

The Five Star Method

A Process-Oriented Competency Based Approach to Dream Analysis

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I. Share dream and feelings

Dreamer shares the dream in the first-person, present tense. Dream worker(s) identifies with the dreamer's experience, and shares feelings that may arise. Dreamer also shares feelings provoked by the dream, too.

II. Formulate the theme

In collaboration with the dreamer, the dream worker(s) summarizes the action in the form of a succinct theme. Avoid mention of specific images and names. Use generic nouns like "someone," "something," or "somewhere" to replace specific names, objects and places. Example: "Someone is trying to get somewhere, and encounters an array of obstacles blocking his way."

III. Highlight and troubleshoot dreamer responses

In collaboration with the dreamer, the dream worker(s) highlight and troubleshoot the dreamer's responses to the dream content. Highlight the responses (i.e. assumptions and reactions) that were made by the dreamer. Ask, "Where did the dreamer respond or react to the dream situations and characters?" Follow up with questions such as these, "Do you respond this way in other areas of your life?" "Is this a new response, or is it familiar?" "What was constructive about the dreamer's response?" "What was unfortunate about the dreamer's response?" "How could the dreamer have responded differently?" and "What do you think would have happened?"

IV. Analyze the imagery

The dreamer shares his or her associations with the images (amplification). The dream worker(s) can also provide associations and ideas, as well. As an added step, have the dreamer dialogue (role play) with dream images in order to enhance awareness and deepen the relationship with that part of himself/herself. The goal is to clarify the generic issue or unconscious agenda represented by the dream content. Also, the dream worker(s) and dreamer discuss any changes that may have occurred in the dream images in the course of the dream, and how those changes may have related to the dreamer's responses.

V. Apply the dream

Ask the dreamer, "What would you like to do differently if this dream, or one that presents you with a similar situation, should arise again? How do you think that affect the outcome?" Also ask the dreamer, "Where else in your life can this new response be helpful? Where are you willing to enact this new response?"