DreamGuideHub

Dream analysis worksheet

Explore, understand, act. A three-stage method for working on one dream, adapted from the cognitive-experiential model described by Clara Hill (2004). It treats you, the dreamer, as the expert on what the dream means.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Dream title (add at the end): _____

Stage 1: Explore

Write the dream in the present tense ("I am walking into a house...") Add the strongest feeling:

Choose 3 images that stand out (a person, place, object, animal or action). For each one, work through DRAW:

Image 1: _____

D Describe it in detail, as if to someone who has never seen it

R Re-experience the feeling: what do I feel as I picture it?

A Associate: what does it remind me of? What word or memory comes up?

W Waking-life trigger: where is this in my life right now?

Image 2: _____

D Describe it in detail, as if to someone who has never seen it

R Re-experience the feeling: what do I feel as I picture it?

A Associate: what does it remind me of? What word or memory comes up?

W Waking-life trigger: where is this in my life right now?

Image 3: _____

D Describe it in detail, as if to someone who has never seen it

R Re-experience the feeling: what do I feel as I picture it?

A Associate: what does it remind me of? What word or memory comes up?

W Waking-life trigger: where is this in my life right now?

DreamGuideHub

Dream analysis worksheet (page 2)

Take your time. There is no right answer and the dream does not have one fixed meaning. Notice what rings true for you.

Stage 2: Understand

My first guess about what this dream is about

Which angles fit? Tick any that feel true:

- ☐ Waking life: it connects with something happening, or a worry, hope or memory I have now
- ☐ Parts of me: each person or figure is a side of me (the critic, the child, the rescuer...)
- ☐ The experience itself: what it felt like to be in the dream matters more than any symbol
- ☐ Meaning and values: it touches on something bigger, like purpose, faith or a life choice

In one or two sentences, what I now understand:

Stage 3: Act

If I could change the dream, or write what happens next, I would:

One small thing I could do in waking life because of this dream:

A way to honor the dream (a drawing, a walk, a conversation, a note on the fridge). Optional:

For teachers and facilitators: this works well as a 30-minute pair exercise, one dreamer and one listener asking the D-R-A-W questions without offering interpretations. The dreamer decides what fits. If a dream touches on trauma, or distress rises, stop and point the person to a counselor or doctor. This worksheet is for learning and self-reflection, not therapy.

Based on: Hill, C. E. (2004). Dream Work in Therapy: Facilitating Exploration, Insight, and Action. American Psychological Association. Overview: Pesant & Zadra (2004), Clinical Psychology Review, doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2004.05.002.