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**-Summary:** The Interpretation Of Dreams is Sigmund Freud's seminal work on scientifically analyzing the deeper meaning hidden inside each and every one of our human dreams, which will help you make more sense of your own psyche.

The Interpretation of Dreams (German: Die Traumdeutung) is an 1899 book by Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, in which the author introduces his theory of the unconscious with respect to dream interpretation, and discusses what would later become the theory of the Oedipus complex. Freud revised the book at least eight times and, in the third edition, added an extensive section which treated dream symbolism very literally, following the influence of Wilhelm Stekel. Freud said of this work, "Insight such as this falls to one's lot but once in a lifetime."[1]

What will surprise you is that this dream is one millions of people have, all of the time and it's no coincidence. When our parents throw us into the air and catch us as children, it's that exhilaration we're craving deep down when we dream of flying in later years. Fascinating, right?

Inception might be a bit of a stretch, but what you can learn about your dreams in the real world still holds lot of potential for getting to know and improving your own psyche. And who better to learn it from than the founder of psychoanalysis himself, Sigmund Freud?

• Here are 3 lessons from one of his most important works, The Interpretation of Dreams:

- All dreams serve to fulfill our wishes, but most of them obscure which wish it truly is.
- There are three different sources for the "stuff that dreams are made of."
- Dreams are arranged through condensing, displacement and coherence.

★ **Lesson 1: Dreams always aim to fulfill our deepest desires, but they often hide which desire it is.**

To be honest I can rarely remember my dreams. When I do, I'm almost disappointed when the dream is about something really obvious, like me suddenly becoming super rich or successful. These kinds of wishes aren't special. Most people have them. There isn't much to learn.

Another obvious desire your dreams want to fulfill for you is being lazy. If you dream about relaxing, lying in bed all day or living at the beach, free from worry, the innate human longing for lethargy is at play. However, quite often, our dreams successfully mask the deep and sometimes obscure desires in our hearts.

For example, one of Freud's patients dreamed her youngest nephew Charles was lying dead in an open casket. When they analyzed her situation, it turned out the dream was about her suppressed love for a professor whose relationship with the family had gone awry. The last time she'd seen him was at the funeral of Charles's older brother Otto, one of the rare events they both attended.

Her only way to see him again would have been if Charles had died – so that's what her mind showed her. Crazy, right? That's why reading dreams is a bit like reading between the lines in newspapers where journalists are censored. You have to look for what's not obvious to find the truth.

✦ **Lesson 2:** The content of your dreams originates from three different sources. We often dream about what happened on the same day or the one before, but real-life events are just one of three sources of dream content:

- ① **Recent, real-life events.** Anything that happened in the past 24 hours, or even the last week. If you bumped into Mr. Gartner, maybe he'll show up. These often connect to other memories too, so you might dream about a garden you once visited, because Mr. Gartner's name sounds similar.
- ② **Childhood memories.** If we dream about it often enough, we might be able to identify definite, distant memories that ended up defining who we are. Freud's dad told him he wouldn't amount to anything when he was really young, so with each new success and award ceremony, dreams of embarrassing moments would come back.
- ③ **Bodily stimuli.** If you've ever had a wet dream, you've experienced this. But any physical influence on your body will transcend into your dreams while you're asleep. For example, if you sleep on a plane and it starts shaking, you might get dizzy in your dream.

There are lots of places to find "the stuff that dreams are made of." Now you know what it is. But how does your brain put it together?

✦ **Lesson 3:** Your mind structures your dreams by condensing, displacing and coherently arranging their contents.

Maybe you've heard the expression of "weaving dreams." Given the three types of "wool" used to create them and how your mind puts them together, that's actually not too far off. Your dreams get their structure in three ways:

- ① **Condensing.** Half a page of writing down your dream's timeline might require six pages of written interpretation. That's the power of compression. For example, if you see a new sports car you like and watched a spy movie three years ago, your dream might combine both and turn you into a racing super agent.
  - ② **Displacement.** Important matters are often represented in trivialities in dreams. You might be bored and unengaged at your job, but in your dream the only reference to that is that the license plate of your sports car reads "BORING."
  - ③ **Coherence.** No matter how different the actual events and memories, your brain will always bring all your dreams' elements into a logical sequence. It might feel strange to dream about a fellow racer riding on a lawnmower, but if those are the two elements, your mind will connect them in the most logical way.
- When you look at where the elements of a dream come from and how they're pieced together, you can now understand why dreams are often surreal and so hard to interpret.

