

In Touch Counseling Services
Gabriele M. Smith, MA

Intentional Dreaming Workbook

By Gabriele M. Smith, MA

Intentional Dreaming

www.gabrielesmith.com

Professional Counselor Gabriele M. Smith, MA

In Touch Counseling Services
Gabriele M. Smith, MA

A. A Brief History of Dreams

B. Introduction

C. Dream Incubation

D. Dream Retrieval

E. Dream Journaling and Analysis

F. Nightmares

A Brief History of Dreams

www.gabrielesmith.com

Professional Counselor Gabriele M. Smith, MA

Listening to dreams and following dream messages can be traced to ancient times. Historically the majority of religions had considerable respect for dreams, regarding them as divine messages. They were considered the guideposts for major decisions people (in authority) needed to make regarding family, community or state affairs.

Learning to do your own dream interpretations can provide rich opportunities for personal growth. Dreams are a reflection of your own thoughts and feelings. They are personal. They reflect your actions, your life settings and your emotions. Because dreams show the inner psychological process, dream work has been done with trauma victims.

Lucid dreaming is one technique that specialist's use, which we refer to as lucid dreaming. Lucid dreaming is being aware of dreaming while dreaming. It is a way to neutralize harmful effects of the nightmares and provide a sense of control for the individual.

When many people think of dream analysis they think of

being in a group. Although it has been traditionally done in-group settings, dream analysis and can be done in individual sessions. Intentional dream work is about the search for meaning.

Introduction

This isn't a book that is going to tell what the images in your dreams mean nor does it assume to know more about your dream images than you do. It does however explain the process; how to increase your dreaming, how to recall and remember your dreams. It will give you techniques for looking at and figuring out what it means to you when you dream of flying cars or your teeth falling out. This is a workbook, a place to record your dreams (thoughts) all in one place.

I have been listening to and following my own dreams for a very long time, since childhood. What prompted me as a child to pay attention to dreams and record them was not a particular event. I had some out of body dreams, similar to lucid dreams, and some flying dreams. When these dreams would happen, I would wonder what they meant.

Was I losing my mind? What was happening? Did others experience this? What did the dreams mean? And more

importantly, how could I make them happen again, directing them at will? I began to research, reading everything I could get my hands on at my local public library trying to find answers.

Fascinating Dreams

I have always been fascinated by dreams and the core beliefs or the deep thoughts we hold about ourselves, others and the world. Core beliefs are all the bad habits, thoughts, feelings and emotional reactions to events that we have created in our lives. I have found major life changes can occur from the discovery of our core beliefs. For example, I have tried many things to break the childhood habit of biting fingernails: I had tried the rubberband around the wrist, the bitter solution on fingernails, manicures, acrylic nails and hypnosis. None were successful. I decided to try intentional dreaming, focusing on the source of the bad habit/symptom. All the other attempts were aimed at eliminating the symptoms of the fingernail biting.

After this dream and the resulting “ah ha”! I had the sensation of a coil releasing, an unwinding. I no longer had the urge to bite

fingernails from that moment forward.

Locked room dream.

I am somewhere and there are people in a room gathered in a group. There are other rooms I think, but I am not in any of the rooms. I am standing on the outside of a room. The door is locked with me on the outside trying to figure out the lock to the door. I do not have a key. However, I start to take the lock apart disassembling it and opening the door to see the room full of people together in a circle. In the room, there are people in a circle together with a leader or someone in charge. They are all close together, talking.

This is dream I had after I had incubated focusing on a habit that I had tried for over twenty years to break. I had tried everything, behavior modification, hypnosis, I had therapy but it persisted. I had tried to stop the symptom and now I focused on why I might be doing that bad habit of nail biting. I had never felt nervous or anxious so I never believed that was the reason.

As I analyzed the dream I immediately had an “ah-ha” and a

physical sensation it felt like a releasing, an uncoiling of a spring. I stopped biting that morning and although I go through periods of nibbling, it has never the same. I felt different, understanding the source of that symptom. I had never felt part of any group/family for has long as I could trace the feeling back to childhood. I did not have the key but had the knowledge to pick out the lock circumventing the need for the key. I had reached a core belief.

Exercise 1: Habits to change.

List some habits you would like to change.

Create New Beliefs

www.gabriele-smith.com

Professional Counselor Gabriele M. Smith, MA

Intentional dreaming is one way to find these core beliefs and create new beliefs. Intentional dreaming bypasses the defenses to prevent the activation of limiting beliefs. These shifts can result in an instant insight and behavioral change. Bad habits and stress symptoms often point toward our limiting core beliefs. These are the core beliefs that are preventing you from achieving fulfillment, happiness and your fullest potential. Ideas or thoughts you unwitting hold prevent you from taking action, being happy, losing weight, succeeding, or meeting the life goals you have set for yourself. You can change your behavior. At last you hold the key. Dreams are the easiest way to access core beliefs.

