

Association Method for Dream Analysis

"Eugene Gendlin's 16 Questions"

Jackson Snyder, January 3, 1993

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Step 1: Each question is asked and time is given for contemplation. The response is not to be *intellectual*, but rather stemming from a "physical felt shift."

"The basic touchstone of the method is your own bodily experience of something opening up in you."

Step 2: The dreamer is then asked to 'be friendly' with any discovered feelings, even if they are uncomfortable. Is there a direction in growth prescribed by the feelings evoked from the dream?

1. What are your associations in relation to the dream?
2. What did you feel in the dream? What in your life feels like some part of the dream?
3. What did you do yesterday? What were you inwardly preoccupied with yesterday?
4. What was the main place in your dream? Have you ever been in a place like that? How did it feel? What other place has felt like that?
5. Summarize the story-plot of the dream. What in your life is like that story? Summarize the events of the dream in one or two steps.
6. Who was the most important character? Were there unknown persons? What do these people remind you of?
7. As to the *characters*: What part of you is that? What feelings arise when you consider any particular character? What adjective would you use to describe that person? Is any part of you like that?
8. Imagine yourself to be a particular dream character. How would you feel and act?

9. Can the dream continue? Vividly visualize the end of any important scene of the dream. How does that feel? Watch and wait for any change in images or feelings.

10. *Symbols*: What is that kind of thing? What does that object stand for? What is it used for?

11. Could something in the dream (such as a house) be an analogy for the body? Could an attic mean thoughts or being in your head, downstairs mean lower level feelings or being grounded, a basement or underground mean the unconscious or something invisible? Odd-looking machines may be body analogies.

12. What in the dream is specifically different from the actual situation? Why would the dream make these changes?

13. What childhood memory comes in relation to the dream or any part of it? What went on in your life at that time?

14. How are you trying to develop? What do you wish you could be or do? In what way are you one-sided or not well rounded?

15. Could the dream be a story about whatever you are currently doing or feeling about sexuality?

16. What creative or spiritual potential of yours might the dream be about? Are you failing to take account of some of your human dimensions?

-- Robert L. van de Castle, *Our Dreaming Mind*, pp. 197-198.

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