## ● Summary

Dream is a "royal road" to the knowledge of the unconscious, the mysterious sphere of the psychic life of a person. There is always a sense in it, our desires are reflected.  
Psychoanalysis explains the nature of this puzzle, revealing the secret of sleep.

The scientific literature dealing with the problems of dreams



The book begins with a review of significant theories about the nature of dreams, accumulated before the writing of this monograph. Analyzing these theories, the author singles out the main ideas of knowledge about dreams:

A dream is a psychic phenomenon that can be explained. This will explain the causes of mental illness (neurosis, psychosis, hysteria).

The dream has the property of turning a small annoyance that arose during a sleep, into a huge event.

The dream consists of our conscious and unconscious desires that were in real life.

Dreams are often forgotten, as they are not realized.

The dream contains memories from the past, which at first glance are not important in the present.

No impression from the memory of a person disappears without a trace. The dream is influenced both by external (cold, sound, light), and internal stimuli (diseases of internal organs).

Interpretation can help in the diagnosis of latent or emerging diseases.

The meaning of the dream eludes explanation, when the mind tries to think out, to connect the incomprehensible images and excerpts of sleep into a whole.

The dream speaks the language of images, not of words and concepts.

The dream reveals our unknown nature, our true desires and traits, in which we are afraid to admit even to ourselves.

A dream represents an object not entirely, but in part, taking some of its property, features or contour.

All theories are divided into three groups, regarding the degree of participation and character of mental activity in dreams:

1. Recognizing that in the dream, the entire psychic activity of the waking state continues;
2. Conducting mental activity in the dream to a minimum;
3. Attributing to the "dreaming soul" a propensity for a special mental activity, to which it is practically incapable in a waking state.

The method of interpreting dreams.

For the successful interpretation of the dream, the mental preparation of the client is necessary. It requires two things: increasing attention to his mental memories and eliminating criticism, through which he usually selects the thoughts that arise in his brain.

It is not required to look for the desired explanation of a sleep. One need to sound all the thoughts and feelings. It is not so easy to drop the criticism of emerging thoughts, since many of them are unpleasant, and a person is inclined to avoid traumatic memories.

To understand the dream, one should not take a dream in the whole of its whole, but only individual elements of its content. Different people can dream similar dreams, but each of them will have its own meaning and desire.

Any dream has a meaning and is the fulfillment of a desire. The author gives an example of his own dream, in which he sees his former patient Irma, who was treated for hysterical fear. In a dream, she "looks painful and complains that she has a sore throat and stomachache," but the author tells her that she herself is to blame for her pains. On the eve of the dream, he met a friend who said that she was better, but not so good. The author thought that it was said with a certain reproach, and he wrote an excuse note to another doctor. This dream signifies the desire to justify and reassure oneself - the patient herself refused treatment and suffers not through the fault of the analyst. "The dream freed me from the responsibility for the well-being of Irma ... its content is thus the realization of desire, its motive is desire." - he writes.

A dream is the fulfillment of a wish

The chapter proves the thesis that a dream is the fulfillment of a desire unsatisfied in reality. In the dream, the desire seems fulfilled. A simple example is a dream of thirst: "If I eat salty foods in the evening, then I get thirsty at night, and I wake up. Before awakening, however, I see a dream constantly with one and the same content: I dream that I drink."

The realization of desire is confirmed by dreams, when a person is somewhere, although at the same time peacefully sleeping in bed: "I dreamed very often that I already got up and stand in front of the washbasin. After a few moments, I still began to realize that I was still in bed, but continued to sleep."

The author gives examples of decoding several dreams, confirming the truth of these provisions: "If a young woman dreamed that her menstruation, then in fact it was not. It was a convenient way to point out the signs of her first pregnancy."

The dream of a woman who sees on her clothes traces of milk, means the desire for pregnancy and the opportunity to feed her future child.

Children's dreams clearly fulfill the desires of the child, but adults can also see infantile dreams. For example, people on a long wintering constantly see dreams about a variety of food, large tobacco reserves, sweets and an approaching ship.

Distortion in dreams



**In its content, a dream can be explicit and hidden. Explicit is what you can communicate after awakening. The hidden content can be understood only after interpretation.**

A dream is formed by two psychic powers: the first is a desire experienced by a person, the second is a censor that distorts this desire.

Where in the social life can you find a similar distortion of the mental act? Only where there are two people, of whom one has a certain power, the other is compelled to reckon with the latter.

