

Running Header: MESSAGES FROM THE DEPTHS: DREAMS AS INNER GUIDES ON THE
PATH TO TRAUMA RECOVERY

Messages from the Depths: Dreams as Inner Guides on the Path to Trauma Recovery

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Submitted to the faculty of the University Graduate School

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in Art Therapy

Herron School of Art and Design

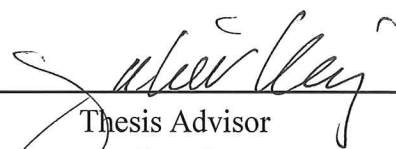
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May, 2017

Messages from the Depths: Dreams as Inner Guides on the Path to Trauma Recovery

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Accepted: May 2017



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May 2017

ABSTRACT

This paper presents a case study about the potential of dreams to mediate traumatic experience in art therapy. It presents the theoretical foundations of dream work according to S. Freud and C. Jung, and art therapy research to support a rationale for using client's dreams to support trauma recovery. The methodology is from Moon's process for dialogue with a dream (2007) that evokes existential questions that the dream presents. The participant was pre-selected from residents of a domestic abuse shelter who reported a dream that was significant in recovery after a traumatic experience. The findings in this case study supported the hypothesis that dreams have the compensatory potential to provide supportive imagery and clues to existential questions confronting the participant, and that attention to this material in therapy is beneficial to the participant. The study concludes that dreams can be an important avenue for clients to experience resilience and begin to process emotions and resolve blockages to the healing process. This case study suggests further investigation is needed to understand the relationship between dreams and trauma recovery, and that art therapy has the potential to evoke and analyze dream imagery in ways beneficial to trauma survivors and helpful in treatment planning.

Keywords: art therapy, dreams, trauma, post-traumatic stress, archetypes.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother and father, who taught me to believe and to hope, and to my husband and two children who supported me through this process and always gave me a reason to laugh.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my cohort. Together we worked hard, laughed often and never stopped believing in the power of art to heal.

Thanks also to my professors, who challenged me, and to my primary advisor, Juliet King, who challenged me again. Special thanks to Eileen Misluk, who reminded me that the clinical work is the aim of everything we do. I am very grateful to Liza Hyatt, who inspired me to write about dreams and generously provided her time as an outside reader.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the context of recovery from trauma, a persistent question arises concerning why some patients develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) while others adapt and avoid developing the disorder (Peres, Moreira-Almeida, Nasello & Koenig, 2007). While it is normal for people to struggle with existential challenges such as anxiety, uncertainty and apprehension about mortality, the experience of trauma places an individual in an “existential vacuum,” meaning, direction and purpose seem to dissolve (Frankl, 1992, p. 152). How do individuals come out of this vacuum? Some individuals find help in spiritual and religious sources, and research has shown that hope, resilience and spirituality are predictors for being able to cope with trauma (Peres, Moreira-Almeida, Nasello & Koenig, 2007). In order to support clients as they work to integrate trauma into their broader life experience (Gantt & Greenstone, 2016), it is important to understand and foster client experiences that provide meaning, direction and purpose in support of healing. A common goal in psychotherapy with individuals who have suffered trauma is to help them cope and feel empowered, providing treatment that is ego supportive and safe, and which fosters communication (Herman, 2015; Gantt & Tinnin, 2009). According to a trauma-informed approach, staff assumes their population has undergone trauma and offers treatment that is normalizing, establishes safety and emotional support, and fosters client’s awareness of their own agency to change their situation (Malchiodi, 1997). It is indicated to use supportive treatments that foster self-esteem, increase healthy functioning, and are rewarding and non-anxiety-provoking (Malchiodi, 1997, p. 18-19).

The hypothesis for this case study is that some dreams mediate traumatic experience by providing immediate guidance when an individual is in crisis. The research question asks whether the client's reported improvement through the mediating dream, and a phenomenological exploration of this dream through art therapy, contribute to the client's process of recovery from trauma. The objective of the research is to explore the client's subjective experience that supports trauma recovery, so that the researcher can understand more about trauma recovery as a process and inform mental health providers to better assist clients.

