

Dream psychology- sigmund freud

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Dreams and the Sub-Conscious Mind The definition of a dream is a series of thoughts, images, and sensations occurring in a person's mind during sleep. It is believed that dreams have always existed in human society and have been shared among members of societies dating back to 3000-4000 BC. In various societies dreams held a number of meanings and significance.

Throughout history dreams have been recognized as significant symbols or signs, warnings of the future, connections between living and the dead, capable of diagnosing illness and predicting onset of diseases, temptations of the devil, and numerous other possible things. Dream interpretations, or attempts made to understand a person's dream, date back to 3000-4000 B.C., where they were documented on clay tablets. For as long as man has been able to talk about dreams, humans have been fascinated with them and have strived to understand them, though this is challenging because dreams are often so easily forgotten.

Throughout the history of the study of dreams, famous theorists have presented their own dream philosophies and theories, developed eight specific categories of dream types, and presented many dreams found commonly among people which represent common aspects of life, all of these things have been developed in trying to answer one question: Do dreams reflect, or relate to, a person's sub-conscious state of mind? First, the most famous of all dream theorists is a man named Sigmund Freud, who lived from 1856-1939 and is considered to be "the father of psychoanalysis" (Dream Moods). Freud revolutionizes the study of dreams with his work *The Interpretation Of Dreams*. Freud begins to analyze dreams in order to understand aspects of personality as they relate to pathology, or the science of

causes and effects of diseases. He believes that nothing one does occurs by chance; every action and thought is motivated by the unconscious at some level. In order to live in a civilized society, humans have a tendency to hold back urges and repress impulses. However, these urges and impulses must be released in some way; they have a way of coming to the surface in ambiguous forms.

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Freud believes that one way these urges and impulses are released is through dreams. Because the content of the unconscious may be extremely disturbing or harmful, Freud believes that the unconscious expresses itself in a symbolic language. To explain this symbolic language, Freud categorizes aspects of the mind into three parts. These parts include the Id, the Ego, and the Superego. Id, which is centered around primal impulses, pleasures, desires, unchecked urges and wish fulfillment.

Ego, which is concerned with the conscious, the rational, the moral and the self-aware aspect of the mind. Superego, which is considered to be the sort of “ censor” for the id, which is also responsible for enforcing the moral codes of the ego. When one is awake, the impulses and desires of the id are suppressed by the superego. Through dreams, one is able to get a glimpse into the unconscious, or the id. Because one’s guards are down during the dream state, the unconscious has the opportunity to act out and express the hidden desires of the id.

However, the desires of the id can, at times, can be so disturbing and even psychologically harmful that a “ censor” comes into play and translates the

id's disturbing content into a more acceptable symbolic form. This helps to preserve sleep and prevent one from waking up shocked at the images. As a result, confusing and often cryptic dream images occur. According to Freud, the reason one struggles to remember their dreams, is because the superego is at work. It is doing its job by protecting the conscious mind from the disturbing images and desires conjured by the unconscious.

According to Freud, dreams always have what he called a " manifest and latent content" (qtd. in moods). The manifest content is what the dream seems to be saying. It is often bizarre and seemingly nonsense. On the contrary, the latent content is what the dream is really trying to say. Dreams give one a look into the unconscious. Freud believes that it is possible to chip through the dream's manifest content to reveal the underlying significance and its latent by utilizing the technique of " free association".

Using this technique, one must start with one dream symbol and then follow with what automatically comes to the mind first. One must continue in this manner and essentially see where it leads. In order to interpret the cryptic images of dreams, Freud divided the images into five major categories, or processes. The first being displacement which occurs when the desire for one thing or person is symbolized by something or someone else. The second, projection which happens when the dreamer propels their own desires and wants onto another person.

The third being symbolization which is characterized when the dreamer's repressed urges or suppressed desires are acted out metaphorically. Fourth, condensation which is the process in which the dreamer hides their feelings or urges by contracting it or underplaying it into a brief dream image or

event. Thus the meaning of this dream imagery may not be apparent or obvious. Lastly, rationalization which is regarded as the final stage of dreamwork. The dreaming mind organizes an incoherent dream into one that is far more understandable and logical.

This is also known as secondary revision. Essentially this is Freud's basic explanation of what dreams are and how one is to interpret them. Freud's dreampsychology is heavily based on psychoanalysis and is centered on the fact that dreams do in fact reflect the sub-conscious mind of the dreamer. Another dream theorist, who lived during the time of Freud, Alfred Adler (1870-1937), believed the importance of dreams to be a little different than Freud's beliefs. Essentially, Adler believed that dreams are an important tool to mastering control over waking lives.