Childhood Dreams

I had begun to pay close attention to my dreams as a child. I noticed some patterns and curious coincidences that occurred with my nightly dreams. I read many books, trying to figure out such crazy things. I was intensely interested as I noticed that fragments of my dreams were often being played out the next day. Once, in grade school, I dreamed of a crow flying with a snake in its talons.

The next morning waiting for the bus, I saw a crow fly low

overhead with a dead snake dangling down its talons. What is the significance of this I asked myself?

I would remember dreams after a small environmental trigger- a sight or sound that would suddenly remind me of the previous night's dream.

Like the time I was riding in a car and someone during the conversation mentioned their favorite movie and I flashed to a dream I had the night before and had forgotten until that moment. I found many books that guided me well in my quest to find answers and some that were not so informative.

As I got older my research into the meanings and reasons for dreams widened to include various theories as to their origins. I developed a way of looking at and deciphering the messages appearing throughout my dreams.

Perspective

As one learns more about their core beliefs, one begins to question their perspective. Having gotten through life with one perspective and looking back with another, I looked around to see there were many different ideas of what the world was. For instance, a car accident witnessed by several different people will have several different versions. What was the one true event? Was there just one true event? Seeing clearly is what we believe we are doing when we look at and think about day-to-day life. We believe we are describing our world experiences as the facts have unfolded. However, the idea of objectively reporting what we see is not objective at all but rather subjective. We only see and experience the things in our world that fit in with our view. Finding your world a frustrating or disappointing place? Having trouble succeeding? Don't know why things happen? You will find out next, as I show you how to incubate a dream.

Emotionally “tagged”

www.gabriele-smith.com

Professional Counselor Gabriele M. Smith, MA

Here is a way to help you determine what you would like to address first. Find a quiet place to sit or lie down without distractions. Relax throughout your body. Tighten each muscle group and release the tension on your body. Breathe deep holding your breath for a while before slowly releasing your breath in a long slow exhale. Deep breathing is essential in helping to clear the mind. This relaxing meditation is a precursor to activating the daydreamer part of your brain. It is the same region from where dreams come. Thinking about your day today; what is the first thing that comes to mind? What emotionally gets your attention? Is there anything bothering you?

For example, I had a neighbor greatly bothered by the wind blowing the entire neighbor's trash into his yard. I helped him to discover the underlying thoughts he held about the garbage. The anger he felt was in response to his belief that it was disrespectful to him to have all this garbage in his yard, and why did he have to pick it up, it was not his. What is one of *your* pet peeves? Write down what comes to mind in Exercise 2.

In Touch Counseling Services
Gabriele M. Smith, MA

Exercise 2 : How to find what “tags” you emotionally.

Sensory Overload

www.gabrielesmith.com

Professional Counselor Gabriele M. Smith, MA

You can discover the fuller version of the day's events and activities by intentional dreaming. Dreams unfold before you nightly, can help you gain insight and a better understanding in your daily activities.

In our daily lives, we are under constant bombardment of stimuli. There are so many sensory items, details that would be overwhelming without an active filter from an underlying operating system sorting out the experiences of daily life. If you have ever gone skydiving, you are familiar with the idea of sensory overload. It is common for beginners not skydiving in tandem to jump out of the plane and forget to read the gauge readings and pull the cord. (Freezing up while will freefalling through the sky at 13,000 feet is not good for your health) Thank goodness for experienced instructor, who have learned to sort out the overwhelming sensory stimuli.

The lens in which we see and experience the world is this active filter. This filter is a combination of our thoughts, our core beliefs and value systems operating so we may continue day to day without the overwhelming sensory overload. Reach under the system of your conscious mind where core beliefs reside.

Here all judgments and observations are made. Through our unconscious filter, we select out or discard all the things that do not fit into our core beliefs. Dreams access information from this filter, helping you reach....

New Experiences

Uncover anew the experiences, the details you did not see, hear or remember in daily life that were discarded in the unconscious sorting process. Dreams are an inward journey inside to a dynamic flowing place where the unattended events of your life has been deposited. Dreams are nightly recordings of the inner self. In this place, there resides a reservoir of wellness, health, and wisdom of the higher self. You have your own personalized wise guru you can consult nightly. You can become aware of the limiting beliefs separating you from your life's mission and life goals. Happiness is at hand.

From the place where your intuition swims, you can build a source of knowledge to aide you in achieving balance and fulfillment in all areas of your life.

Dreams can solve problems, show you the big picture, clarify

and expose your core beliefs, discover your life mission and change the way you view the world.