If supportive symbolic material from dreams and other unconscious or preconscious sources emerges in times of overpowering mental or physical stress (Lusebrink, 1998) it is important for mental health providers to pay attention to this experience. Such experience is often supportive in that it helps individuals cope, find meaning and not become overwhelmed; it fosters the client's physical and psychological safety, emotional stability, hope, and resiliency (Briere & Scott, 2015). One of the goals of this study is to become more aware of supportive experiences so that they can be more easily acknowledged in the therapeutic session, which may have implications for the prognosis for recovery. This means providing therapeutic care that is active and involved, and which fosters social connection (Briere & Scott, 2015). Listening to the client's experience of a dream significant to them is one way to provide therapeutic care to foster resiliency and recovery. Exploring the client's own supportive experiences can help the client meet the goals of coping and empowerment, as well as to feel less socially isolated and better able to re-establish human relationships (Herman, 2015). This study aims to foster the goals of supportive interventions that are suited to the trauma-informed approach.

This research was conducted as an intrinsic case study, defined as a pre-selected case chosen to learn something significant about that case, rather than to illustrate a general problem

(Stake, 1995, as cited in Kapitan, 2010, p. 104). According to Moore, Lapan & Quartaroli (2012), the case study is appropriate for the purpose of deepening understanding of particular complex phenomena (as cited in Mertens, p. 245). The case was pre-selected by identifying clients receiving art therapy services at a domestic abuse shelter who had spontaneously reported a dream that helped them to regain healthy functioning after trauma. From among the clients identified, the participant for the study was selected based upon availability and willingness to commit to the research protocol.

The participant was a 40-year-old Hispanic woman and mother of four children, who stated the dream helped her to begin functioning again after a tragic loss of her husband and son in a traffic accident eight years previously. The dream took place several months after the accident, and the client stated, “it helped me stop crying incessantly,” and to “say my goodbyes.” The dream was still very significant to the client at the time of the study. The choice of this participant was best for the purposes of expanding the knowledge of supportive types of interventions consistent with care for trauma survivors.

The case study dream analysis data was gathered through six sessions with the client to explore the dream in depth using the steps described by Moon (2007, p. 130-132). The approach emphasized the client’s subjective experience in the phenomenological tradition, including both the dream, the art, and the client’s responses and meaning-making (Mertens, 2015). As outlined in the Method’s Section, each session consisted of particular steps with stated objectives helping the client enter into the meaning of the dream and its impact on the client and the client’s recovery. Care was taken to use a supportive approach during the sessions, as appropriate for trauma-informed work.

Operational Definitions

Psychological trauma. Trauma is defined as the result of an overwhelming event or events that compromise the person's ability to cope, and giving rise to a wide range of symptoms. These include anhedonia, dysphoria, aggression, dissociation, as well as anxiety or fear-based symptoms. For the purposes of this study the psychological rather than medical use of the term is intended (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

Primary process. Primary process refers to the aspect of psychic structure that is preverbal, and contains primitive drives, fears, wishes, and fantasies. It is expressed in symbols and images and in the modality of dreams and hallucinations. Primary process is unconscious (McWilliams, 2011, pp. 27-28).

Secondary process. Secondary process refers to the aspect of psychic structure that is rational, reality-oriented, and sequential. It is expressed in language, understanding and conforming to social norms. It has both conscious and unconscious aspects (McWilliams, 2011, p. 28).

Archetype. A Jungian term defined as the contents of the collective unconscious which are expressed indirectly as universal images through primordial types, myth, fairytale, and symbols (Jung, 1980).

Collective unconscious. According to C. Jung, the collective unconscious is a substrate of the human psyche that is distinguished from the personal unconscious in that it does not originate in personal experience. It is universal, identical in all persons and its contents are called archetypes (Jung, 1980).

Dream. For the purposes of the study, dream is defined as “a fragment of involuntary psychic activity, just conscious enough to be reproducible in the waking state” (Jung, 1959, p. 364).

Dream work. The process of reflecting on a remembered dream through the use of script-writing, telling and making art, in the context of the therapeutic relationship, drawing on the theories of Freud, Jung and Aizenstat (Shafton, 1995, Aizenstat, 2011).

Phenomenology. The term phenomenology is used to describe an approach that involves paying attention to the here and now of human experience, which also involves setting aside preconceived ideas, interpretations of the client’s experience or assumptions one may have (Corey, 2013).