This mechanism resembles the effect of political censorship: if a writer openly and directly expresses his criticism of the authorities, he will not be published and punished. But if the heroes of his book are beautiful or non-existent characters, then the thought will be expressed, and retaliation will not come. Censorship changes desire, distorting it sometimes to the opposite: for example, hostility to someone in hidden content is hypocritically replaced by tenderness in explicit (conscious) content.

Many dreams before the interpretation are so hidden that they do not seem to be the fulfillment of desire. The author proves that this is not so.

The woman had a dream that she wanted to invite guests to dinner. But due to a number of circumstances (the store is closed and the supplier has not been reached), her intentions have not materialized.

It turns out that a friend was expected to visit, who she is jealous of her husband. The guest dreams of replenishing herself and the husbands likes plump women. In a dream, a wish came true that the dinner did not take place - a girlfriend did not come, did not get fat on the treats, and the dreamer was not jealous of her husband.

Another patient dreamed that her beloved nephew Carl had died. She sees him, the coffin, the candles. It turned out that a woman loved a man, but could not with him. Before that, during the funeral of another of her nephews, she saw this man at the coffin. The dream fulfilled the desire to meet with a loved one at a funeral.

The man had a dream that he was going home with a woman and, having arrived in the carriage, the policeman wants to arrest him. During the analysis, the man suggested that he could be arrested for infanticide. His secret relationship with his mistress caused concern that she became pregnant and exposed. The dream fulfilled the desire: the child was killed, the child killer was arrested.

Everyone has unpleasant, forbidden desires, in which he is incapable of confessing either to others or to himself. They are rooted in the depths of the unconscious and do not reach consciousness in their original form, passing through the distortion of censorship.

Dreams in which there is fear, at the core have some unsatisfied sexual desire (libido).

The material and sources of dreams

Repression is the process of denying and rejecting a desire, in which the object of desire changes, but the power of emotion persists. It is formed through the action of censorship, when the desire is asocial (sex, murder, incest). Repressed desires, as a rule, concern the Oedipus complex, according to which the child unconsciously seeks to own the mother and eliminate the father and brothers. These children's experiences never get out, being a powerful source of dreams.

Another mechanism is a shift in which thought, avoiding censorship, penetrates consciousness. For example, a soldier defends a flag (a piece of cloth), replacing the concept of homeland and duty.

There is also a condensation function in the dream, when several emotions, objects or events experienced can be combined into one. In real life, there is no connection between these elements.

Sources of dreams can be:

- An important emotional event
- An event or series of events presented in a dream with a neutral and indifferent scene.
- Strong unconscious desire, which has an important motive. It is replaced by an indifferent material in which the hidden content is disguised as a minor image or a trifling event.

Typical dreams are dreams inherent in all people:

- A dream about nudity: a person is stripped, he is ashamed, he is trying to leave, but he can not, while feeling stiff. This desire is from childhood, when the child enjoys nudity. Stiffness suggests that the unconscious wants to enjoy nudity, and consciousness requires a cessation. Death of relatives, when the dreamer does not experience grief, remaining indifferent. Another reaction - at the sight of the death of a native person (living awake), the sleeper suffers. In fact, this is a disguised desire for death to this relative. The desire for death can be disguised by care.
- A dream about a failed exam, in which a person feels afraid to do something wrong and be punished for it. Such a dream dreams in anticipation of any test, in the success of which a person doubts.
- Dream of being late for a train, where departure symbolizes death.
- A dream about flying, hovering or falling. The first flights the child makes as a child: they throw him up, rock, swing on swings, carousels. Along with fear, he experiences a pleasant dizziness (the first sexual sensation). Dreams of take-off are associated with an erection, and dreams of falling are an expression of fear.

The symbolism of the dream is related to myths, legends and archetypes. For example, the king and the queen mean parents, and the heir to the throne (prince or princess) is the dreamer himself. Oblong or sharp objects - stick, cane, knife, tree, umbrella, nail file,



woman's hat, tie - represent male characters. Boxes, cabinets, boxes, stoves, rooms, a wall with ledges refer to female symbols. A table, a bed (bed) symbolizes marital family relations. Sexual relationships can be represented by climbing or descending the stairs. A child in a dream (baby, baby) can represent the genitals, and crush the child - the symbol of a sexual act.

### The dream-work

If censorship does not allow the mind to become conscious, the dream uses the process of **condensation**. For example, for the image of the similarity of different people, a new unit is created from one person, in the appearance of which there may be features of people being replaced by him. The most clearly condensation is manifested in the formation of words and names, when comical and bizarre combinations of speech are produced as a result of the connection, displacement, and substitution.