They are problem-solving devices. Dreams need to be brought to the conscious and interpreted so that better understanding can be shed on one's problems. Adler believes it is important to learn from dreams and incorporate them into waking life. Adler believes that there is a correlation between dreams and the problems in daily life. The more dreams one has, the more problems one is likely to have. Adler believes that dreams are an open pathway toward one's true thoughts, emotions and actions. In dreams, one clearly sees one's aggressive impulses and desires.

Dreams are also a way of overcompensating for the shortcomings in waking life. For example, if one is unable to stand up to a boss in waking life, then one may find it easier to lash out at the boss within the comfort and safety of a dream. Dreams offer some sort of satisfaction that is more socially acceptable. So, though Adler does not entirely agree with Freud's views of

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the subconscious controlling the dream, he does in fact believe that one's subconscious desires and drive are released through a dream.

A third dream theorist, Carl Jung, who was considered to be a mentor of Freud's also believed in the existence of the unconscious. However, he did not see the unconscious as animalistic, instinctual, or sexual; he saw it as more spiritual. Eventually, Jung split with Freud due to their differing views on dreams. According to Jung, dreams are a way of communicating and acquainting oneself with the unconscious. Dreams are not attempts to conceal one's true feelings from the waking mind, but rather they are a window to the unconscious.

They serve to guide the waking self to achieve wholeness and offer a solution to a problem one is facing in waking life. Jung views the ego as one's sense of self and how one portrays oneself to the world. Part of Jung's theory is that all things can be viewed as paired opposites: good/evil, male/female, or love/hate. So working in opposition to the ego, is the "counterego" or what he refers to as the shadow. The shadow represents the rejected aspects of oneself that one does not wish to acknowledge. The shadow is more primitive, somewhat uncultured, and a little awkward.

As dreams are a way of communicating with the unconscious, Jung believed that dream images reveal something about oneself, one's relationships with others, and situations in one's waking life. Dreams guide one's personal growth and help in achieving full potential. Jung also believes that the dream's manifest content is just as significant and revealing as the latent content. By simply discussing what is currently going on in one's life, it can

help one interpret and unlock the cryptic images of one's dreams. Jung's method of dream interpretation is placed more confidently on the dreamer.

He believes that all dreamers possess the necessary tools to interpret their own dreams. The meaning of one's dreams is a personal judgment and is up to the dreamer on how to interpret them. Jung noted certain dream symbols that possess the same universal meaning for all men and women. He terms this phenomenon the "collective unconscious". While dreams are personal, one's personal experiences often touch on universal themes and symbols. These symbols are believed to occur in every culture throughout history. Jung identifies seven such symbols in what is referred to as the major archetypal characters: 1.

The Persona is the image one presents to the world in waking life. It is similar to a public mask. In the dream world, the persona is represented by the Self.

2. The Shadow is the rejected and repressed aspects of oneself. It is the part of oneself that one does not want the world to see because it is ugly or unappealing. It symbolizes weakness, fear, or anger. In dreams, this figure is represented by a stalker, murderer, a bully, or pursuer. It can be a frightening figure or even a close friend or relative. Their appearance often makes one angry or leaves one scared.

They force one to confront things that one doesn't want to see or hear. 3.

The Anima / Animus is the female and male aspects of oneself. Everyone possess both feminine and masculine qualities. In dreams, the anima appears as a highly feminized figure, while the animus appears as a hyper masculine form. These dream imageries appear depending on how well one is able to integrate the feminine and masculine qualities within oneself. They

serve as a reminder that one must learn to acknowledge or express a masculine (be more assertive) or feminine side (be more emotional). . The Divine Child is one's true self in its purest form. It not only symbolizes innocence, vulnerability, and helplessness, but it represents one's aspirations and full potential. One is open to all possibilities. In the dreamscape, this figure is represented by a baby or young child. 5. The Wise Old Man /Woman is the helper in dreams. Represented by a teacher, father, doctor, priest or some other unknown authority figure, they serve to offer guidance and words of wisdom. They appear in the dream to steer and guide the dreamer into the right direction. 6.

The Great Mother is the nurturer. The Great Mother appears in dreams as one's own mother, grandmother, or other nurturing figure. She provides one with positive reassurance. Negatively, they may be depicted as a witch or old hag in which case they can be associated with seduction, dominance and death. This juxtaposition is rooted in the belief by some experts that the real mother who is the giver of life is also at the same time jealous of one's growth away from her. 7. The Trickster, as the name implies, plays jokes to keep one from taking oneself too seriously.

The trickster may appear in one's dream when one has overreached or misjudged a situation. Or he could find himself in the dream when one is uncertain about a decision or about where to go in life. The trickster often makes one feel uncomfortable or embarrassed, sometimes mocking or exposing one to personal vulnerabilities. He may take on subtle forms, sometimes even changing its shape. Overall, Jung seemed to be influenced by both Freud and Adler in his belief of the dream yet he presented common

dreams symbols which further explained the manifestation of one's sub-conscious mind within the dream.

