

The Dream Master and the Pathologos

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Those who are led through our way of exploring dreams gain an understanding of themselves, their reality, and the profound nature of the role of the Dream Master. This approach is philosophical rather than psychological because it is a non-interpretive method that draws all the material for the exploration and analysis from the subject, bringing a recognition of how false beliefs are at the basis of one's problems. The conclusions reached through this method are tested and verified when they are applied to the individual's own experience. Thus, the exploration of each dream takes the form of a structured dialogue designed to uncover a subject's belief system and as such it is a rational method.

Analyzing the content of many people's dreams brings the realization that man is only partly aware in his waking life of the problems, failures, as well as the victories of his waking life. In the waking world that means that dreams play a vital complementary role in man's psychic life. Equally, since the method of analysis makes this conclusion obvious, the method itself plays a critical role in dream work. For, in learning about dreams the dreamers learn not only about their personal lives, but learn a method of analysis that has far-reaching consequences. Once the method becomes second nature to dreamers, they apply it to other areas of their lives and learn to anticipate the occurrence of problems, find themselves more fully aware in their lives, and recognize more fully what they had previously ignored.

Dream analysis shows that dreams often carry a theme across many dreams, that there is a significant linkage between dreams, and that later dreams correct or modify the conclusions made in earlier dream analysis. The dreamers learn that the maker of dreams must be aware of the dreamers' personal past since it uses their past history as the material for the dream; that it can artfully select key images from their past to represent the message of the dream; that it has a grasp of what they themselves have ignored from their waking world and reminds them of its significance both in terms of their present life as well as its implications on their past history. The dreamers realize that the maker of dreams must be awake to their life and is even awake in their life in a way that they themselves are not. This brings a greater realization to the dreamers that something beyond them, that is yet present to them, has an intelligibility that works for their personal good and, hence, is providential in its vision. This maker of dreams we call the Dream Master because its mastery is profound in its understanding and most artful in its production.

The dream master presents a special kind of problem to the dreamer, for the failures and successes that are ignored in the waking world become the subjects of the dream. The analysis of dreams discloses this special kind of problem as having its roots in beliefs about oneself that have been formulated in our early youth but which were never articulated and therefore cannot be recalled by the believer. These beliefs have their origin in early experiences in one's youth, during occasions when families disclose their

fundamental and emotionally held beliefs about life, about themselves, and about family members. From them one draws one's own conclusions, in private, about oneself and the nature of reality. These beliefs are the root cause of our problems because these beliefs are always, in principle, false. These beliefs are never discussed in the family but live as milieu beliefs and taboos within the family. Invariably, these beliefs were shared when we ourselves were in the state of mind or approaching a success that threatened or challenged the beliefs of the family authorities. Thus, later in life, whenever we face analogous situations or states of mind that would threaten those family beliefs, we withdraw and find a solution that preserves or can be reconciled with those family taboos.

These beliefs are given the stamp of authenticity and are made believable because they were revealed by authorities who gave the appearance of being most caring, genuine and sincere. It appeared that they thought enough to share their fundamental convictions and, so, to reject the belief would be tantamount to rejecting them, leaving one to face the possibility of exile and loss of affection. Thus, while these beliefs shape an image of ourselves and our reality, they are, in principle, false and irreconcilable with our highest ideals. These false beliefs are called the pathologos because they are "sick beliefs." The pathologos' are the causes of our sense of dissatisfaction and failure in life. When one's possible achievements are in contradiction to these beliefs, then blocks are experienced that either compromise one's achievements or precipitate one's failures.

The dream presents these blocks and sets them within scenes that show their common dynamic and structure within the history of our life. Through analysis we can unlock those personal blocks to our achievement of excellence and come to a way of analysis that opens up the possibility of leading a more rational life.