Exercise 3 : Life Goals.

Think about your life. What is it you would like your life to be? Describing your life what do you wish to see? Write down your goals for 3 months, 6 months, 1 year, 5 years and 10 years.

Remembering Your Dreams

www.gabriele smith.com

Professional Counselor Gabriele M. Smith, MA

You may not remember your dreams but each one of us dreams. Dream recall is a skill and like any skill, with practice it can be improved. Remember learning to ride a bike? You began with a small bike, your feet easily reaching the ground. And then moving up to a bigger bike, using training wheels, helping you to keep your balance while you went faster and faster. Learning to remember your dreams is very similar. It is a skill and over time, you get better and better at recalling the dreams. Taking a dream analysis class, reading a dream analysis book or doing this workbook can facilitate the process. You can learn dream incubation. All that means is asking a question and receiving a response solution through a dream.

You have started on an exciting journey. I will prepare you to explore and discover more about the inner workings of your emotional and mental landscape. I will teach you how to dip into this reservoir of information from your day to day life. Dream analysis can help you do many things: figure out why you didn't get that promotion, how you can reach your life goals, how it is that you can't get along with Suzie or why you find yourself irritable, short tempered and gaining weight.

Exercise 4: Core values.

Circle the important value traits. This list is not inclusive, you may want to write any values not listed here.

Understanding	Success
Learning	Wealth
Health	Peace
Wisdom	Joy
Teaching	Mentoring
Compassion	Honor
Love	Bravery
Strength	Courage
Flexibility	Independence
Service	Autonomy
Humility	Helping
Sacrifice	Happiness
Well Being	Balance
Pleasure	Mastery
Spirituality	Personal Growth

Your Dreams, Your Life

Your dreams are a product of you and your life. They are the wisest part of you. A unique language designed and fitted to your personality. Dreams are picture stories. You can understand with a little practice. All the characters are you. You already have the solutions to many of your problems within you, let's go uncover them and find your limiting beliefs.

Your dreams are solution oriented. We are searching for meaning. Even though you do not remember a dream, it will still have emotional impact on your day.

Dreams address the cultural influences. We all have common objects, images, labels and symbols that we use and describe. However, the meaning of each picture or image is constructed solely for you by you with your preconceived thoughts and emotions. For example, a white dog means to me a companion, noble and pure, a loyal protector. However, the nuances are different for each individual. If you owned a white dog that died because of an accident, a white dog may represent loss, grief or guilt. You can easily identify the meanings.

These symbols are created and understood within the context of the individual's personal experience. This approach is empowering. For only you are the expert on you and your dreams. You hold the key to their messages.

Exercise 5: Image Decoder

Using the descriptive words, write down what comes to mind when you see each image. Example: dog - loyal companion, trustworthy, protective. Add your own everyday objects to the list, if you like.

Dog -

Cat -

House -

Tree -

Snake -

Car -

Truck -

Teeth -

Work -

Mom -

Dream Incubation

Incubating your dreams is more than just dreaming. It takes action. It begins before retiring for the night. It is the intentional process where you actively seek information from your dreams. You are creating a space to cultivate the knowing, and preparing to receive.

Begin in centered calmness and relaxation. Create a quiet place to rest. The space to cultivate rest should be comfortable, with no loud music or TV blaring, and at comfortable room temperature. Remove all distractions. Do the nightly chores of letting the cat out, sending the kids to bed and doing everything that needs to be done before retiring for the night. Get comfortable in the place you normally sleep. It is a good idea not to do daily activities such as eating or knitting in bed because we are conditioned by our routine. Save sleeping for the bed rather the sofa. This prepares you for the relaxing entry into sleep when you climb into the bed.

Formulating the Question

The question you want answered needs to be a single part

question. Be sure you really want to know. Mixed feelings and conflicted thoughts around your incubation question brings a dream with mixed or conflicted symbols. It isn't unusual for several nights to pass before you get an answer in a dream. If you can, ask a question that is emotional for you. This seems to create a more pressing need and shorten the response time. Do not get discouraged. You can do this.

Sometimes I do not receive an answer for several nights. Like the time I asked for help understanding the other person's perspective. Example: My sister was always moody when our family gathered at the holidays. Before incubating my dream I asked what does this person think? What does this person need? What am I reacting to? I then decided on one of these questions.

The first step in dream incubation is deep breathing. This is a diaphragmatic breathing or deep belly breathing. One way to tell if you are diaphragmatically breathing is to hold your hand on top of your belly while you breathe. Your hand should move up and down with each breathe. You might need to practice the deep breathing.

Begin with this muscle relaxation techniques to physically relax the body. Start at the tip of the toes moving upward towards

the head. Tighten each muscle. Make as tight as possible. Relax before moving on to the next muscle. After the physical body is relaxed, clear the mind and with each deep breath hold the incubation question in mind.

