

MAPPING DREAMS

THE HADEN INSTITUTE METHOD FOR WORKING WITH DREAMS INDIVIDUALLY

1. Write the dream in the first person in the center of the page with wide margins on both sides for notes. (An option is to use a separate page for notes if the dream is already written in your journal. When you write the dream in your journal, you may want to either write it in the middle of the page or write it on the left hand pages leaving the right hand pages blank for notes.)
2. What is the setting of the dream? Put “the setting’ with your description of your setting in the upper left hand margin. Mark the stages of the dream with Roman numerals and titles.
3. What is the feeling tone of the dream? How do you feel after the dream? Mark these feelings down in the left hand margin. Where is the energy in the dream? Mark with an “E”.
4. Who is in the dream? Circle all of the people in the dream. Draw a simple circle around people of the same sex (often your shadow) and a jagged circle around people of the opposite sex (your anima/animus). Draw a line from each one to the right margin and describe what they are like. Then ask yourself, “Where am I like that?” Do this with each person. In describing what they are like, use the first thing that comes to your mind, but also particularly describe their personality. Have any of these people occurred in other dreams? What was going on in that dream?
5. Put a square around any animals in the dream. Draw a line to the margin and write down the characteristics of that animal and the particular emotion the animal is projecting in your dream or what emotion you associate with that animal. Since it is an animal, the emotion will probably be on the instinctual level. See if you can become aware of those animal feelings within you. You may want to read up on that particular animal in nature and mythology books. Have any of these animals occurred in other dreams? What was going on in that dream?

6. Underline the objects in the dream (like a house or a road). You might want to research the meanings those objects can have in dreams as well as any personal associations you have with that object. Again, ask what that object is like and what its function is in the dream. Particularly note if it is odd in any way or doing something uncharacteristic. Remember that objects in dreams are also a part of you and ask yourself the question, “What part of me does that represent?” Have any of these objects occurred in other dreams? What was going on in that dream?

7. Go through the exercise of expressing the dream symbolically, i.e., “My anima and another anima aspect of myself and I were in a room with my shadow.” Just by expressing it symbolically in Jungian terms, additional knowledge will probably pop into your head.

8. Where is the tension in the dream? Try to distinguish the two sides of the tension. Give each side of the tension a name. Which one seems to be the “underdog” and which one seems to be the “overdog”? One way to dialogue with tension is to get the “underdog” and “overdog” in dialogue with each other. You can do this in a journaling fashion starting with the “underdog” ask the “overdog” a question and having the “overdog” respond. Continue this and see what happens. Normally the “underdog” will come up to a par with the “overdog” and a good Gestalt would have happened within your own soul. This dialogue can also take place with two chairs facing each other where you start sitting in one chair as either the “underdog” or “overdog” and move back and forth as you continue to dialogue. You may also wish to have a Gestalt dialogue between any figure in the dream and yourself.

9. What title would you put on the dream? Put a title at the top of the dream. How does the dream end? Write down how it ends at the end of the dream. What action does the dream call for it any? It may be calling for a concrete action like “taking a serious look at my vocation” or “slow-down” or the action called for may be symbolic, like putting a symbol from your dream on your refrigerator or painting a picture of the dream or being aware of birds which remind you of the dream.

10. It can also be helpful to express your dream in any art or expressive form. Look for humor. There is a lot of humor that occurs in dreams. Sometimes we need to just laugh at it, and at other times, it is at a point of key meaning for us. See what meaning it has for you. The dream may also call for extensive research on anything that occurs in your dream with high energy that you do not know anything about.

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