**Displacement** is the replacement of the colorless and abstract content of the thought underlying the dream with a more plastic and concrete expression. Displacement and transfer of meaning from more important elements to less important ones is a distorting work of the dream. The main purpose of distortion is to avoid censorship, to allow the desire to penetrate into consciousness.

Condense and displacement are methods of the same repression, which avoids the use of a word with a direct meaning. In this case, new, bizarre and incomprehensible words and sentences are formed. Such formation occurs in neurosis, paranoia, hysteria or obsessive manifestations.

The technique of analyzing a dream is to treat the dream not as a whole, but separately each of its elements. The dream contains only thoughts, not the connection between them. To connect several thoughts, the dream uses a form of simultaneity, when all the material is presented in the form of one event.

To express contradictory relationships ("on the contrary"), the dream uses the reversal of the element in the dream. A dream can also distort the time when the final event is placed at the end, and the cause is at the beginning of the dream.

### The psychology of the dream-processes

The author divides the mental apparatus of man into two systems. The first has a passive-perceptive character, at the pole of which diverse impressions are split. The second contains motor-volitional functions that combine these impressions into a holistic emotion. In other words, the psyche has two poles - the sensory and the motor. The mental process proceeds from the perceiving end to the motor.

The author puts forward the hypothesis that a dream is the result of the conservation of the energy of the organism, which tends to preserve the state of sleepy sleep longer, since sleep is the optimal state of equilibrium. A dream is a complete closure of the organism on oneself, excluding oneself from interaction with the external environment. But the body system depends on the influence of external conditions (climatic, temperature, sound and visual

stimuli). The influence of external factors takes the body from a state of rest, creates tension, which it seeks to neutralize through the dream. The dream transforms the external impressions (bell, door clap, cold) into dream images, designed to soften real impressions with imaginary images.

The author calls the passive system the Unconscious, and the active one - the preconscious. If the former produces various affects, the latter seeks to censor them. Affective and censoring systems perform various tasks, creating a mental conflict. The unconscious produces an irrational, aggressive activity that causes unpleasant emotions. The preconscious is oriented toward the censoring activity of the mind and seeks to create a compromise with the instincts of the unconscious.

The book concludes with the idea that a dream "carries us to the future, but this future is a copy and reproduction of the past."

How did "Dreams" do that?

To put it very simply, it was through Freud's theory that we understood for the first time that we dream for a reason; that reason is to deal unconsciously with the problems the conscious mind can't deal with. That theory meant that the mind obeyed its own rules. People set out to discover those rules and the reasons for them.

How did he do that?

He analyzed his dreams, his childhood memories, screen memories, slips of the tongue, and episodes of forgetfulness. Screen memories are memories of events which actually stand for other memories which have been forgotten. These memories may have an unusual vivid quality because they represent a convergence of a variety of scenes

According to Freud, what was the major stimulus to dreams?

Dreams are fueled by a person's wishes, particularly wishes of which the person was not conscious. On another level, the purpose of the dream is to allow the person to continue sleeping.

What are the major mechanisms that Freud postulated of how the mind works in dreams?  
Dream-work, as it is called, has four major elements.

Displacement, which is the way the importance of an idea shifts from one idea to another. (For example, the most significant ideas or feelings for a person may shift from one idea (in the latent content of the dream) to an insignificant detail in the manifest content of the dream.

Condensation, that one idea or image may represent several ideas, which converge on one dream image.



Considerations of representability, where all meanings, including abstract thoughts, are represented through images.

Secondary revision, which explains how the apparent incoherence and absurdity in the dream are eliminated by filling in the gaps to make the manifest content of the dream more logical.

What is the difference between the manifest content of the dream and the latent content?

Manifest content is the dream as perceived by the dreamer. The manifest content is a result of the dream-work. Latent content is the meaning of the dream as revealed by analysis. The latent content does not appear as a narrative (like the manifest content) but rather as a group of thoughts expressing one or more wishes.

### 3 Lessons from the Interpretation of Dreams:

- 1- All dreams serve to fulfill our wishes but most of them obscure which wish it truly is.
- 2- The content of your dreams originate from three different sources:-
  - Recent, real life events.
  - Childhood memories
  - Bodily Stimuli
- 3- Your mind structures your dreams by condensing, displacing and coherently arranging their contents;
  - 1- Condensing
  - 2- Displacing
  - 3- Consideration of representability
  - 4- Secondary revision

Am I left  
me down???