Asking the Question

The steps for dream incubation are as follows:

Set up the environment for a distraction free comfortable space.

Mentally prepare yourself.

Relax.

Deep breathing.

Ask a single part question.

Hold the question meditatively in mind.

Be confident, sure, you want to know.

Be direct in your questioning.

Go to sleep.

A final note for decreasing the environmental interference, have

no bright lights, have a pen and paper available for recording and a quiet peaceful place to recall and write. To ensure success use no drugs/alcohol, do not be overtired and lessen the time constraints. (Turn off the alarm if possible.)

Dream Retrieval

Remembering your dreams is something you can easily learn. Dream recall can be acquired and strengthened with a little effort.

Here are tips to remembering dreams.

Start with the ending and work backwards.

Write the entire dream including bits and pieces even if you do not think they go together.

If you don't remember the whole dream, only a part of it, that part contains enough information to decipher the whole dream. Go ahead and write this part down.

Lie still upon waking this increases dream recall.

Some dreams will not be remembered until you receive an environmental trigger. These are the moments in your day when you suddenly remember the dream, jotting down these triggers.

Give the dream a title. This provides a framework for anchoring the dream and remembering the details.

Journaling and Dream Analysis

With this workbook, you are starting a dream journal. Keep it along side your bed. If you do not have time to jot down the entire dream, you can write a few lines or the title. In journaling the dream, you are looking for patterns and themes. Attempt to recapture the mood of the dream. Note this along with the details. Write quickly as possible as this will circumvent the editor part of your brain. This editor can block the flow of dream images and hamper dream recall.

One method of dream analyzing is to speak it aloud alone, or discuss it with someone else. Another technique to use when you are struggling to understand and decode your dream is to talk aloud or discuss the dream and the images. The language we use in conversation is different then the language we use in writing and can often help to continue the dream analysis process when you are feeling stuck.

Think about and identify any relationship between the

feelings in the dream and other emotions being sensed or avoided.

Take another element of the dream and act out that object/person.

Write out what you are discovered. Dig for the emotional treasures in your dreams. Ask what do you feel in the dream? How did you feel when you woke up? Dream images often have emotional context. Yet we often avoid those emotions when decoding our dreams. They are another source of information for you as you analysis your dream.

Write as quickly as the ideas come, do not worry about complete sentences, spelling or punctuation. Writing quickly will help circumvent the editor part of your brain. The editor can block the flow of dream images and hamper dream recall.

You could also relive the dream. Use present tense to describe the dream. If you cannot remember a dream, make one up a dream to journal. This is still accessing your inner psyche, activating in the same region of the brain as dreams. Daydreams can be used as well.

Checklist

Here is a checklist for analyzing the dreams. It is important to go through the dream in the order of the dream. Use the points: discover the messages, meanings and solutions of the dreams you have incubated.

You start with the description of each object/character.

Are there recurrent objects/persons in your dreams?

Who was the main character and setting?

Who and what does this person remind you of?

Who were the other characters in the dream?

What are their characteristics and whom did they remind you of?

Describe in detail the setting.

Bridge the dream to your life by asking-where in my life do I feel like this? What does this remind me of?

Reflect on the dream as if you are all the parts and characters of the dream.

If you cannot understand your dream, begin the process all over again. Use the dream incubation method. Ask for clarification, if you have difficulties understanding the symbols.

How do you know when you are understood the dream?

Understanding a dream produces an “ah ha” and sometimes have a physical sensation in addition to the insight. You will know.

Nightmares

Your nightmares and scary dreams serve a purpose. It is not uncommon for people to have the same nightmare for years. One of the reasons nightmares persist is to have you attend to an underlying unresolved issue. This is what can happen when a dream message goes unheard. You can reduce the emotional residue of the nightmares through dream incubation.

Another technique is to go back into the nightmare. For an example: you stop running and turn towards the thing chasing you. Ask it what it is trying to tell you. Alternatively, you can go back into the nightmare and change the ending to one where you conquer the thing chasing you.

Another way to defuse the nightmare is to draw out the nightmare on paper. Increase your understanding and discover the message through pictures of what you experienced.

In Touch Counseling Services
Gabriele M. Smith, MA

Exercise 7: Recurring Nightmare. (Write out your nightmare here.)



Ending Nightmares

Tips to end the nightmares are as follows.

Name the nightmare.

Looking for recurring patterns.

Draw it out.

Incubate the nightmare asking for guidance.

Noting the age and life circumstances when they first started.

Noting events/time of your life when parts of the nightmare has changed.

Going into the nightmare to face the thing/chasing or whatever it is that is producing the fear while awake and change the ending of the nightmare.