1991). Schön (2016) supports dream interpretation in theory but not in therapeutic practice, suggesting that while dreams are widely used in psychoanalytic literature, they are rarely given systematic attention with regard to theory or technique. In Jung’s psychotherapy there are no fixed methods; rather, the method evolves as the treatment progresses according to the unique circumstances of the particular individual (Moacanin, 2003). Jung “enjoins therapists to free themselves from all preconceptions and theoretical assumptions, and abandon all methods and techniques” (p. 45). The process requires an open communication between the conscious mind and its unconscious counterpart, and “a sensitivity to the signals of the unconscious, which speaks in the language of symbols” (p. 34). With regard to the art of interpretation, Jung remarked: “It is not so much a technique that can be learned and applied according to the rules as it is a dialectical exchange between two personalities” (1964, p. 44).

This clarification suggests that criticisms levelled at Jung for his *failure* to outline a theoretical framework of dreams (Zhu, 2013, p. 669) appear to disregard his understanding of the vital nature of the dream and his conviction that an “overinvolvement with theories” (Johnson, 1986, p. 16) was an obstacle to the dreamwork. It is possible, however, that the lack of a structured framework became an obstacle for some in Jung’s psychology.

Jung worked with dreams because he understood them to be an objective source of information in psychotherapeutic treatment. Schön (2016) notes that since Freud’s seminal work, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899), there have been relatively few contributions from psychoanalytic literature on the specifics of dream interpretation. Erikson (1954) argues against teaching dream interpretation, particularly to the inexperienced clinician. Conversely, Schön acknowledges the importance of dreams in providing direct messages from the patient’s unconscious, but concludes that there is a value in focusing on the dream and interpretation “in teaching, if not in actual practice” (2016, p. 105). Khan (1976) argues convincingly that dreams should be interpreted “in the here and now of the total transference situation” (as cited in Schön, 2016, p. 328) and that it is unnecessary to teach the specifics of dream interpretation. Kernberg (1993) contends that we now have many *royal roads* to the unconscious so the dream no longer occupies the place of singular importance that it did in the early formation of psychoanalysis.

However, Greenson (1970), in staunch defence of the dream states that “the best window into the internal world is the dream, the freest form of free association is the dream, the best access to early childhood experience and the best hope of awakening childhood memories come from the dream” (p. 13). Meltzer (1984) maintains that while dreams are not necessarily easy to interpret and may be confusing for the clinician and the dreamer alike, they are a unique phenomenon that deserve close attention. Eudell-Simmons and Hilsenroth

(2007) argue that the way in which dreams are used in psychotherapy depends largely on the theoretical orientation of the therapist. The variety of contrasting views documented in the literature indicates divided opinion in relation to the purpose and process of dream interpretation in contemporary psychotherapy.

## **2.6 Individuation**

Jung coined the term “individuation” to describe the individual journey towards integration of the conscious and unconscious psyche – the outer practical world of ego, work, duty, and the inner world of dreams, fantasy, imagination (Berger and Segaller, 2000, p. 5). Jungian analyst June Singer (1994) describes how Jung learned from experience that one cannot *know* the unconscious. One can *discover* and *experience* it. Moacanin (2003) describes the process of individuation as essentially unconscious and autonomous, with psyche’s urge for wholeness striving to harmonize its conscious and unconscious contents (p. 43). Jung suggests that “the personality too desires to evolve out of its unconscious conditions and to experience itself as whole” (1995 p. 17). Johnson (1989) notes that when the human psyche is in balance “there is a constant flow of energy and information between the two levels as they meet in the dimension of dream, vision, ritual and imagination” (p. 9). Marie-Louise von Franz (1996) advises that the dream be considered as objectively as possible for it provides a *new* message in a direct communication from the unconscious which neither dreamer nor analyst knew before. Singer (1994) reasserts von Franz’s view that what is essential in the psychology of Jung is that each individual consciously develops a unique philosophy of life – a “*Weltanschauung*”. Jung’s concern that a fixed theory of dreams would endanger the very nature of the dream and be counter to the aim of analytical psychology is clear from his own stated aim: “My aim is to bring about a psychic state in which my patient begins to experiment with his own nature – a state of fluidity, change, and

growth where nothing is eternally fixed and hopelessly petrified” (as cited in Stein, 1999, p. 46).

## **2.7 Freud and Jung**

The publication of Sigmund Freud’s magnum opus *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899) had sparked “a revolution the magnitude of which cannot be overestimated” (Wyly, as cited in Stein, 1995, p. 105). Jung initially resonated deeply with Freud’s theories and acknowledged his immeasurable contribution as a pioneer of the unconscious: “In my experience up to that time no one else could compare with him. There was nothing the least trivial in his attitude. I found him extremely intelligent, shrewd, and altogether remarkable” (1963, p. 149). Samuels (1986) contends that Jung’s approach to the dream reflects both an acknowledgement of debt to Freud and “the limitations which he found in using Freud’s approach” (p. 197). In Jung’s own words, “[F]airness to Freud, however, does not imply, as many fear, unqualified submission to a dogma... If I, for instance, acknowledge the complex mechanisms of dreams and hysteria, this does not mean that I attribute to the infantile sexual trauma the exclusive importance that Freud apparently does” (as cited in Storr, 1998, p. 45). Fundamental differences arose in the theoretical orientations of the two men concerning the nature of the dream, the dream images, and the unconscious itself (Jung, 1995; Jung, 1964; Stevens, 1995; Moacanin, 2003; Storr, 1998; Berger and Segaller, 2000).

The main disagreement centred around the question of the manifest and latent dream content (Samuels, 1986). Freud generally associated the latent content with a repressed sexual desire of an infantile nature (Storr, 1998), and applied the process of free association to the dream images to allow the true meaning of the dream to become apparent (Stevens, 1990, p. 18). A further difference emerged between Freud and Jung in relation to the dream images themselves. While Freud considered them as “archaic remnants”, Jung felt this view

represented “part of the prevailing depreciation of the unconscious as a mere appendix of consciousness”, or “a dustbin which collects all the refuse of the conscious mind – all things discarded, disused, worthless, forgotten, and repressed” (1990, p. 86).

Schön (2016) suggests that Jung “identified a number of keys to unlock the meaning of dreams, which constituted a development and a departure from Freud’s thinking” (p. 93). Jung understood dreams “as guides to the individual’s spiritual development” (Freud, 2008, p. xxxi). Jung said “*I take the dream for what it is. The dream is such a difficult and complicated thing that I do not dare to make any assumptions about its ... tendency to deceive*” (Jung, 1990). Jung found that the dream was not necessary as a point of departure to discover a patient’s complexes which could be reached by other means. He chose to concentrate attention on the dream associations themselves, believing that they “expressed something specific that the unconscious was trying to say” (1964, p. 12) and operate from a different dimension of time and space than any conscious process. Jung understood that dreams might be “couched in symbolic language” (Storr, 1998, p. 17) which, while difficult to decipher, were not concerned with wish-fulfilment or concealment.

Ritchie Robertson, in the introduction to Freud’s *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1999 edition), alludes to Freud and Jung’s differing attitude to the dream. As a “scientific rationalist” (p. xx), Freud did not value Jung’s view that the dream could restore psychic balance and help us towards wholeness. Nor did he show any regard for the “big dreams” that “can give one’s life a new direction” (p. xxi). Additionally, “if we see ‘irrational’, or (more politely) symbolic thinking not as the antithesis to rational reflection but as the basis from which conceptual thinking develops” the interpretation of a dream “would then take dream-symbolism seriously and educe from it a conceptual meaning” (p. xxxii). Freud’s original theory was in close alignment with the view which Jung later expanded on: “Freud

made the simple but penetrating observation that if a dreamer is encouraged to go on talking about his dream images and the thoughts that these prompt in his mind, he will give himself away and reveal the unconscious background of his ailments” (1964, p. 9). This view indicates that some of the differences between Freud and Jung in relation to the dream were perhaps more to do with personality types than a clash of opposing theories. Samuels (as cited in Berger and Segaller, 2000) suggests that Jung and Freud were stuck in a power struggle, and the irrevocable split and resulting animosity which persists to this day between the two schools has ultimately cost the cause of psychoanalysis dearly.

## **2.8 Decline of the Dream**

Stevens (1997) suggests that a withering of interest in dreams has coincided with a growth in attention to ego psychology and object relations theory. Lippmann (2000) asserts that dreams, once the cornerstone of psychoanalytic theory and practice, have become an underused resource in psychotherapy and “have lost their singular importance” (p. 627) as more popular concerns such as “transference, countertransference, the intimate edge, attachment, gender politics” (p. 640) take precedence. In psychoanalytic circles, interest in dreams and their interpretation has diminished over the past half-century, according to Lippmann (2000). Issues of cost-effectiveness and time constraints within the therapeutic world of “market-driven, managed-care” (p. 628) are discussed. Lippmann (2000) outlines a number of further potential obstacles to working with the dream in our materialist age, including the currently favoured model of short-term, solution-focused therapy, and a cultural mistrust of dreams that have caused dreams to become “an endangered species of life” (p. 637). Both Lippmann (2000) and Greenson (1970) contend that the decline in attention to the dream has prevented trainee therapists from a full exploration of both their own and their patients’ inner world. Lippmann’s (2000) article draws attention to some important issues in

relation to the dreamwork, but the frivolous tone might unwittingly mirror an unhelpful attitude that has undermined the function of the dream in therapy.

Jung felt that man suffers from a loss of connection to his inner world (Jung, 1995; Johnson, 1986). Warnecke (2015) addresses the dualistic nature of this mind/body split (p. 7). Stevens (1995) maintains that there has been a notable decline in numinous or archetypal dreams as human societies have developed from the primitive to the elaborately complex societies of modern times. However, Storr (1990) considers that there is a growing regard for the place of inner work and creativity in therapy: “I anticipate that the psychotherapy of the future will emphasise the importance of the individual’s own inner resources” (p. ix). Additionally, there are signs of rapprochement occurring between the schools of psychoanalysis and analytical psychology according to Kirsch (2000), Roesler (2018), Storr (1990), Samuels (2001) and Beebe et al. (2001), among others.

