



CHIRON  
ART THERAPY

# The Meaning of Dreams

Science and Augury

By Maggi Colwell, MS, ATR-BC

# Course Objectives

- Identifying the psychological purpose of dreams according to Carl Jung.
- Defining the Jungian terms psyche, Self, and complex.
- Describing the 4 parts of the dream including the threshold, the development, the crisis, and the lysis.
- Specifying the relationship of time to dream content as a macrocosmic model of the universe.
- Learning at least 3 methods for starting a personal dream practice.

# Ground Rules



- Feel free to ask questions
- Please do not share any personal dream content.
- Story of warning

Image: Susanna and the Elders, by Artemisia Gentileschi  
<https://aras.org/records/5ga.239>

# Hi, I'm Maggi

*"I don't understand why some kids don't like going to bed. I love going to bed! My dream life is just as important as my waking life."*

- Maggi Horseman, age 6





# Dreams and Ancient History

Dream traditions required training and divine inspiration in the Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Grecian, and Roman cultures.

- Artemidorus (2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD)  
Oneirocritica (The Interpretation of Dreams)
- **Other famous dreams:** Hannibal, Themistocles, Descartes, Socrates
- **Biblical Dreams:** pharaohs, Solomon, Joseph, Jacob, the Magi (The 3 Wise men), Pilate's wife.



Asclepius Healing a Dreamer  
(400 BC)

From the Asklepieion of Piraeus  
<https://aras.org/records/3ka.013>

# Carl Jung and Dreams



- *"We also live in our dreams, we do not live only by day. Sometimes we accomplish our greatest deeds in dreams."* –Carl Jung, *The Red Book*

# Carl Jung on Dreams

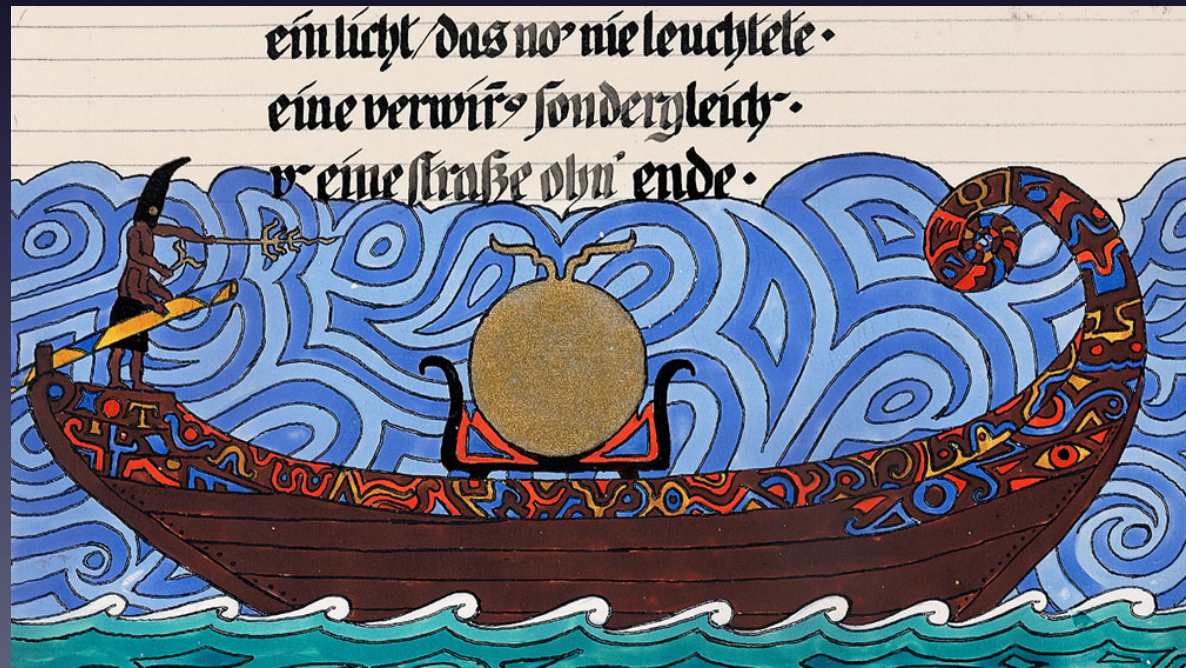
*"I must learn that the dregs of my thought, my dreams, are the speech of my soul. I must carry them in my heart, and go back and forth over them in my mind, like the worlds of a person dearest to me. Dreams are the guiding words of the soul."*





