

## **IMPORTANCE AND METHODS OF INTERPRETING DREAMS ACCORDING TO SIGMUND FREUD**

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The ancients regarded dreams not as a product of the dreaming mind but as something introduced by a divine agency.

Aristotle was aware of some of the characteristics of dream life, for instance, that dreams give a magnified construction to small stimuli arising during sleep. Sigmund Freud tries to prove that there is a psychological technique which makes it possible to interpret dreams and if that procedure is employed every dream would reveal itself as a psychical structure which can be inserted, at an assignable point, in the mental activities of waking life.

In this presentation, I attempt to bring out the following points. How does Sigmund Freud interpret dreams and what are the principles and methodology he uses for this? How does a dream become important in knowing a person's unconscious mind? To interpret a dream, he divides the dream into its elements and starts as a separate inquiry into each element. The dreamer will give certain pieces of information, which may be described as historical with a particular case history. By asking to tell what occurs to him in response to a particular element of a dream, while keeping an idea in mind as a starting point, we can enter into the free association area of the dreamer.

There are two methods used for dream interpretation namely Symbolic Method and Decoding Method. Though these two methods were used from ancient time, the way in which Freud uses is different. It imposes the task of interpretation upon the dreamer himself. It is not concerned with what occurs to the interpreter in connection with a particular element of the dreams, but with what occurs to the dreamers. Symbolic Method considers the content of the dream as a whole and seeks to replace it by another content, which is intelligible and in certain respects analogous to the original one. Decoding method treats dreams as a kind of cryptography in which each sign can be translated into another sign having a known meaning in accordance with a fixed key. But for Freud the piece of content may conceal a different meaning when it occurs various contexts. The situation is in fact more favorable in the case of self observation than in that of other people; at all events we may make the experiment and see how far self analysis takes us in the interpretation of dreams. But there are other difficulties to overcome; there is some natural hesitation in revealing so many intimate facts about one's mental life; but it must be possible to overcome such hesitations.

Dreaming is evidently mental life during sleep. Sleep is a state in which I want to know nothing of the external world in which I have taken myself away from it. I put myself to sleep by withdrawing from the external world and keeping its stimuli away from me. Then what is happening when we sleep is that our unconscious minds are awakening. It is reflecting as dreams, so by analyzing dream we can come to know what is the feeling suppressed into the unconscious mind. By letting the dreamer express the dream, we can bring him out of that suppressed feeling.