

six things to know before our
group dreamwork

based on Jeremy Taylor's Dreamwork Toolkit

1. *All dreams*
come in the service
of health and
wholeness

- Every dream comes *for* us.
“There is no such thing as a
'bad dream' - only dreams that
sometimes take a dramatically
negative form in order to grab
our attention.”

2. *Only the dreamer* can recognize the meanings of their dream

- “...a wordless “aha!” of recognition. This “aha” is a function of memory, and is the only reliable touchstone of dream work.”
- On some level, the dreamer already “knew” what the dream was about, and they can remember this in the process of dreamwork.

3. *There is no
such thing*
as a dream with
only one meaning

- This is one reason that working our dreams in groups - where everyone brings their own fluency with certain realms of significance (like relationships, health, spirituality, etc.) - can be so valuable.

4. *No dream comes*
only to tell you what
you already know

- Even though the dreamer is the one who will recognize the meanings of their dream, they may not *consciously* know the meanings at first.
- We need one another to ask questions and offer insights - to stretch us beyond what we're already conscious of.

5. *wisely and respectfully* owning our projections

- “When talking to others about their dreams, it is both wise and polite to preface your remarks with words to the effect of ‘in my imagined version of the dream...’ and to keep this commentary in the first person as much as possible. This means that even relatively challenging comments can be made in such a way that the dreamer may actually be able to hear and internalize them. It also can become a profound psycho-spiritual discipline -- ‘walking a mile in your neighbor's moccasins.’”

listening to a dream

- When you first hear or read someone else's dream, imagine yourself in the dream as the dreamer.
- You can ask questions to help fill out your experience of the dream.
- “Own” the fact that you're having *your own imagined version* of the other person's dream by speaking in first person. Something like, “What time of day is it when I'm walking on the road?”

how and why
we share
our projections

- We can only ever imagine our own version of someone else's dream. Any ideas we have about the dream are *projections* based on our own experiences and our own way of looking at things.
- When you share reflections, offer them by saying, "If this were my dream," and then speaking in first person, *even if the person who had the dream is different from you in many ways.*

how and why
we share
our projections

- For example, rather than, “Maybe this means you're still trying to baby your daughter when you should be letting her move on,” offer the dreamer, “If this were my dream, and I were the dad with a daughter about to leave home, I'd think filling the trunk of her car with little coats and boots is about how I'm trying to take care of her like I used to. I'd wonder if this takes up space she needs, and I should just let her drive away.”

how and why
we share
our projections

- Sometimes, these projections will strike a chord for the dreamer: an “ah-ha!” moment. Sometimes, they won't. By phrasing your thought in first person, there's plenty of room for the dreamer to take it or leave it.

how and why
we share
our projections

- I will gently remind us to stay with this approach when needed.
- I may also slow us down or ask for a pause to support the dreamer's personal process.

6. *Anonymity,* confidentiality, and safety

- Anonymity is our foundational agreement: Group members are free to discuss their experiences outside the group, as long as they don't share anyone else's name or other identifying information.
- If a group member requests complete confidentiality at any point, everyone agrees not to discuss them or their dreams outside the group.
- At the same time, we acknowledge that online communication is never 100% private. I ask that we each commit to not sharing anything that is essential to keep private.

thank you
now, to the dreams