# Carl Jung on Dreams

*"Dreams pave the way for life, and they determine you without you understanding their language."*





# Jungian Terms

## Psyche and Self

The Self is the totality of the parts of the psyche including the personal unconscious, the ego, the animus, the shadow, complexes, and potentialities. The Self is whole and unchanging. The psyche is the whole of psychic processes (Jung, 1961).



# Jungian Terms

## Complexes

People hold within them patterns of energy within their unconscious that form around conceptions of how the world works. Complexes are organization themes within the mind around any given pattern such as memories, attitudes, emotions, and perceptions. Complexes are unconscious and can be emotionally charged. (Jung, 1959).

# Jungian Terms

## Archetypes

Archetypes are patterns of energy that make up collective unconscious (Jung, 1959). When a strong ego utilizes complexes generatively, the individual can tap into the archetypal and act creatively. When someone has a damaged ego, complexes can possess the person. The possessed person then engages in activities that are instinctual, reactive, and possibly maladaptive.





# Parts of the Dream

- the threshold
- the development
- the crisis
- the lysis



The Four Faces of Lokeshvara, Cambodia,  
<https://aras.org/records/7cc.001>

# Objective Ontology of an Image

Peter Pan  
Complex – the  
Puer Aeternus



## Adherence to the Image in Dreams and Artwork

Jungian analyst, Yoram Kaufmann, noted that, “the image carries within itself an inherent set of constraints, whatever one’s subjective reactions to it happen to be at the moment. When we relate to an image from a subjective point of view we interpret the image; when we relate to its objective structure we are translating it” (Kaufmann, 2009).

Kaufmann also stated that the innate power of the image is in understanding its mandates. In this, the image carries with it stored, archetypal energy. When the patient or client understands the symbolic meaning of the image, the complexed energy releases (Kaufmann, 2009).