Resilience. Resilience refers to the capacity to adapt to situations and to utilize healthy coping skills in spite of challenges and risks. It is the ability to “bounce back” after a difficulty, disappointment or suffering (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015, p. 537-38).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of the theory of dreams and their functions is necessary to explore the hypothesis that dreams may function as mediators of traumatic experience. This chapter reviews the theoretical foundations for dream work in the therapeutic context. It begins with the approaches of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, with a focus on the function of dreams for each theorist and an explanation of their interpretation of the structure of the psyche and character of the unconscious. The section on Jung includes a discussion on the autonomous nature of dreams and the differentiation between big dreams and little dreams. The chapter goes on to discuss physiological aspects of dreams as reported in various contemporary studies. Next is a review of the literature on dreams in the context of trauma with a subsection on dreams as inner guides. The discussion in the section on trauma-informed care provides information on the population being studied. This is followed by a section on the Jungian concept of Individuation which describes the role dreams may play in the process of psychological growth. The chapter ends with a discussion of phenomenological approach that serves as a bridge from the Literature Review to Methods.

Dream Functions and Analysis According to Sigmund Freud

Sigmund Freud developed his classic theory of the unconscious based in part on his study of the literature on dreams and his clinical dream work with patients. Dreams, as a visual representation of unconscious needs, constitute an important part of the clinical evidence for his theory of the unconscious, and Freud famously called dreams the royal road to the unconscious (Corey, 2013). He stated this unequivocally in his *Note on the Unconscious in Psychoanalysis*

(1912) where he writes that the analysis of dreams constitutes the very foundations of psychoanalysis (p. 51). The structure of the psyche is defined by Freud as consisting in dynamically related processes between the unconscious (the id) and the conscious (the ego and superego). However, he also distinguished the pre-conscious, an aspect of the unconscious that is seemingly cut off from consciousness, but passes into consciousness with little hindrance (Freud, 1912, p. 50). Understanding these varying and dynamic processes is an important starting point for dream work that provides a framework for distinguishing between different states of mind that are operative during sleep cycles.

A well-known statement of Freud is that “a dream is a fulfillment of a wish” and that this “wish-fulfillment is the meaning of every dream” (Freud, 2007, p. 107; Shafton, 1995, p. 51). This wish arises out of a need to discharge the drive energy at work in the unconscious or id, and this energy emerges in the dream state. There are two psychic forces or agencies at work in dreams that help to elucidate the various dynamics taking place. The first force refers to latent content in the unconscious, where the wish exists in fullness but is hidden. This force is defined by Freud as a primary process. The second force refers to manifest content, of which we can become conscious, but which is distorted through censorship. Censorship refers to the building of a theme or story that distorts the latent content. The process of censoring is defined by Freud as part of a secondary process that involves the conscious ego structure of the psyche. Freud believed we should not limit ourselves to consider what the dreams mean only in the second instance when our conscious mind has produced a narrative. (Freud, 2007, p. 113-114). Importantly, sleep is a time when psychological defenses are at a minimum, so that the wish can potentially become known. However, Freud posited that a central psychological dynamic at work in dreams is to disguise the true meaning. Thus, psychological defenses do continue to operate

even in the dream state, and are known as disguise mechanisms. Thus, without understanding the censorship at work, the latent meaning of the dream will be difficult to know.

Disguise mechanisms. The disguise mechanisms are operative in dreams, and include representation, condensation, displacement, symbolization and secondary revision (Lusebrink, 1990). Representation describes how a series of dream images is not explicit, so we may miss the meaning in what is represented; condensation refers to the layers of meaning contained in a dream image, and explains strange combinations of images; displacement refers to a how the energy around a dream image may be transferred to a neutral image so that it will be less recognizable (Shafton, 2007, pp. 53-54). A sub-category of displacement is reversal, when an unacceptable part of the dreamer's self is projected into a dream. Freud believed that the inner censor was operational during sleep and played a role of "guardian of sleep." This protected a vital function of human health from being disrupted and potentially overwhelming the individual with unacceptable aggressive or sexual desires (Freud, 2007; Shafton, 1995, p. 60). Resistance to interpretation is a defense against conscious acknowledgement of the wish. It is operational when reversal is happening, "so that I may not become aware of that which I object to" (Freud, 2007, p. 112).

Symbolization serves to cover over or disguise the true meaning of dreams. Freud linked this symbolization to aggressive and sexual material that was repressed (Shafton, 1995, p. 56). Freud believed that psychological defenses are operative not only in waking life, but when we are asleep. Thus, symbolization in dreams also serves a protective function by keeping overwhelming material from consciousness.