James Hillman maintains that people “don’t want to know about the psyche – they prefer to think life is just the concrete, visible, tangible world” (as cited in Berger and Segaller, 2000, p. 69). Jung himself wrote of a collective ambivalence to the dream where “the average man thinks little or nothing about dreams, and even a thoroughly educated person shares the common ignorance and underrates everything connected with the unconscious” (1990, p. 73). This view is expressed in a contemporary context by Lippmann (2000) who addresses a long-standing ambivalence towards dreams and their interpretation in psychoanalysis. Haule (2011) further supports the idea that interest in dreams has declined since we have come to value the rational mind and dismiss the “irrational” world of dreams and myths as “childish, delusional, naïve, even pathological” (p. 9). However, to balance this viewpoint, Zhu (2013) affirms that contemporary cognitive and neuroscientific approaches to the study of dreams explored in relation to Jung show “how cognitive and scientific findings challenge, enrich,

and in some ways confirm Jung's dream theory and praxis" (p. 662), and "can and should be combined fruitfully with the Jungian approach" (p. 673).

## **2.9 Changing Paradigms**

Psychotherapy in general, and the dreamwork in particular, is undergoing a paradigm shift with the emergence of a more blended model of psychotherapy. According to Berger and Segaller (2000), Jung's concepts of the unconscious psyche "have infiltrated modern attitudes to a remarkable extent", despite resistance from the psychoanalytic domain, and Roesler (2018) indicates that resistance is slowly melting away as the Freudian and Jungian schools become more closely aligned. Stevens (1997) argues that the "disdainful view of dreams adopted by rational, educated people since Roman times has in the present century been radically revised" (p. 81). This revision sees dreams as "capable of contributing significantly to the meaning and well-being of our lives" (p. 81). Kirsch (2000) observes that an emerging consensus between the schools of depth psychology indicates a possible revival of attention to the dream in therapy. Beebe et. al. (2001) describe a growing consensus between Freudian and Jungian practitioners. This view is further extended by Roesler (2018) who suggests that the psychoanalytic community has moved dream interpretation from a Freudian perspective towards Jung's less reductionist model. Research by Ryecroft (1979) and Gill (1982) indicates that psychoanalysis is moving away from seeing the dream as a disguised or forbidden wish, and regards psyche as more of a "creative" than a "deceptive" phenomenon. While Kirsch (2000) maintains that there has been increased sharing of ideas between psychoanalysts and analytical psychologists during the past decade with a growing number of "respectful and productive interchanges enriching all of the participants" (p. 242).

A more blended style of therapy appears to be evolving in the therapeutic domain. This view is endorsed by Storr (1990) who believes that "we shall soon see the disappearance of the

analytical schools as discrete entities” (p. xiii), as the common factors which lead to a successful outcome in therapy take precedence over the particular school to which the therapist belongs. Research by Samuels (as cited in Beebe et al., 2001) has “revealed surprising commonalities of concern in the approach to clinical practice” (p. 215) between the Freudian and Jungian schools. McLeod (2003) contends that the postmodern phenomenon of integration in psychotherapy has been shaped by general unhappiness with single-school systems, eliciting a desire for something beyond the rigid boundaries of a particular paradigm. O’Leary and Murphy (2006) further recognise a movement towards integration and suggest that a major benefit lies in the convergence of voices that adds to a rich discourse from diverging backgrounds and multi-disciplines. Lippmann (2000) contends that “Freud’s view and method is now open for revision, for experimentation, for a broadening, a mixing with Jungian and other ideas about the meaning and use of dreams” (p. 645). He notes a growing interest in young analysts to “play with dreams” and become more at home with “the complex and multi-layered nature of dreams, and with an underlying, implicit theoretical pluralism” (p. 645).

Eudell-Simmons and Hilsenroth (2007) discuss how dreamwork is approached in various therapeutic modalities, from psychoanalysis to cognitive behavioural therapy. The authors suggest an Integrative Model of dream work based on combining the techniques and theories of various approaches to “enhance and facilitate each other as well as enrich the therapeutic process” (p. 330). It is suggested that the dream offers information about a patient’s clinical condition, personality characteristics, and functioning, regardless of the therapeutic modality. The Integrative Model would bypass any psychological boundaries between different therapeutic approaches and allow dreamwork to be applied “to the greatest possible number of patients under a great variety of conditions and clinical modalities” (p. 350). While the premise of this article supports expansion of “the dream’s usefulness and relevance in

psychotherapy” (p. 353), the proposed Integrative Model appears to the researcher to wrestle the dream from the dreamer. In attempting to combine several theoretical orientations, there is too much focus on theory and less attention to the dreamwork itself. Jung (1995) cautioned against forming theoretical assumptions and falling into any specific, routine approach to the dream.

## **2.10 Science, Spirituality, and the Dream**

The realms of science and spirituality (the rational and the irrational) are also finding a new alignment (Haule, 2011; Samuels, 2013; Zhu, 2013; Stevens, 1995; Berger and Segaller, 2001). What, if any, are the implications for the dream in psychotherapy? Haule (2011) looks to the potential of working with dreams so that we can train ourselves to utilize the “transcendent function” that enables psychological transformation; he observes that science and technology have counted more than spirituality in our time; and notes the contention of both neurobiologists and anthropologists that “dreams help us to integrate recent waking experience with our phylogenetic heritage” (p. 1). Samuels (2013) repeats the assertion that in the dream, “we enter an archetypal world where we participate in the phylogenetic programme of our species” (p. 113) which makes dreaming “a neuropsychic activity of the greatest biological significance” (p. 113). The *Consciousness and Physical Reality Digest* (1996) maintains that it is “becoming clear that the science of the immediate future will be based on equality of spiritual and material, and in the distant future may well be predominantly spiritual” (p. 1).

Moacanin (2003) explains how, through studies of alchemical symbolism, Jung came to understand that the transformation of personality and the emergence of a new unified being occurs in the interaction between ego and the unconscious (p. 34). Singer (1994) discusses how the psyche consists of conscious and unconscious content, two aspects of one system

“with the exchange of energy between...providing the dynamic for growth and change” (p. 15). This growth happens throughout life as unconscious content is gradually assimilated via inner work, notably through the dream. According to Johnson (1986), the modern mind, in its elevation of the rational and denigration of the spiritual dimension, has lost its balance. The loss of the “religious function” – an inherent need, according to Jung, for meaning – causes it to demand attention in the form of neurosis, inner conflicts and psychological symptoms (p. 10).

Saban (2016) applies a reflexive critique to investigate a criticism that Jung’s psychology over-values the *inner* world suggesting that the collective unconscious may be encountered through psychic engagement with both inner *and* outer others. Haule (2011) addresses Jung’s challenge to science to explore phenomena – including life, intentionality, parapsychology, and consciousness – that it has hitherto simply dismissed as “inexplicable or non-existent” (p. 4).

Dream science reveals that “dreaming itself is the workshop of evolution” (Ferenczi, as cited in Samuels, 2013, p. 113). However, western society’s belief in rational left-brain dominance, supported by unprecedented technological advances, has militated against understanding the human organism as an integrated holistic system incorporating unconscious processes, according to Johnson (1986).

With regard to Jung’s pioneering work with the psyche, von Franz maintains that he charted “a whole new continent, and...scientists still have trouble to follow up and to map out what he explored” (as cited in Berger and Segaller, 1989, p. 13). Edward Edinger claims that Jungian psychology had to be a science “because the new level of awareness must be born out of our best reality, and our best reality is science” (as cited in Berger and Segaller, 1989, p. 164). However, in support of an emerging consensus between science and spirituality Jung

(1990) reveals that the past century has witnessed the growth of “a scientific discipline which aims at exploring the vast field of unconscious processes” (p. 73). Haule (2011) explores how Jung’s theoretical constructs represent “an intuitive leap that science appears to be catching up with” (p. 6). Stevens (1995) makes the principles of dream interpretation available to science and the findings of dream science available to analysts. According to Haule (2011), Jung lamented the trend toward a “flat and lifeless mechanical world devoid of transcendence and wonder” (p. 11) and stressed the necessity “to embrace the irrational and discover the multiphasic nature of human consciousness” (p. 3).

According to Wyly (in Stein, 1995), dreams bring to psychotherapy “the opportunity to transcend ego-determined points of view” (p. 134). Stevens (1990) describes Jung’s emphasis on the Self as opposed to the ego – with Self-realization as the goal of all personality growth – as “psychology’s Copernican revolution” (p. 66). Psychotherapy looks towards change and psychological renewal and dreams “probably enable this process more directly than any other single therapeutic device” (p. 134).

The problem of the *rational* versus the *irrational* would appear to be central to resistance within scientific and academic circles in relation to Jung’s theory of the unconscious, and appears throughout the literature. Moacanin (2003) stresses the importance of expanding awareness beyond personal consciousness for modern man “whose rational attitude has thwarted and repressed the spiritual dimension of life” (p. 46). Holbeche (1998) urges to attend to the dream which connects us to a Higher Intelligence that is “the voice of the soul” (p. 3). And Moss (2009) succeeds in straddling both rational and irrational dimensions with his contention that imaginal healing will become central to modern medicine as we reclaim the skills of dreaming, a view supported by the fast expanding scientific field of psychoneuroimmunology which is overthrowing “the Cartesian dogma that mind and body

are separate” (p. 262). While Stevens (1995) achieves a sacred union for the dream when he asserts that it is not good enough to treat dreams as either purely psychological or entirely neurophysiological phenomena, since they are clearly both.

Jung (1995) says that in this time “we can see as never before that the peril which threatens all of us comes not from nature, but from man, from the psyches of the individual and the mass” (p. 154). The assimilation of the dream material over time leads to the actualization of the whole human being, in other words, individuation (Storr, 1998).