Flying  
Dreams

# Coherent or Dissonant Images?

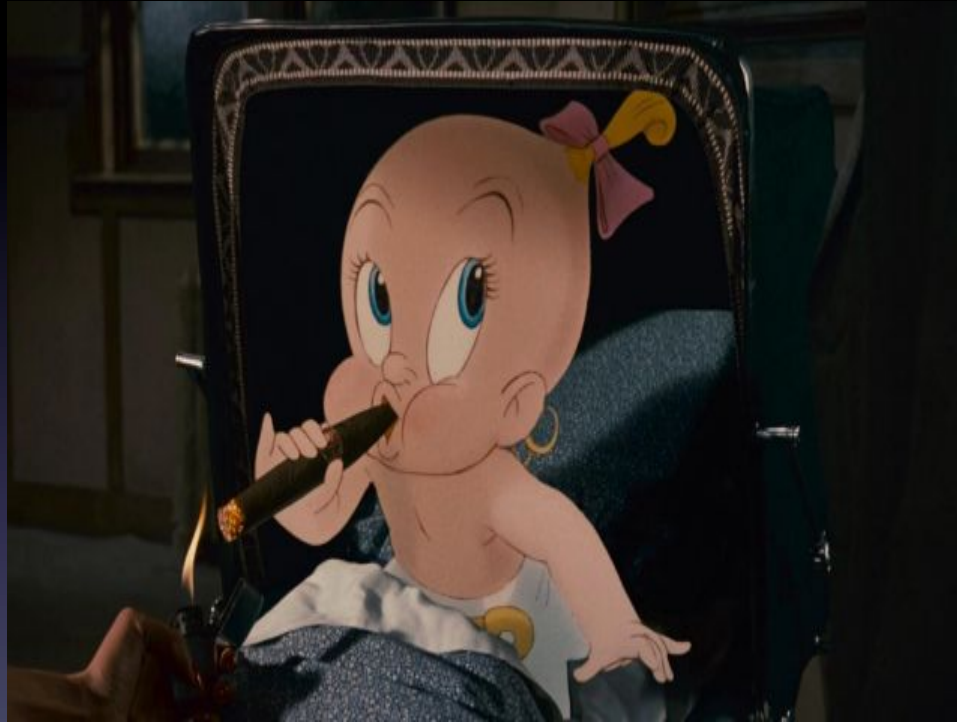




# Coherent or Dissonant Images?



# Coherent or Dissonant Images?



# Dreams and the Collective Unconscious

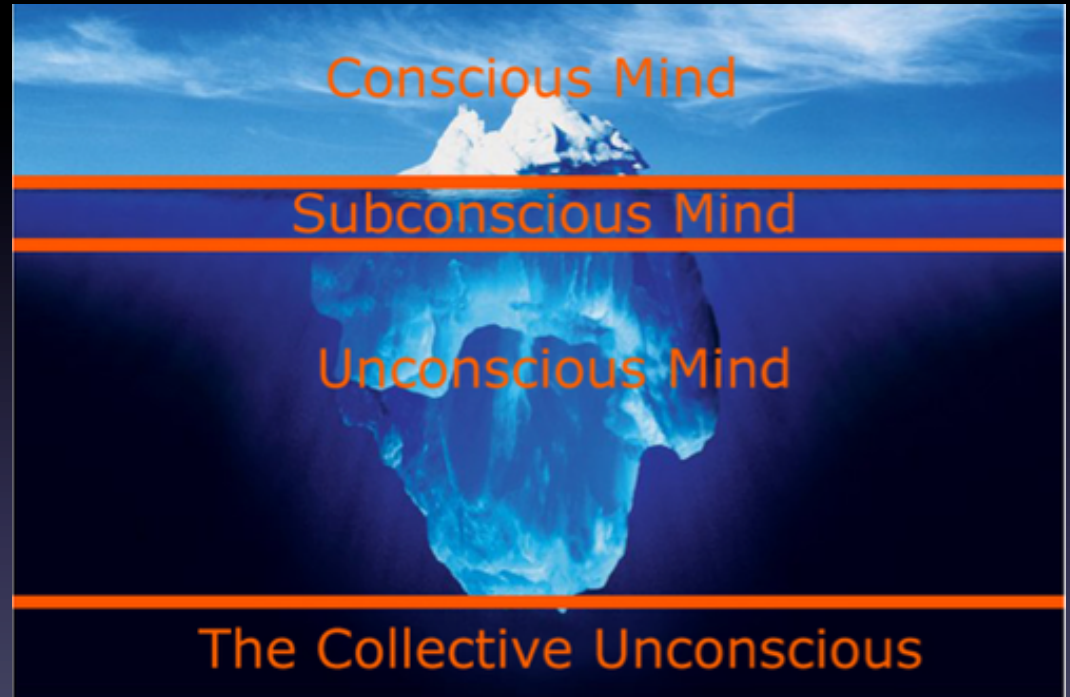
- Personal Dreams

## The Personal Unconscious

Jung called the personal unconscious the superficial layer of the unconscious.

## Collective Dreams

- The “Big dreams”