Finally, the concept of secondary revision is important because it gives an intelligible form to a dream that likely has no inherent coherence. Here the secondary process is at work as the ego dynamic of the psychic structure attempts to make sense of an experience that lacks it (Shafton, 1995, p. 58-59). The manifest content of a dream is therefore not a helpful metaphor for latent content, in other words, one cannot take a dream at face value. Latent dream-thought, because it is coded in images, must be traced back to the source of its rising in the unconscious through the process of *free association*. This work will potentially reveal the deeper significance of the dream, while the original manifest meaning is, at best, only a starting point (Shafton, 1995, p. 59).

If the dream is a covered over or disguised, then how did Freud assist clients in dream work? He defined an above level and a below level to dreams that mirrors his view of the psychic structure of the individual conscious and unconscious, and the manifest and latent forces just described. The above level contained manifest content that related to daily life concerns, while the below aspect related to repressed infantile wishes characteristic of latent content (Freud, 2007; Shafton 1995, p. 62). In practice, Freud worked with patients on concerns of waking life at work in the above level. Demonstrating a practical approach to dreams in the clinical setting, Freud had a common-sense view of dreams, saying that “a dream-thought is a repetition of a day-thought,” (Shafton, p. 66). In practice, Freud also used the technique of free-association to help his patients examine separate elements of a dream in order to get as close as possible to the latent content, the authentic meaning of the dream, which remained coded in images (Freud, 2007, p. 109-111; Shafton, 1995, p. 59). The conscious mind, by investigating individual elements, could perhaps come closer to the dream’s true meaning by paying closer attention to the hidden or disguised elements.

In summary, Freud's view on dreams is based on the two forces described here: the latent, primary process of the unconscious, and the manifest, secondary process of the conscious or semi-conscious mind. The dynamic interactions between these forces are characterized by the protective disguise mechanisms that shield the conscious mind from repressed unconscious material. Dream work requires a discovery of what may be hiding behind the manifest content. It requires paying attention to what the individual's daily concerns are, but then going deeper in order to sidestep the censorship of the disguise mechanisms.

The Unconscious According to Carl Jung

Carl Jung accepted the Freudian conception of the conscious and unconscious at work in dreams and therefore the importance of dream work. However, he expanded Freud's notion of the unconscious to include archetypes, and material that is too overwhelmingly intense, beautiful, good or spiritual, in other words a broader category containing "the entire unknown inner world" (Shafton, 1995, p. 77). Central to Jung's conception of the unconscious is that it cannot be known directly but only through one of two mediums: 1) action in the world, such as human behavior and personal experience, or 2) perception based in imagery, story and symbol through archetypes, described by Jung as a "congenital and pre-existent instinctual model, or pattern of behavior" (Shafton, 1995, p. 78). Jung emphasized four central archetypes: (a) persona; (b) shadow; (c) anima/animus; and (d) the Self (Bogart, 2009, p. 76). These central archetypes provide a structure for archetypes that fall under each, such as the primordial mother, a feminine figure or type of anima, and the wise old man, masculine figure or type of animus (Jung, 1959). Archetypes are many and varied, and may include events and objects, or be characterized by dyads or opposites, as in the example of the persona and shadow archetypes,

where the persona is the mask of self we present to the world, and shadow is those aspects of self we deny or reject. Anima and animus, which refer to the feminine and masculine in each individual, are also a dyad (Bogart, 2009).

Jung and dreams. As with Freud, Jung believed dreams serve a function to achieve homeostasis through interaction between the conscious and unconscious, but, as stated above, Jung's notion of the unconscious is conceived in broader terms. Jung understood dreams as having an important biological basis and function, and he connected this biological basis and function to psychological health as inextricably linked. Dreams are a "natural reaction of the self-regulating psychic system" (Shafton, 1995, p. 100), and so have an adaptive function that is actively responding to needs. That is why he characterized them as integral to biological and psychic health and an important part of healthy development.