## **Chapter 3 Methodology**

*“Dreams...are invariably seeking to express something that the ego does not know and does not understand.” – C.G. Jung*

### **3.1 Introduction to Approach**

This chapter outlines the methodology used for conducting the research project, including the research design and the sample selection. The method of data collection and analysis is then outlined, followed by a consideration of the ethical issues involved.

The aim of this research project is to explore a Jungian-oriented approach to the dream in psychotherapy. The literature review has described the process of dream interpretation from a Jungian perspective, considered alternative approaches to the dreamwork, and examined the relevance of the dream in the future evolution of psychotherapy.

### **3.2 Rationale for a Qualitative Approach**

The focus of inquiry for this study will be best addressed by a qualitative approach which reveals a complete picture of the issue thus enabling a rich understanding to emerge from the data set. The qualitative paradigm utilises data to produce understandings that are appropriate to the context (Mason, 2002, p. 3). This strategy allows the researcher to understand a problem or phenomenon from the perspective of the people it involves, identifies patterns that emerge from the data, and “values context sensitivity, that is, understanding a phenomena in all its complexity and within a particular situation and environment” (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994, p. 13).

Qualitative research is a process of investigation into an individual’s personal experience, and into how the individual makes meaning from this experience (J. A. Smith, 2004; McLeod,

2014). The qualitative researcher aims to build on theory by capturing the totality of the experience and attempting to understand it (McLeod, 2001). Qualitative research has been shown to be highly effective for such in-depth explorations of areas of complexity (Brocki and Wearden, 2006). A further benefit is that it involves researcher and participants as collaborators: “the challenge for the novice researcher is to interact with research participants in such a way that they generate rich and complex insights” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 98). The aim of this research will, therefore, be best met by a qualitative approach.

### **3.3 Thematic Analysis**

Thematic analysis is a theoretically flexible approach in which the researcher actively engages with the process to generate the themes. This form of analysis provides a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns, or themes, within the data set. It organises and describes the data in detail. However, according to Braun and Clarke (2006) it frequently goes further than this “and interprets various aspects of the research topic” (p 79). It is advisable to embed reflexivity into the analytic process to avoid unacknowledged values or assumptions from contaminating the data. A thematic analysis reveals what is interesting about the data, and describes why and how it addresses the research question. It is recommended as a useful research strategy as “it provides core skills that will be useful for conducting many other kinds of analysis” (p.78). Potential difficulties associated with this method come from poorly conducted analyses or inappropriate research questions, both of which are avoidable.

### **3.4 Sample and Recruitment**

The qualitative research method begins with the selection of a purposive sample that will best display the phenomenon under study (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994, p. 57). This research project involved the participation of five practicing psychotherapists, each of whom employs

a Jungian-oriented approach to working with the dream in clinical practice. The participants each had at least twenty years of clinical experience. This ensured that all the participants had a solid experience of inner work which was essential for providing a rich response to the research topic. The participants were identified via the IAPA (International Association for Analytical Psychology) and IAHIP (Irish Association of Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy) websites, and by word-of-mouth recommendations. For a balanced enquiry, a gender mix was achieved with two male and three female psychotherapists participating.

An email was sent to a selection of twenty Dublin-based psychotherapists, each of whom had listed a Jungian modality among their qualifications or skill set. An invitation to participate in an MA Research Project was extended with the title “An Exploration of a Jungian-oriented Approach to the Dream in Psychotherapy” included in order to orient the prospective participants to the topic. An Information Sheet (Appendix 1) and Consent Form (Appendix 2) were attached to the invitation. Participants were later given hard copies of both documents at the interview. When the response rate to the email was insufficient for requirements, a follow-up phone call was made to each prospective candidate to ascertain their interest, or otherwise, in participating. Three candidates emerged from this process, and a fourth was suggested by one of the participants based on a professional profile that matched the stated criteria. The final participant was approached by the researcher having read published material in relation to their clinical experience of applying a Jungian-approach to dreamwork.

### **3.5 Data Collection**

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews, in conjunction with the thematic approach which is collaborative by design, yields a potentially rich data set. A questionnaire (Appendix 3) with ten open-ended questions was designed in advance of the interviews and tested on a peer

group for efficacy. Individual interviews were arranged in advance to take place at a mutually convenient time and at a venue of the participant's choosing. Semi-structured interviews allow for a degree of flexibility with the interview process, and also enable the development of a rapport between researcher and participant (Smith and Osborn, 2003). Questions were designed to be open-ended to allow for flexibility of participant responses (Kvale, 2007). The interview questions followed a funnelling approach beginning with general questions and working towards a more detailed consideration of the therapist's unique experience (Smith and Osborn, 2003, p. 62). Each interview was digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. Interviews lasted approximately forty minutes. Field-notes were recorded before and after each interview in order to document the researcher's personal response to the process (Appendix 7).

A pilot interview was conducted with a practicing psychotherapist prior to the interviews which resulted in a reconsideration of the initial order of the questions. The pilot interview enabled the researcher to test the flow and efficacy of the question set and reassured the researcher regarding the timing requirement which is otherwise difficult to predict. It also provided an opportunity for a practice run with the recording equipment. Finally, the pilot session reduced the natural anxiety that can accompany a new experience before the researcher embarked on the interview process itself. Each interview was digitally recorded using both a voice recorder and a mobile phone and transcribed verbatim.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

The transcripts were coded line-by-line to search for potential themes. The coding process was undertaken in two different ways which enabled the researcher to become more familiar with the data (Appendices 4 and 5). One process involved handwritten codes on large sheets using coloured markers. Another involved inserting comment boxes directly onto the printed

transcripts to identify potential themes. Research data were grouped as appropriate and three main themes, represented across the data set, were generated. These were organized into a thematic map of the analysis (Appendix 6). Relevant extracts from the research data were identified to support each theme (Appendix 8). The identity of the participants was protected by using participant numbers which were applied throughout the data, P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, in order to ensure anonymity.

### **3.7 Ethical Issues**

This research topic involves the potential disclosure of personal material relating to the inner world of the participants. It was, therefore, essential that participants were invited to give informed consent in advance of the interview process (Kvale, 2007). Personal contact was made with each participant prior to interview, and a written account detailing the research topic and interview procedure was forwarded by email in advance of each interview. This information was again shared upon meeting, and participants were invited to sign a consent-form prior to commencing the interview process.

The right of the participant to withdraw from the process at any time up to the submission of the research documents to Dublin Business School, and the right of the participant to withhold any sensitive data during the interview process, was clarified by the researcher. The research participants were informed that confidentiality would be protected and all information relating to identity would be replaced by pseudonyms as needed. It was explained to the participants that while the final research document would be publicly available, the anonymity of each participant would be protected. Participants were also informed that all documents and recordings would be kept in strict compliance with GDPR regulations: stored in a secure environment; accessed by the researcher for the duration of the process only; and would be destroyed upon completion of the research process.

## **Chapter 4 Results**

*"My aim is to bring about a psychic state in which my patient begins to experiment with his own nature – a state of fluidity, change and growth where nothing is externally fixed and hopelessly petrified." – C.G. Jung*

### **4.1 Introduction**

The coding process as outlined in Chapter 3, Methodology, was undertaken in two ways by researcher choice – hand-coded on charts and computer-coded directly on the transcripts. This process generated three solid themes: (1) The Purpose of the Dream in Psychotherapy; (2) The Process of Dream Interpretation; (3) Dreams and Psychotherapy – A Shifting Paradigm. The themes came from responses that were significant to all participants and therefore appeared consistently across the data set. The subthemes were either directly connected to a specific research question or emerged unprompted across the data set.

### **4.2 Theme 1: The Purpose of the Dream in Psychotherapy**

This theme speaks directly to the core aim of the research inquiry, “To Explore a Jungian-oriented Approach to the Dream in Psychotherapy”, and provided a rich and varied response with three distinct subthemes emerging: The Function of the Dream; Freud, Jung and the Dream; and Training in Dream Interpretation.

#### *4.2.1 The Function of the Dream*

Dimensions to the dreamwork which were alluded to throughout the data set include the compensatory function of the dream, the individuation process, the healing of complexes, the self-regulating psyche, and the universality of the dream. Each topic is illustrated by extracts

from participant transcripts as they arise. Practical implications for the dreamwork will be further elaborated in *Theme 2*.

The responses elicited through the interview process suggest that the dream performs a multitude of functions: the dream offers access to inner wisdom; presents and resolves problems; balances a one-sided conscious attitude; connects to age-old templates; guides the therapeutic process; and gives access to the unconscious via the symbolic. On the other hand, it was acknowledged that there are those who believe the dream to be no more than a collection of the day's psychic detritus!

The ways in which the dream can serve the therapeutic process was variously described across the data set. The participants described how the dream honours the unconscious in a special kind of way and how some (big dreams) impact more profoundly than others. The data describe how the dream functions as a direct communication from the unconscious and can offer a new perspective on a current situation particularly where we can feel really stuck either by posing a question or presenting an answer. The individuation process is served by the dream as what is revealed to conscious mind is not always what we *want* to know, but often what we *need* to know. The hallmark of Jungian work was described in the data set as the journey to becoming the best version of the individual that we can be, and that the individuation process can be perilous with the dream transcending the egoic point of view. With psyche as a *self-regulating system* the dream suggests unconscious content that is ready to be made conscious and that content "is not always pretty" according to P1. The dream thus provides an efficient tool for the therapeutic process allowing access to one's inner wisdom according to P5:

"... it's like a litmus test of how much a person is actually in touch or connected to the psyche beneath the conscious level ... leaves you with a better sense of inhabiting your inner and outer world..."