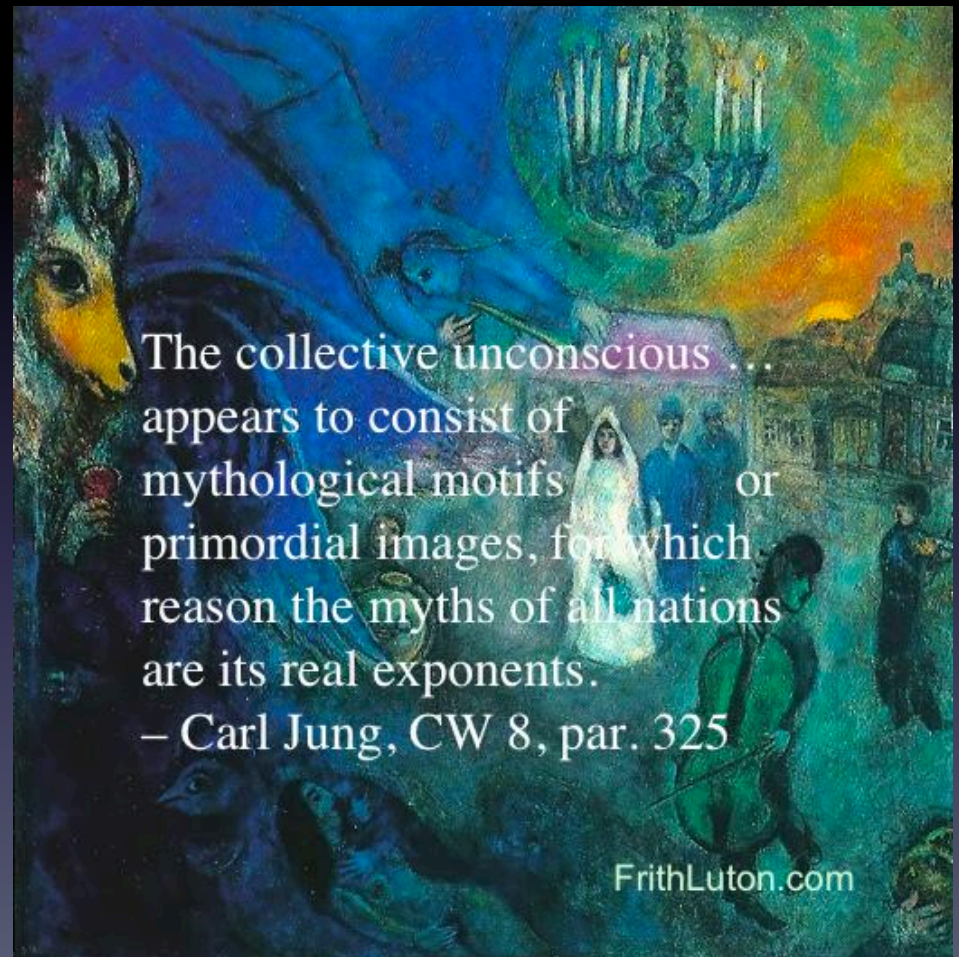
<https://personapsych2a.tumblr.com/post/99328933088/the-collective-unconscious>



# Dreams and the Collective Unconscious

## Collective Dreams

- The “Big dreams”
- May be cultural, ethnic, national, or universal.





# Dreams and the Collective Unconscious

*God as the architect of the universe,  
redering primordial creation with the  
help of the compass. Illuminated  
manuscript from the Bible moralisée,  
ca. 1250 France.*

<https://aras.org/records/bos.064>





# Dreams and the Collective Unconscious

"Alchemy, however portrayed the compass as an essential tool of the imagination in the process of the opus. The adept used the compass to "square the circle," in other words to discriminate the original chaotic unity, or *prima materia*, into four opposing elements that, through the process of the opus, could be recombined into a more integrated whole" - Carl Jung (CW 12:124).

<https://aras.org/records/bos.064>



# Dreams as Microcosm

- Dream content is a macrocosmic model of the universe.
  - Past, present, future implications
  - Innerworld, manifest outerworld, archetypal world, and analysis.



# Working with Your Dreams

- Setting an Intention – Self Programming
- Dream Journaling
- Dream the Dream Forward – Dream incubation
- Dream Pattern Analysis

# Questions?

Thank you!

# Keep in Touch!

- **Dream Group in Formation**
- <https://columbusarttherapy.com>
- Email: [maggi@chironarttherapy.com](mailto:maggi@chironarttherapy.com)
- Instagram: [@chironarttherapy](https://www.instagram.com/chironarttherapy)
- Facebook Page: Chiron Art Therapy  
<https://www.facebook.com/chironarttherapy>