Jung understood dreams to function differently depending on the context of the individual dreamer. He recognized that there is no structure to dreams that would allow them to be interpreted or definitely categorized, leading him to join Freud in asserting that dreams could not be interpreted apart from the dreamer (Jung, 1959). In exploring the dreams of his patients, Jung utilized several processes including "taking up the context." "Taking up the context" allowed salient and meaningful aspects of the dream to be determined by associations of the dreamer to the dream (Jung, 1959, p. 367). Another process was called amplification. Amplification refers to the exercise of exploring individual elements of a dream in order to find meaning. Amplification was used to explore individual elements of significance for dreamer and rational translation of dream meanings. It also explored collective associations, symbolic meanings not easily verbalized, as well as historical or cultural parallels. (Shafton, p. 81). Amplification is a multifaceted way of approaching the meaning of significant dreams of greater intensity, termed

by Jung “Big” dreams and described more fully below. While the client takes the lead in dream work, it is the dream itself that leads the client (Jung, 1959).

In approaching dreams with a client, Jung’s question was, “what conscious attitude does it compensate?” (Shafton, 1995, p. 93, Jung, 1959, p. 378). The theory is that dreams may provide something different, something new; they offer something other than what is provided in waking life, and even have the potential to “unhinge our fixed positions” (Shafton, 1995, p. 98, p. 107). Jung contrasts the psychic function of dreaming with conscious, waking life, and posits that dreams serve an important purpose in human well-being and healing. This is reflective of Jung’s view of dreams as biologically adaptive. Dreams serve the health and well-being of the entire organism (Shafton, 1995, p. 77). The role of archetypes becomes more apparent, because they are the collective source of something new that might contribute to individual well-being in waking life, in a given time or situation through the collective unconscious.

Aizenstat (2007) provides an example of a dream that provided something new to a man who did not see the worth of dream work initially. The man described his dream image—an ornately designed piano leg, with a crack between two of its segments and a wedge stuck in the crack. After exploring the image for a few minutes, Aizenstat asked whether the man had any back pain recently. Astonished, the man admitted he had, and was given some advice to take more time for recreation and perhaps go see a doctor. It was later discovered that the man had a ruptured disk. The man was a furniture mover, for whom continued work might have meant permanent, irreparable damage (Aizenstat, 2007, p. 187-188). When viewed as having its source in the collective unconscious, the piano leg could be seen as an archetype that is symbolic of *support* needed to stand upright. In the context of the man’s work as a piano mover, it is an interesting and quite logical way of solving a problem and ‘unhinging’ the man from his fixed

point of view that dreams were not worth tending! Jungian theory provides a context for psychic elements that might otherwise be overlooked or simply dismissed, and this story provides an example of a rationale for why dreams may be instructive for both client and therapist.

As described above, the archetypes cannot be known directly, but they can be partly understood through either personal experience or archetypal imagery. In dreams, imagery is the primary mode of experience, so that the individual dreamer gains access to the archetypal landscape, where it is possible to find the collective associations of the whole of humanity. Thus, Jung posits that the collective unconscious with its archetypes and other symbolic experiences are a transcendent resource that can help us resolve conflicts and clear roadblocks to psychic wholeness (Shafton, 1995, p. 81-82). Some key archetypes that may be present in dreams are objects, such as a dwelling or road; figures such as mother/father/child or hero/heroine/warrior; or one of Jung's main archetypes: persona, shadow, feminine/masculine and the Self (Bogart, 2009, p. 76-78).

Autonomous nature of dreams. Jung saw dreams as having a life of their own, rooted in the unconscious. Therefore, at times dreams are not in agreement with conscious thoughts and plans of waking life, and deviate to a greater or lesser degree from them. This observation led him to assert the "autonomy of the unconscious" (Jung, 1959, p. 369). In Jung's view, the unconscious is unfettered by the constraints and concerns of conscious purposes and therefore can function to provide data otherwise unavailable to the conscious mind. This is what he means by "autonomy of the unconscious." The interaction between the conscious and unconscious processes is central to Jung's understanding of the function of dreams. This dynamic interaction constitutes a balancing and a comparing of different data in order to arrive at an adjustment. The adjustment is a "rectification" so that the conscious and unconscious can be in harmony (Jung,

1959, p. 369, p. 370). Jung theorized that the unconscious mind makes a contribution to the conscious mind, which is necessary for mental health. Jung called this compensation and believed it was a necessary process in order for the psyche to self-regulate. For the vast majority of people, the process contributes to psychological well-being. However, in some cases it may have the opposite effect, as when a client has destructive tendencies or latent psychosis, and in this case, it may lead to abnormal actions or even suicide (Jung, 1959, p. 370).