An illustration of this inherent wisdom was offered by P2 who described the dream as a psychic container which can effectively guide the pace of the therapy:

“... for example, if the defenses are being taken down too quickly, the dreams of the client will show that ... they’ve dreamt of a wall being knocked down or a truck that’s overturned ... then you step back a bit and say *no the container isn’t safe enough yet.*”

It was acknowledged across the data set that while the dreamwork is of enormous value to the therapeutic process, there are those who disregard its significance, as P3 explains:

“... some people would say it’s what they call an epiphenomenon of the psyche, which is just ash or the detritus of the day and totally ignores them but I would say every dream is important, and some are more important than others.”

#### 4.2.2 *Freud, Jung and the Dream*

It was an unanticipated result that each participant alluded to the distinction between Freud’s and Jung’s approaches to the dream, unprompted, acknowledging the contributions of both while indicating a preference for Jung’s approach. This finding supports later indications that an “either/or” approach to psychotherapy is becoming “both/and” in relation to the legacy of Freud and Jung. P1 recalls her original introduction to the dreamwork in a three-strand training programme which included a study of Freud, Klein and Jung:

“Freud ... saw the dream as being a condensation of repressed materials, Jung saw it as a symbolic communication ... and the difficulty we have in understanding the dream is because of the symbolic nature of it ... he had quite a different perspective on the unconscious than Freud. And so it doesn’t translate directly ... what we have to do is to enter into the dream and to let its meaning be revealed or to emerge.”

The participants described an early infatuation with the works of Freud and Jung but found Jung’s orientation to the dream to widen out the symbol. The Freudian model follows the association in a linear way leading away from the original symbol, while the Jungian model *circumnambulates* always returning to the original symbol. It was agreed that the approach

taken to dream interpretation depends on one's theoretical orientation. While the participants stated a preference for the Jungian model, other approaches were equally acceptable. However, from a Jungian perspective, Freud's view was seen to be somewhat limited with Jung offering a more flexible approach to the dream symbols thus allowing a broader canvas on which to work. P3 describes this view:

“Jung is flexible and incorporates what's happening in the psyche ... Freud would say that it all goes back to sex so you find what is the sexual conflict or issue in the dream ... I would say it's not *just* about sex ... Jung's message is about ... what you associate with each image in the dream ... back to the symbol every time.”

#### 4.2.3 *Training in Dream Interpretation*

There was a strong response across the data set with regard to the value of an *experiential* over a *theoretical* approach to the dreamwork. The question of whether it would be possible to train in dream interpretation brought a variety of responses from the participants. Only one, P4, immediately agreed that training is a possibility while the other participants felt that an experiential knowledge of psyche would be essential for working with dreams from a Jungian perspective. It was generally agreed that not enough is currently being done to equip trainee psychotherapists to engage successfully with the dreamwork. The vital importance of the therapist's ongoing inner work was a view common to all participants. The issue of applying a structure to dreamwork was considered but only in support of an experiential approach. To illustrate this point, P1 describes the importance of the experiential:

“We learn by our own dreams ... we learn through our engagement in our own therapeutic process. Jung was the first to insist that analysts go through their own analytic process. And that's the keystone for all analytical trainings and his reasoning behind that is that you can only go as far with someone else as you've been able to go in yourself.”

It was suggested that a further component of a Jungian-oriented training would include the arts as a cultural container for the expansion of consciousness. P1 and P2 refer to Jung and

von Franz who articulated the necessity at a particular stage in a Jungian-oriented therapeutic approach to expand our *Weltanschauung* [philosophy of life] through engagement with art, literature and music which provide a reference point beyond the personal dimension.

There was initially some hesitation with regard to the question of training in dream interpretation with four of the five participants referring to an over-emphasis on the theoretical dimension in support of the ego perspective in therapeutic training which might be effectively balanced by more attention to inner work. The integrative training model has not been seen to incorporate an understanding of the “reality of the psyche”, but tends to favour theoretical knowledge over experiential understanding. Becoming familiar with how psyche works in a Jungian-oriented training was therefore considered essential in addition to gaining some knowledge of myths and archetypes. P5 disagrees entirely with the concept of training due to the intuitive nature of dream interpretation and illustrates his view with a medical analogy:

“You cannot train somebody really ... it’s a feeling. You can teach doctors medicine but you can’t teach them the kind of diagnostic gift that some doctors have. It’s the same thing with psychotherapy, more so I’d say, because the gifts there are not evident or testable so a lot of those things are intuitive.”

#### **4.3 Theme 2: The Process of Dream Interpretation**

This theme looks at the practical application of dreamwork in therapy. While all five participants work with the dream the data set revealed different attitudes to the process of dream interpretation. Three of the participants reveal a depth of experiential knowledge of the Jungian approach to dreamwork while two applied a “smorgasbord” (one participant’s observation) of styles including creative processes and “redreaming the dream”. All five participants shared a conviction in the importance of the therapeutic relationship as an essential component for healing and in the value of the dream as a tool to facilitate psychic

growth. Additionally, all participants were open to combining the dreamwork with other processes according to their particular strengths and depending on who and what presents in therapy. Three subthemes emerged from the data in relation to the process of dream interpretation: The Analytic Process; Potential Problems; and No Dreams? No Problem!

#### 4.3.1 *The Analytic Process*

It is clear from the data set that dream analysis can become an intuitive practice over time as one becomes experienced in understanding the nature of psyche. The analytic process was described by all participants according to how they individually progress with the dream content, but all agreed to first noticing where the energy of the dream lies and to what the dream presents in terms of personal associations, dream figures and recurring themes. The nature of the dream as a *living entity* was acknowledged in the data set, however components may change over time according to the needs of the dreamer. Staying with the dream symbol and the dreamer's associations allows the energy of the unconscious to move through it and reveal its meaning which ultimately allows growth and creativity to emerge. This describes the Jungian process of *circumnambulation* or circling around the symbols which was variously articulated by the participants.

The importance of allowing the dreamer to first respond to the dream symbols is repeated throughout the data set acknowledging that it is the dreamer who holds the key to understanding. P2 synthesizes the responses of the data set with her description of what happens when a client presents with a dream:

“... we narrate the dream and we sit with that for a little bit till the feeling of the dream comes up. So then I will ask them first what their feeling is, and I will try and put myself in what Keats called ‘negative capability’, you know, which is one tries to empty out any grabbing ego...like the ego wants to say ‘Oh, I know what that means’. So I try to pick up what their unconscious is trying to communicate in a way where

my own framework doesn't interfere ... to let this new reality emerge. So that would be the container for the work."

The concept of applying a rigid structure to dream interpretation was not favoured by any of the participants. However, it was suggested that Jung's formulation of a broad structure for the dreamwork could be applied to a greater or lesser extent in the context of the dreamwork.

Deeper levels of dreamwork can be indicated by the dream's presentation of symbols that extend beyond the personal into collective associations. The Jungian process of *amplification* which involves the concepts of the collective psyche, myths, and archetypes, was described in the data. P2 provides a practical example:

"First we would see what the personal associations for the dream are ... and from there we'll go on to see if there are archetypal themes ... which would then provide a deeper level for interpretation. So I would move ... from the personal to the familiar, familial, which would be the ... parental or ancestral complexes to the collective ... for instance, is the client getting entangled in a collective shadow ... and then I would see is there any archetypal theme in this which would help to heal that ... like the Great Mother or something."

The dream chooses the symbol that is both most meaningful to the dreamer and can speak to the personal and collective at the same time. The process of amplification widens out the symbol by linking it with images from myth, art, and cultural history, and can be applied when a dream contains clear references to archetypal themes. P2 elaborates:

"We'd been working with the negative mother complex and as the complex was getting healed, one of the final dreams was that her mother had given her a sack of potatoes ... hugely symbolic significance you know, it was like a gift from not just the personal mother but the Great Mother as well ... and then the Irish collective psyche ... the famine ... so it went through all the layers."

The Jungian concept of the *numinous* was referred to in relation to the potential impact of *big dreams* which must be handled with care and not necessarily shared immediately with the client. P3 explains:

“... with archetypal content the client might not have much personal connection to that because it is archetypal, it is still very numinous, that’s it ... the power of it ... big dreams will stay with you. There are layers and layers to them.”

However, it was also noted by one participant that a lack of knowledge of myth and archetypes is not necessarily an impediment to a Jungian-oriented approach. Attention to the intersubjective nature of the therapeutic alliance and the therapist’s own process work are of considerable importance in entering into deeper levels of the dreamwork.

#### 4.3.2 *Potential Problems*

This subtheme recounts some of the issues that participants felt can get in the way of the dreamwork including compliance, resistance, time constraints, literal versus symbolic interpretation, and an over-attachment to rational mind. Client compliance in relation to provision of dreams can present a problem when a client feels pressured to bring their dreams to therapy and are concerned with, according to P5, “pleasing the therapist”. It was generally agreed that clients should be gently *encouraged* but not *required* to provide dreams as this can create resistance to the dreamwork. There was concern across the data set at the loss of symbolic thinking in modern society, the growth of a utilitarian attitude, and a lingering obsession with the rational, all of which have contributed to the dreamwork being overlooked or completely disregarded. P3 explains:

“I can see if someone’s quite rational they will tend to dismiss [the dream] as just fantasies and thoughts ... so a wonderful dream ... you don’t take literally because it is symbolic ... but I can see how if somebody’s quite rational they will tend to dismiss it as just fantasies and thoughts and not important.”

#### 4.3.3 *No Dreams? No Problem!*

An unanticipated result involved agreement among all participants that the dreamwork was *not* an essential route to the unconscious in therapy. It was generally acknowledged that

while there are many possible roads to the unconscious which others may find more effective, the dream still represents the *royal road* by those working within a Jungian paradigm. However, there was consensus across the data set that it should not present as a problem in therapy, even in Jungian analysis, when a client has no dreams to recount. Active imagination, sand tray, journaling, creative activities, the therapeutic alliance, and the transference/countertransference dynamic emerged across the data set as alternative ways of working with the unconscious in therapy. An interesting result emerged from the two Jungian analysts who separately suggested that in the absence of dreams, applying Jung's *symbolic attitude* to life events offers an alternative approach to the dreamwork. P2 explains:

“... one can begin to think of external events ... in an equally symbolic manner. For instance, why do we keep getting ourselves into the same situation again and again? So when that begins to happen, you can say, well, we're caught in a complex ... and that's why we meet the same type of person again and again, because we are sort of manifesting the shadow or manifesting the negative father or whatever it might be. So ... in the absence of dreams there are lots of ways ... to access the unconscious patterns that we're playing with.”