Next, research and records of dreams further progressed it was discovered that there are essentially eight major categories which all dreams fall into. These categories being: daydreams, lucid dreams, nightmares, recurring dreams, healing dreams, signal dreams, and epic dreams. Daydreams are often viewed as light-hearted in nature. They are silly fantasies and wishful thinking. Actually, even worrying over things can be classified as a form of daydreaming. When one worries, one is visualizing an unwanted or negative outcome to a situation.

By repeating these negative images in one's mind, one is more likely to make them happen. Daydreaming is believed to occur when one is only semi-awake and it is essentially running away with ones imagination, or the take over one's thoughts by wandering sub-conscious mind. Next is the Lucid dream. Lucid dreams give the ability to control one's own dreams and steer them toward the direction the dreamer wants. In the lucid state, one is more willing to confront threats and as a result, become more self confident.

When one achieves lucidity, one can use it as a tool to improve one's sports game, to rehearse for a speech, to fulfill your fantasies, or to solve a problem in your waking life. Though lucid dreams often give one the power to face the things in the forefronts of one's mind, it is believed that the unconscious is what triggers a lucid dream and encourages one to assume this power. Third, is nightmares which are a subcategory of dreams. The distinction of a nightmare is its frightening and/or emotional content. One tends to wake up in fear in the midst of a nightmare.

Because of its frightening nature, one is more likely to remember nightmares and the vivid details. Nightmares are almost always believed to be caused by the sub-conscious mind as it the sub-conscious' way to get your attention about a situation or problem that one has been avoiding, warning of a health issue, or nightmares may stem from a deeper level indicating that something is troubling you from within your subconscious. Next, is recurring dreams, which are quite common and are often triggered by a certain life situation, transitional phase in life or a problem that keeps coming back again and again.

These dreams may recur daily, once a week, or once a month. Whatever the frequency, there is little variation in the dream content itself. Such dreams are often a message from the subconscious highlighting a personal weakness, fear, or inability to cope with something in one's life. Fourth, is Healing dreams are often dreams which tell the dreamer that he or she needs to go to the dentist or doctor. These dreams are often communication between mind and body that something is not quite right. Prophetic dreams, also referred to as precognitive or psychic dreams, are dreams that seemingly foretell the future.

One rational theory to explain this phenomenon is that one's dreaming mind is able to piece together bits of information and observation that one may normally overlook or that one does not seriously consider. In other words, one's sub-conscious mind knows what is coming before one consciously pieces together the same information. Signal dreams, are similar to healing dreams, in that they are essentially a warning. Signal dreams are considered

to be a sub-conscious warning or problem solving method to help the dreamer deal with situations in life.

Lastly, Epic dreams are so huge, so compelling, and so vivid that one cannot ignore them. The details of such dreams often remain with one for years. These dreams possess much beauty and contain many archetypal symbology. When one wakes up from such a dream, one feels that they have discovered something profound or amazing about oneself or about the world. These dreams are also often future telling or even present revealing messages from the subconscious mind. Overall, each of these categories or types of dreams are the development which has resulted from the theories of the above dream theorists.

Each type of dream is related to an archetype or belief of one, two, or even all three of the above theorists which reveals the large influence of the subconscious mind on dreams. Overall, it can be concluded that dreams are quite often reflecting of, or related to, the subconscious mind of the dreamer. This can be seen in all three of the major theories presented and through the eight major types of dreams which have been determined through said theories. For example, In Freud's theory, he states his belief that dreams are the subconscious mind's release of suppressed desires and ambitions of the dreamer.

Freud believes these suppressed desires must be released, so the mind releases them in the form of a dream, which can often be incredibly disturbing. That is, until the subconscious mind intervenes, turning these disturbing dreams into cryptic and symbolic images which can really only be understood through psychoanalysis of the mind of the dreamer. Adler's

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theory, similar to Freudian theory, but not entirely the same claims that dreams are essentially problem solving devices. Adler believes that through dreams the subconscious mind of the dreamer brings forward waking life desires the dreamer may not even realizes exist yet.

Adler states that the dream is used to make the conscious mind aware of what to do in waking life as it presents lessons to be learned from. Freud and Adler differ in that Freud believes the dream comes from the conscious mind and is edited and controlled by the subconscious, whereas Adler believes the dream comes from the subconscious and is to teach the conscious, and make it more aware. Lastly is Jung who believes all dreams share in a number of specific archetypes and are a way of communicating and acquainting oneself with the subconscious.

Jung's theory differs the greatest from Freudian theory and Adler's theory as Jung believes the conscious and subconscious mind come together in a dream, and work together to create images which express the psychological state, and views of the dreamer. Overall, each of these three theorists and the eight categories of dreams which resulted from their studies have revealed that the subconscious mind of the dreamer has great influence on dreams and that the subconscious, no matter what the dream, plays a major role in some aspect of the creation or portrayal of the dream.