P1 initially found it amusing to contemplate a Jungian analyst without dreams! Upon reflection, she too refers to Jung's symbolic attitude:

“... I think one of Jung's other contributions is his symbolic attitude, so that once we adopt that perspective, that whatever material comes in to the session that we can look at it in a symbolic way.”

The value of the transference dynamic and the therapeutic relationship were considered essential by P4 and P5 as providing potential access to unconscious material. While P3 acknowledges all routes to psychic healing, he reasserts his particular regard for the dreamwork:

“Whether [change in therapy] is due to dream interpretation or whether it's the therapeutic alliance or a combination ... I wouldn't separate one from the other, but I do think that dreamwork is a very valid way of working in therapy.”

#### **4.4 Theme 3: Dreams and Psychotherapy – A Shifting Paradigm**

The third theme generated by the data set involves changes in the contemporary model of psychotherapy towards integration of modalities and an increased demand for short-term psychotherapy. A potential re-balancing of the rational and non-rational dimensions of psyche was also considered in the data including implications for the dreamwork. This theme highlights some interesting feedback from the participants which generated the following sub-themes: Future Models; and Science, Spirituality and the Dream.

##### *4.4.1 Future Models*

The research results endorse the view that there is a shift happening in the provision of psychotherapy which favours a short-term, solution-focused model over the depth psychology model. An interesting finding that was generated by the data set (and may have surprised even the participants themselves) is the possibility of incorporating dreamwork into this model. The initial feedback indicated that dreamwork would not fit within a time-limited paradigm with one participant, P5, suggesting that dreamwork could not be contained within a short-term model:

“Dreamwork is part of a depth psychology approach really and there’s been a drift away from that ... there’s really no interest in this culture about dreams ... in a practical solution-oriented ... I think there probably is not enough of a container for the dream.”

However, further inquiry elaborated the potential for integration across the data set. While there was a general feeling of regret at the recent decline in dreamwork, and an acknowledgement that fewer dreams are presenting in today’s therapy rooms, it was suggested that the evolution of a more integrative model including a flexible approach to all theoretical formulations has the potential to re-invigorate the dream in psychotherapy. It was noted that a shift has occurred even within Jungian-oriented psychotherapy away from the

classical Jungian dreamwork model towards an object relations approach. However, P1 and P2 felt that a shift in formal training towards object relations which excluded the Jungian model is currently being revised and opening up now into a more integrative model.

Additionally, the distinction between chronological [conscious] and dream [unconscious] time was considered in relation to working with dreams in a short-term therapeutic model.

P1 explains:

“...when we’re working with that material we need to both honour and acknowledge that this is unconscious time ... we can’t just arrogantly assume I’ll make this work ... because our psyche will have another ... perspective ... and we can’t always make things fit into chronological time.”

There was general agreement that when a dream presents in any therapeutic model long or short, offering potential resolution to a presenting problem, time and space could be made for initiating a process of *self-analysis*. Two participants, P4 and P5, agreed that every model of psychotherapy offers a different way of engaging with the dreamwork, and an integrative approach can allow greater flexibility for the therapist.

#### 4.4.2 *Science, Spirituality, and the Dream*

There was agreement across the data set about the lessening of tensions, and even a growing alignment, between the fields of science [rational] and spirituality [irrational]. The evidence of this research suggests that science may be paving the way to a new understanding of the nature of human consciousness. The dreams that are presenting in therapy were seen to be compensating for the loss of external containers of religion, family, community et al.

According to P2:

“... dreams are there furiously trying to compensate for lack of the external containers and it’s very interesting to see ... common themes emerging in people’s dreams and then you can see that the collective psyche is ... now turning inwards ... for that sustenance.”

It was generally agreed that we are experiencing a healing of the split between science and spirituality which may indicate more openness to the inheritance of Jung. The data suggests that Jung's work has been generally overlooked by academic circles due to the lack of a rigid theoretical framework in addition to the spiritual orientation of his work, both of which the academic model rejects. However, the work of the post-Jungian cohort was seen to be expanding Jung's opus into a 21<sup>st</sup> century context. It was also noted that modern science is now validating many of Jung's theories. P3 suggested, however, that while neuroscience can describe neural pathways there is still no way to map the unconscious!

“The more we understand about the brain and brain functioning and synapses and pathways ... you could say ... is giving a biological basis to Jung's theories ... But it's the *psychological* aspect that Jung was interested in!”

P2 believes that the current zeitgeist will see science leading the way into a new spirituality and has already begun to acknowledge the interconnectedness of everything:

“Because I think science is opening up levels of understanding that are helping us to integrate the age-old divisions between matter and spirit ... it is the same energy or the same consciousness that informs us at the ... cellular, the most bodily level and at the most conscious level.”

The softening of the scientific-rationalist standpoint was illustrated throughout the data set by a variety of references: to a documentary which showed hardened scientists moved to tears in a moment of transcendence; Jung's long and fruitful collaboration with Nobel prize-winning physicist Wolfgang Pauli; science and psychotherapy being considered together in the *Harvard Business Review*; and the sciences opening new levels of understanding that are helping the integration of the division between spirit and matter. P1 ended the enquiry with a pertinent question:

“So what is spiritual and what is scientific? I think that those are boundaries that are yet to be illuminated.”

## **Chapter 5 Discussion**

*“My life is what I have done, my scientific work; the one is inseparable from the other. The work is an expression of my inner development.” – C. G. Jung*

### **5.1 Introduction**

The aim of this research was to explore a Jungian-oriented approach to the dream in psychotherapy. The main objectives of the study involved an exploration of the purpose and process of working with the dream, and a consideration of both current practice and future prospects for dreamwork in psychotherapy. A qualitative approach using thematic analysis as described in Chapter 3 generated the three themes presented in Chapter 4 which were illustrated by relevant interview extracts. Chapter 5 offers a discussion of the research findings with reference to each of the three themes as outlined in Chapter 4, and supported by the relevant literature from Chapter 2.

### **5.2 Theme 1: The Purpose of Dreams**

This theme sets the base note for the inquiry. While it was expected that the five participants who work with a Jungian-oriented approach to the dream will have probed the purpose of the dream, some unanticipated material emerged in the data. It was not surprising that Sigmund Freud should enter into a discussion of dreams, however it was nonetheless interesting to note that he arrived, unprompted, into the discourse and was often mentioned in the same breath as Jung. There were also some unanticipated results from the data set regarding training in dream interpretation. These points will be elaborated in the following sub-themes: The Function of the Dream; Freud and Jung; and Training in Dream Interpretation.

### 5.2.1 *The Function of the Dream*

The function of the dream was articulated in a variety of ways by participants. Jung (1964) understood that the dream supports the self-realisation of the unconscious by revealing the deepest layers of psyche to the dreamer. The participants collectively enumerate ways in which the dream facilitates this process: the dream as guide for the pace of therapy; the dream as psychic container; the dream presents the client's own material; the dream can pose a question and offer a solution and can therefore facilitate a time-efficient process in therapy. The power of the dream to enable change was discussed in addition to the fact that the dream does not comply with our ego-centric understanding space and time.

It was interesting to note that the dream offers us what we *need* to know and not necessarily what we *want* to know on our journey to individuation. The concept of the dream as a natural and autonomous psychic phenomenon is articulated by Jung in his *Collected Works* (as cited in Berger and Segaller, 2000) with the observation that the dream can not only fail to obey our will but “often stands in flagrant opposition to our conscious intentions” (p. 55). The function of psyche as a self-regulating system is indicated across the data set and referenced throughout the literature (Jung, 1995; Storr, 1998; Stevens, 1995). The purpose of the dream in compensating for a one-sided conscious attitude and the value of amplification through myths and archetypes which connect the dreamer to the “age-old templates” within were referred to throughout the data set in relation to the dream's purpose. These fundamental Jungian concepts are reflected in the literature as seen in Stevens (1995), Jung (1964), Berger and Segaller (2000) and Beebe et al. (2001).

While the participants shared a conviction that the human psyche can achieve balance through the interflow of energy and information between the conscious and unconscious levels via the dream, vision, ritual and imagination (Johnson, 1989), the data revealed that the

dream is still regarded by some as unimportant and merely an epiphenomenon of the psyche. The question of whether the understanding of psyche has changed since Jung (1990) observed a collective ambivalence in relation to the dream and everything connected to the unconscious (Schön, 2016) will be further explored in *Theme 3*.

### 5.2.2 *Freud and Jung*

As noted, an interesting finding emerged from the interview process when, without prompting, each of the participants made a positive reference to Freud in relation to the dream and included the enormity of his contribution in their feedback despite a personal preference for Jung's corpus, particularly in relation to his formulation of the collective unconscious and the dream as a symbolic communication. This finding indicates a healing of the split between the Freudian/Jungian schools and supports the later suggestion of a blending of therapeutic modalities which will be further explored in *Theme 3*. Four of the five participants had originally studied Freud, however, all five participants found Freud's attitude towards the dream as a condensation of repressed material to be reductive, and his focus on the personal unconscious to be limiting.

Fundamental differences between the Freudian and Jungian approaches to the dream have been articulated throughout the literature including Jung (1995), Stevens (1990), Storr (1998), Moacanin (2003), Berger and Segaller (2001), Beebe et al. (2001) and Schön (2016). Participants variously described the Freudian model's focus on a linear process of *free association* by contrast with the Jungian process which involves *focused association* to the symbol, also known as *circumnambulation*. Jung (1964) clarified: "[W]hile "free" association lures one away from that material in a kind of zigzag line, the method I evolved is more like a circumnambulation whose center is the dream picture" (p. 14). Giegerich (2015) further elaborates this uniquely Jungian concept of dreamwork of circumnambulation.

### 5.2.3 *Training in Dream Interpretation*

The issue of training in dream interpretation generated diverse opinions and has emerged as an area for potential future research. There was agreement across the data set with regard to the importance of therapists developing an *experiential* knowledge of psyche through engagement with their own process, or *self-analysis*. Lippmann (2000) observes that dream-analysis was synonymous with self-analysis in the early days of Freud and Jung. According to the data, a core tenet of Jung's analytical psychology maintains that one can only go as far with a client as one has gone with one's own process. According to von Franz, there is no such thing as a typical Jungian analysis "because every dream is a private and individual communication, and no two dreams use the symbols of the unconscious in the same way" (Jung, 1964, p. xi). In this way, every Jungian analysis is unique, a view which supports Jung's resistance to forming a rigid theory of dreams and is endorsed in the literature by Meltzer (1984), Greenson (1993), Moacanin (2003), Johnson (1986).

There was a mixed response to the concept of applying a structured approach to dream interpretation. One participant with experience as a supervisor of therapists in the integrative model felt that a more experiential focus on psychic processes would greatly benefit trainee therapists in growing the capacity for a more fruitful engagement with the dream in clinical practice. Singer (1994) proclaimed that one cannot *know* the unconscious, one can only *experience* it. In Freud's *Standard Edition of Psychological Works* (Strachey, 1999), he acknowledged that Jung was the first to insist on all trainee analysts undergoing their own analytical process. An experiential focus notwithstanding, four of the participants felt that it could be helpful for some practitioners to apply a structured approach to dreamwork. However, one participant refers to the vital importance of the *intuitive* aspect involved in working with the dream, and employs a medical analogy to describe the art of dream interpretation:

“You can teach doctors medicine, but you can’t teach them the kind of diagnostic gift that some doctors have.”

This observation suggests that while theoretical knowledge can indicate excellence in practice, the unquantifiable quality of intuition brings another dimension into play in any endeavour. Intuition is undoubtedly a component of a Jungian approach to dream interpretation, however it goes hand-in-hand with logical reasoning in the art of dream analysis according to Jung himself (1964): “[I]ntuition is almost indispensable in the interpretation of symbols” (p. 82). He continues with a warning never to rely on the “lucky hunch” of intuition alone that can lead to a false sense of security and declares that it is only possible to decipher the true meaning of the dream’s meaning once the intuitive knowing has been reduced “to an exact knowledge of facts and their logical connections” (p. 82). It can therefore be deduced that from a Jungian perspective both the rational and the intuitive dimensions are interdependent when working with the dream.

The literature likewise indicates mixed opinion on the issue of bringing a structured approach to dreamwork. One article by Eudell-Simmons and Hilsenroth (2007) proposes an Integrative Model of Dreamwork with a view to expanding the dream’s usefulness and relevance in psychotherapy by merging various theoretical orientations and models of dream interpretation “that would enhance and facilitate each other as well as enrich the therapeutic process” (p. 330). The proposed model, while innovative, represents the antithesis of a Jungian approach as it attempts to impose a rigid structure upon a natural phenomenon. In Jung’s words: “The art of interpreting dreams cannot be learnt from books. Methods and rules are good only when we can get along without them. Only the man who can do it anyway has any real skill, only the man of understanding really understands” (1990, para 153).

Divided opinion continues in the literature with Fordham (1991) and Johnson (1986) advocating Jung's fluid approach to the dream material, while Urbina (1981), Schön (2016) and Erikson (1954) argue that a proper structure is necessary for dream interpretation. It was noted in the data set that there are other ways apart from the dream to access the unconscious (this will be elaborated in *Theme 2*).

However, the research data suggests that training institutes are still reluctant to move beyond the theoretical towards a more experiential training model. This study has highlighted that training in dreamwork is currently inadequate to equip trainee psychotherapists to work with the dream, which would naturally account for a reluctance among young psychotherapists to include dreamwork in their repertoire of therapeutic skills. On the other hand, Lippmann (2000) has noticed that young analysts, no longer holding a rigid adherence to old methodologies, are more willing to "play" with dreams rather than depend upon a formulaic structured approach to dreamwork.

### **5.3 Theme 2: The Process of Dream Interpretation**

This theme refers to the analytic process itself and includes: how to proceed with the dreamwork in therapy; amplification of the dream; and alternative ways of working with the unconscious when there are no dreams presenting included in two sub-themes: The Analytic Process; and No Dreams? No Problem!

#### *5.3.1 The Analytic Process*

The application of dream analysis from a Jungian-oriented perspective was considered in the research. The data set revealed mixed approaches to the analytical process with three of the participants generally adhering to the Jungian model, one participant applies a structured approach, and another prefers "not to get stuck on any one way of working with the unconscious" even though the dream can be central at times. All five participants agreed

with the Jungian premise that the dream belongs to the dreamer who holds the key to meaning and the therapist must never impose an interpretation. Johnson (1986) refers to the inner work that is involved in the individuation process: “It is your *work*, rather than your theoretical ideas, that builds consciousness” (italic in original, p. 13).

Stein (1995) states that there are many routes to working with the unconscious in psychodynamic psychotherapy, but attention to the dream probably enables this process more directly than any other single therapeutic device. In spite of a preference for the Jungian model, the participants were magnanimous with regard to other approaches in the spirit of Jung’s “personal equation” which states: “[T]he psychology we believe in and teach is reflective of the psychology we *have* or, better still, the psychology that we *are*” (Jung cited in Giegerich, 2015, p. 304). There was agreement in the results that the approach taken with dream interpretation depends on one’s theoretical orientation. Eudell-Simmons and Hilsenroth (2007) reflect this opinion when they suggest that the universality of the dream experience allows for the dreamwork to be applied to any therapeutic modality.

The data generated an interesting result in relation to the arts as “cultural container” that can facilitate the expansion of consciousness and should be included as a component of training. This supports the concept of *Weltanschauung* (philosophy of life) which encouraged psychotherapists to expand their reference point beyond the personal dimension through engagement with culture and the arts. This concept originated with Jung and his collaborator Marie-Louise von Franz and was later referred to by Singer (1994). It was noteworthy that while two of the participants were trained as Jungian analysts, the three Humanistic-Integrative psychotherapists had come to a deeper understanding of the dream, *not* in therapeutic training, but through their own process work supported by relevant reading and engagement in the arts. Four of the participants had studied myths and archetypes and found

them to be invaluable to a Jungian-oriented dream analysis. One participant did not find the lack of an archetypal or mythological repertoire to be an impediment to the dreamwork. Stevens (1990), however, describes Jung's hypothesis of the collective unconscious and its archetypal components as highly significant since they bring dynamic psychology into the mainstream of biological science, establish continuity between the human psyche and the natural world, and serve to bridge the science of experience and the science of behaviour.

### 5.3.2 *No Dreams? No Problem!*

The data set revealed a number of potential obstacles to the dreamwork, for example, when a client has no dreams to report or alternatively brings too many to therapy. The issue of the "compliant client" was raised in the data, one who seeks to please the therapist by meeting a perceived demand for dream material. According to the participants, that would be cause for concern as an excess of dream material might risk "flooding the therapy", which would then become a therapeutic issue in itself.

The loss of symbolic thinking and an over-reliance on rational mind also arose in the data as potential obstacles to inner work that might create resistance towards the dreamwork as a meaningful process. This view was highlighted in the literature by Johnson (1986), Hopcke (1999), Moacanin (2003) and Berger and Segaller (2000).

A noteworthy finding emerged from the research indicating that the dream is *not* essential to the therapeutic process whether within a Jungian model or any other, even where the dream is considered to be the *royal road* to the unconscious. The data set suggested that there are alternative ways of working with the unconscious including active imagination, sand tray, journaling, physical symptoms, repetitive thoughts or words, resistance, projection, and the transference dynamic. Participants also revealed that although their particular preference was for the dreamwork, they would apply Jung's "symbolic attitude" to whatever material

presents in therapy in the absence of dreams. Jung (1964) himself refers to the value of working with neurotic symptoms: “Freud and Josef Breuer had recognized that neurotic symptoms...are in fact symbolically meaningful. They are one way in which the unconscious mind expresses itself, just as it may in dreams; and they are equally symbolic” (p. 9). An observation made by P4 sums up the tone of the data set in relation to the therapeutic process: “We work with what people can bring.”

### **5.4 Theme 3: Dreams in Psychotherapy – A Shifting Paradigm**

The third theme generated by the research and supported in the literature indicates that there are shifts occurring within the realms of psychotherapy in general and the dream in particular, and within science in its investigation of human consciousness. The research suggests that there are potential implications for the dreamwork in therapy. Each of these issues will be discussed under three sub-themes: Decline in Dreamwork; Future Models; and Science, Spirituality and the Dream

#### *5.4.1 Decline in Dreamwork*

There was consensus among participants that fewer dreams have been presenting in therapy in the past decade and this was confirmed in the literature by Berger and Segaller (2000). Lippmann (2000) also notes that interest in dreams and their interpretation has significantly diminished and suggests that the causes of this decline are many and complex but include a long-standing ambivalence within the domain of psychoanalysis towards dreams and their interpretation, a view repeated in Schön (2016). Lippmann (2000) asserts that object relations and more recently attachment theory have replaced the dream which was “more inclusive” (p. 630). One participant was briefly amused at the notion of a Jungian analyst *sans* dream, but fortunately this has not presented as a problem in practice. It was also suggested by the data that with the demise of the old structures as we knew them – those of

family, community, and religion – plus recent technological advances and the acceleration of consumerism, there has arguably never been a greater need for the dream and its healing potential. It was also suggested, in both the research findings and the literature, that science is emerging as the spiritual container of our zeitgeist with positive implications for the future of psychotherapy and that of the dream itself. This view is reflected in the literature by Haule (2011), Cheetham (2005) and Moss (2009) among others.

#### *5.4.2 Future Models*

The research suggests that the dreamwork might be reinvigorated within a changing paradigm of therapy and participants have noted a growing demand for short-term psychotherapy, a view also held by Warnecke (2015), Lippmann (2000) and Stevens (1997). Research participants collectively voiced concern about engaging with the potential complexities of inner work within a time-limited model of psychotherapy. It was interesting to discover that while participants initially felt that it would not be feasible to include dreamwork in a short-term model, they later reconsidered. Eventually they acknowledged the possibility of supporting the client's self-analysis by guiding them towards a deeper connection to the dream. The concept of including dreamwork in any therapeutic model, long or short, was endorsed by Stein (1995), Stevens (1990) and Lippmann (2000) in the literature.

The evidence from the research also indicates that a more blended therapeutic model is evolving to replace the old schools as "discreet entities" (Storr, 1990). There is strong evidence across the literature of a growing rapprochement between psychoanalysis and analytical psychology. Berger and Segaller (2000) suggest that Jung's concept of the unconscious psyche has infiltrated the therapeutic domain despite initial resistance. Similarly, Beebe et al. (2001) have noted an increased sharing of ideas between

psychoanalysts and analytical psychologists in the past decade, and they elaborate how Jung's theories of complexes, archetypes and personality types, plus his concepts of the Self and the individuation process, "could usefully supplement psychoanalytic conceptions of the process of the psyche in analysis" (p. 215). Roesler (2018) finds that in psychoanalytic circles dream interpretation is moving from a Freudian perspective towards Jung's theory of dreaming. Zhu (2013) finds that our understanding of dreaming requires greater integrative applications and suggests integrating cognitive and neuroscientific studies on the nature of dreaming with Jung's work on the value of the dream content to form a new theory of dream interpretation. Finally, Eudell-Simmons and Hilsenroth (2007) affirm the evidence of the data set that the universality of the dream experience supports a broader clinical use of dreamwork regardless of therapeutic orientation. As indicated throughout the data set, a Jungian-oriented approach requires the therapist to abandon all methods and techniques and enter into a dialectical procedure with the unique individuality of the other. The research data was also noted that this process anticipated the intersubjective nature of the contemporary therapeutic model which further supports the concept of an integrative approach.

#### 5.4.3 *Science, Spirituality and the Dream*

There are indications – supported by both the data and the literature – that while a rational mindset has dominated for over a century, a more balanced attitude is slowly emerging towards the rational and irrational aspects of psyche. Singer (1994), Samuels (2001), Johnson (1986), Lippmann (2000), Stevens (1997) and Haule (2011) variously suggest that there is a shift occurring in Western culture within the realms of human consciousness, therapeutic models, and dreamwork, leading us beyond scientific materialism to greater self-awareness. As an empirical scientist himself Jung was critical about the exclusively rational perspective of science. He insisted that the *irrational* experiences that we ignore or deny are

as important as the *rational* ones we revere (Haule, 2011). Stevens (1990) describes how pure reason which excludes the irrational from life “stifles the spirit and shackles the soul” (p. 264).

The term *psychology* refers to the study of psyche or soul (Warnecke, 2015) and in our time science is opening up new levels of understanding to enable integration of age-old divisions such as that between matter and spirit as discussed in the research findings. The need to restore symbolic thinking which would imbue the world with meaning was articulated in the data, and “unless and until we do”, as highlighted by one participant, the degeneration of our physical and psychic world will continue apace. Jung’s final warning was that the greatest threat to our survival is man’s own psyche, and his final wish was for mankind to realize the reality of the unconscious and take his own soul seriously (Hannah, 1976). The assimilation of dream material over time can lead to “the complete actualization of the whole human being, that is, individuation” (Read et al., 1973, para 352). As this research study suggests, scientists are now investigating the neuroscience of consciousness and expanding our conception of psyche (Warnecke, 2015). However, what matters is how we apply the consciousness we have, and towards this end our dreams will be indispensable (Stevens, 1995).

## Chapter 6 Conclusion

The aim of this research study was *To Explore a Jungian-oriented Approach to the Dream*. An investigation of the purpose of the dream was followed by an exploration of the process of dream interpretation. A variety of issues were identified in the data set as worthy of further attention including the contemporary approach to the dreamwork, the shifting paradigms in relation to psychotherapy and the dream, and an emerging alignment between science and spirituality which is opening new pathways for the dreamwork.

There was divided opinion in both the research and the literature on the issue of applying a structured approach to the dreamwork. The research has linked Jung's *personal equation* to the question of working with the dream and indicates that different personality types respond to different approaches. In other words, a structured model of dream interpretation may benefit a particular type of psychotherapist who might not relate to the more intuitive nature of the Jungian-oriented model. However, it was also suggested that intuition can be developed over time and with practice.

The results of this research also indicate that although dreams are a most valuable tool they are not essential to the process of investigating the unconscious psyche. Self-realization (the process of individuation, personal growth and development) is the most important focus in psychotherapy, and can be facilitated by many routes including the *royal road* of the dream.

This research study indicates that there has been a decline in dream presentation in the past decade for a variety of reasons. Additionally, there appears to be a paradigm shift occurring within the realm of psychotherapy in recent times with both integrative and short-term

models of psychotherapy usurping the position held by former *schools*. The research suggests that it would be possible to integrate a Jungian-oriented approach to the dreamwork within any therapeutic model as a tool for *self-discovery* when combined with any route that supports the expansion of consciousness such as reading, cultural activities and the arts.

According to the research findings, the potential for the dreamwork as a vessel for transformation has moved beyond the realm of personal development and become a collective imperative. Jung warned that psyche is the greatest problem of our time which we ignore at our peril (Jung, 1995). His life's work provides a bridge between the scientific-intellectual aspects of life and the religious/non-rational aspects (Singer, 1994). This viewpoint is articulated throughout the data. Science is at a crossroads with quantum physics and neuroscience now bridging the gap to the spiritual dimension (Stein, 1995; Haule, 2011). In keeping with Jung's concept of compensation, mankind's attachment to the rational will inevitably give way to a re-balancing of a one-sided attitude as suggested by the data set. Dreams bring to psychotherapy an opportunity to transcend the ego-determined view (Wylie, 1995). A re-balancing of mankind's attitude to the rational and non-rational dimensions of psyche will make space for the transcendent in our experience, and thus enable a more conscious engagement with the dream.

## **6.1 Strengths of the Research**

The mix of distinctive but compatible therapeutic approaches of the five participants added an interesting flavour to the data and the quality of the engagement with the question set made for a stimulating process and a sufficient diversity of response. A gender mix was achieved and the mature experience of the participant group lent itself to a rich data set illuminating a number of areas for potential future research.

## **6.2 Limitations of the Research**

It is possible that what was a strength of this research may also have been a weakness. Including Jungian analysts in the research brought a high quality response in relation to the aim, but may have biased the result. Working with a more homogenous sample might have allowed for even more diversity in response to the question set. A thorough investigation of some of the questions that have arisen here is beyond the scope of this research and would require a much broader sampling.

## **6.3 Areas for Future Research**

The diversity of response from both the participants and the literature in relation to a structured approach to dream interpretation suggests opportunities for further investigation. While there are many models proposed for imposing a structure on the dreamwork, they do not appear to include sufficient regard for the nature of the dream itself. Attending to Jung's injunction that the more we work on a dream the more we risk distorting it (Stein, 1995), further research could be undertaken to reinvigorate a structure of analysis which preserves the integrity of the dream, holds the dreamer at the centre of the process, and thus reflects the essence of a Jungian-oriented approach to the dreamwork (as outlined in Singer, 1994, and Johnson, 1986). The possibility of incorporating a structure to the dreamwork that could be applied to long or short-term models of psychotherapy has been indicated as an area for future research.

Further investigation is indicated to assess the value of including a more experiential approach to psyche and self-analysis within therapeutic training to enable psychotherapists to easily integrate the dream as a valuable tool in clinical practice.

#### **6.4 Implications for Therapy**

The exclusion of C.G. Jung from training programmes in psychodynamic psychotherapy poses questions about the willingness of contemporary training institutes to embrace a holistic approach to the inner work involved in the practice of psychotherapy.

Trainee therapists could engage in experiential training in dream analysis as a valuable tool in their therapeutic repertoire.

A Jungian-oriented structure for dream interpretation for trainee therapists would ensure optimal regard for safeguarding the integrity of the dream.

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### YouTube Videos

Carl Gustav Jung, "Face to Face" (1959), BBC documentary, interviewed by John Freeman, retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2AMu-G51yTY>

"The World Within: C.G. Jung in His Own Words" (1990) retrieved from: <https://www.jungiananalystvt.com/FilmTheWorldWithinCGJungInHisOwnWords.en.h...>

"The Way of the Dream: Marie Louise von Franx in Conversation with Fraser Boa" (2008), retrieved from <https://www.reddit.com>

"Carl Jung: The Wisdom of the Dream" BBC Documentary, 1998

## **Appendix 1 Information Sheet**

### **INFORMATION FORM**

My name is Darina Shouldice and I am in my final year of an MA in Psychotherapy at Dublin Business School. I am writing to ask if you would be willing to take part in my research project entitled:

#### **An Exploration of a Jungian-oriented Approach to The Dream in Psychotherapy**

I will be exploring the views of psychotherapists who work with a Jungian-oriented approach to The Dream within a Humanistic-Integrative model of psychotherapy.

#### **What is Involved?**

If you agree to participate in this research, you will be invited to attend an interview with myself in a setting of your choice and at a mutually convenient time during the coming month. The interview should take no longer than an hour to complete. I will ask you a series of questions relating to the research question and to your own work. Upon completion of the interview I will request to contact you by telephone or email should I have any follow-up questions or queries.

#### **Confidentiality**

All information shared during the research process will be kept confidential. All notes kept and any forms you may fill in will be coded and stored in a locked file. The key to the code numbers will be kept in a separate locked file. This means that all data kept on you will be de-identified. All data that has been collected will be kept in this confidential manner and in the event that it is used for future research, will be handled in the same way. Audio recordings and transcripts will be made of the interview but again these will be coded by number and kept in a secure location. Your participation in this research is voluntary. You are free to withdraw at any point of the study without any disadvantage.

## Appendix 2 Consent Form

### Research Title:

*An exploration of a Jungian-oriented Approach to the Dream in Psychotherapy*

### Please tick the appropriate answer.

I confirm that I have read and understood the Information Leaflet attached, and that I have had ample opportunity to ask questions all of which have been satisfactorily answered.

Yes  
 No

I understand that my participation in this study is entirely **voluntary** and that I may withdraw at any time, without giving reason.

Yes  
 No

I understand that my identity will remain confidential at all times.

Yes  
 No

I am aware of the potential risks of this research study.

Yes  
 No

I am aware that audio recordings will be made of sessions

Yes  
 No

I have been given a copy of the Information Leaflet and this Consent form for my records.

Yes  
 No

Participant \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature and dated

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name in block capitals

### **To be completed by the Principal Investigator or his nominee.**

I the undersigned, have taken the time to fully explained to the above participant the nature and purpose of this study in a manner that he/she could understand. We have discussed the risks involved, and have invited him/here to ask questions on any aspect of the study that concerned them.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name in Block Capitals

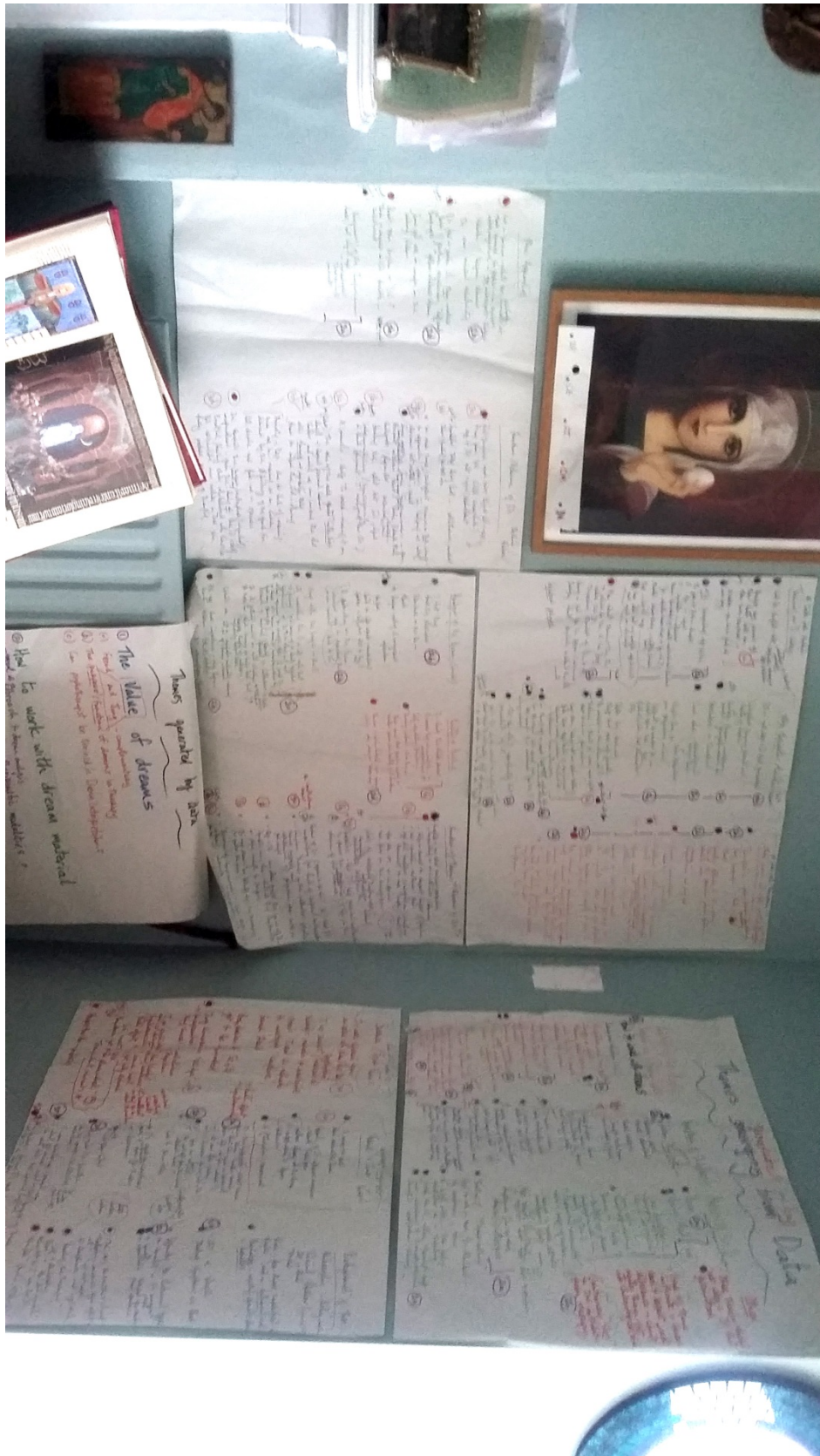
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix 3 Questionnaire

### Exploring a Jungian-oriented Approach to the Dream in Psychotherapy

1. What brought you to the field of Psychotherapy in general, and to Jung in particular?
2. What, in your opinion, is the value of dreamwork in psychotherapy?
3. (a) Are there other ways of working with the unconscious? (b) Would you consider them equally effective? (c) Why might a therapist choose to work, or not, with the dream material?
4. Can you describe what happens when a client presents with a dream, i.e. your specific approach to the dream material.
5. (a) In your opinion, is it possible to train a therapist in the art of dream interpretation? (b) Are there other approaches to dream interpretation that psychotherapists might use, including those who work from a Jungian perspective?
6. Have you ever experienced a client's dreamwork leading to therapeutic change or integration? (Has the dreamwork ever revealed a complex? Premonition? Solution? Big Dreams? Value of the 'common or garden' variety of dream?)
7. Have you noticed a shift in attention either towards or away from dreamwork in therapeutic practice in the past decade?
8. Do you think there's a place for dreamwork in (a) an integrative/blended model of psychotherapy; (b) And/or in a short-term, solution focused, model of psychotherapy? (c) Is an integrative approach to dream interpretation a possibility within this emerging paradigm?
9. Do you consider that there has been a strengthening of the relationship between science and spirituality in recent times? If so, are there implications for the dreamwork in therapy?
10. Can you think of anything further that's relevant to this topic that hasn't been covered?

## Appendix 4 Coding by Hand



## Appendix 5 Coding on Screen

ak Okay, so when a client presents with a dream, we sort of generate [??] the dream and we sit with that for a little bit till the feeling of the dream comes up. So then I will ask them first what their feeling is, and I will try and put myself in what Keats called negative capability, you know, which is one tries to empty out any ego thing from grabbing, you know, like, the ego wants to say, Oh, I know what that means. So I try to empty that out and pick up exactly what the they're unconscious is trying to communicate in a way where my own framework doesn't interfere. Do you see? Yes, including a Jungian framework. There is nothing ya know...

So you lay aside your ego...

Yeah, lay aside everything that I think is right, let' put it that way, to let this new reality emerge. And so that would be the container for the work. And then we would see what the dream, what the personal associations for the dream are, you know, so that it becomes rooted in the in the client's personal life, you know, to refer to and from there we'll go on to if there are archetypal themes, you know, which would then provide a deeper level for interpretation. So I would move like, well, I would move from the personal to the familiar, familial, which would be the, like, the parental or ancestral complexes to the collective, which would mean like, for instance, is the client getting entangled in a collective shadow, you know, or in collective issues which every society has, ya know, you know, so for our [????] psyche, it would be things like shame or not wanting to stand out or you know, things like that. And then I would see, is there any archetypal theme in this which would help to heal that? So that would be like the great mother or something, you know.

And is it important for you as a Jungian analyst to be well versed in myth and ...?

Definitely. Because Jung felt that the only way we could understand archetypal themes was through mythology you know and so we one of the best ways to be would be to read myths and to try and read them in the original rather than somebody else's interpretation because details get left out okay and

2.

Comment [DS21]: Feeling of dream NB

Comment [DS22]: Ther removes ego attachment to knowing

Comment [DS23]: So ther framework doesn't interfere (link to CB)

Comment [DS24]: Let new reality emerge...container for the work

Comment [DS25]: Cl's personal assoc to the dream

Comment [DS26]: Archetypal themes for deeper level of inter

Comment [DS27]: From personal to familial - parental/ancestral complexes

Comment [DS28]: Example: \*\*\*Complex healing via archetypal

Comment [DS29]: Myth and archetypal link

Add subtheme for 'Deeper levels' 2.2



## Appendix 7 Field Notes

interesting process, as in therapy  
past meeting - finding a way  
to the inter-subjectively, interpret-  
ative - settling in, measuring up  
then a considerable 'allowing'  
or being with the other.

I found ~~the~~ voice soothing and  
his articulation of responses  
but the mask perfectly in contrast  
to ~~the~~ whose responses veered off  
in directions that brought me  
inquiry of track at times.

It was a very pleasant encounter  
and I could imagine meeting ~~the~~  
again in professional circles - (while  
I don't anticipate further connection  
with ~~the~~ - I found ~~the~~ ego too much  
at play - and style 'affected')

The interview was smooth and  
completed within 50 mins.

~~the~~ should have names of therapists  
who might be worth pursuing for but

## Appendix 8 Interview Transcript (Sample Page)