Big dreams versus little dreams. Jung's approach further distinguishes between "big" dreams and "little" dreams, which have different levels of intensity and import for the dreamer (Jung, 1959, p. 372). Little or insignificant dreams contain more familiar motifs such as flying, climbing, losing one's teeth, wearing insufficient clothing, familiar places, and animals. Big or significant dreams contain symbolic imagery that is common to humanity, described above as archetypes.

Jung emphasizes the role of big or significant dreams in circumstances when they may function to provide "welcome assistance" to illuminate an individual's situation, which could be "exceedingly beneficial" in times of need for healing (Jung, 1959, p. 371). Such dreams may bring insight, awaken memory, and shed light on unconscious aspects of relationships, thus serving to assist the dreamer. A series of such big dreams and other mental activity that may facilitate this process are also essential for healthy psychological growth, a process which Jung called individuation. Individuation is a kind of teleology of the psyche, the end goal of all the processes of an individual's inner journey that leads a person to becoming a unique self (Jung, 1959, p. 143). Individuation is an important focal point in understanding the importance dreams may have in trauma recovery.

Individuation. Individuation posits that human beings have an inner dynamism to become a “single, homogeneous being” that “embraces our innermost, last, and incomparable uniqueness” (Jung, p. 1959, p. 143). Individuation is a process of psychic development that consists in: (a) divesting the self of false self; (b) operating as a continuous unconscious process; (c) the unconscious mind standing in a compensatory relationship to the conscious mind; (d) complementarity between the unconscious mind and the conscious mind that together form a totality: the self; (e) resourcefulness, meaning the unconscious processes that compensate the conscious ego contain all the elements necessary for self-regulation of the psyche as a whole (Jung, 1959, pp. 147-148).

Jung believed that the dynamic and continuous interaction between the conscious and unconscious mind consisted in an unfolding pattern towards integration. Central to this dynamic interaction is the notion that there is a transcendent, timeless aspect of the psyche known as the Self and the other archetypes. Furthermore, Jung believed that the transcendent psyche possessed a transcendent function: the capacity of the psyche to spontaneously produce symbols (Shafton, 1995, 119-129). Thus, individuation can be partially observed in dreams as the “unconscious process, spontaneously expressing itself in the symbolism of a long dream-series” (Jung, 1959, p. 371). Individuation as a theory reflects that Jung assumed that the organism would continuously seek health or homeostasis. In the dynamic workings of the psychic system, dreams were seen as a natural self-regulating system, much as the body fights purposefully to fight infection. In short, the psychic system tends toward balance, wholeness, health and development (Shafton, 1995, p. 104, 98). Central to this process is compensatory dreaming, which has potential to contribute something to conscious, waking life, has the “grand goal” of serving the purpose of self-regulation and ultimately individuation itself (Shafton, 1995, p. 109). Thus, individuation is the

backdrop for dream work. When a person has a significant dream, it arises from the deeper level of the unconscious and functions as psychic compensation which is at the base of the individuation process (Jung, 1959, pp. 372-373). Dream imagery has the capacity to give insight into the conscious situation of waking life. Jung places this importance on dreams because he believed life's greatest difficulties are profoundly emotional rather than intellectual in nature. They emerge from one's "deepest instinctual processes, as well as their most idealistic aspirations." Thus, it is not unusual that the answer likewise emerges from the depths (Jung, 1959, p. 153).

Psychodynamic Theorists

Paul Lippmann (2006) approaches dream work in the Jungian tradition that respects the autonomy of the unconscious. He outlines principles of working with dreams. First, the dream work should be more a dream conversation than an interpretation. Second, the effect of the dream on the dreamer should be considered. Dreams have layers of functions, and are often only the starting point for investigation, so Lippmann cautions against expecting a clear and final interpreted meaning. Like Jung, he believes there are "deep healing aspects of a person's creative imagery" (Lippmann, 2006, p.130) which require an attitude of curiosity and on-going openness to insight. Third, he recommends following where the dream leads, using improvisation and play to stay with the dream imagery over time. Lippmann's whole approach expresses commitment to respect the dreamer's own way of dreaming to properly conduct dream work.

Stephen Aizenstat developed an approach to dreams that is like tending a garden or living thing, which he called Dream Tending (2001, 2011). Aizenstat affirmed the theory of Freud and Jung in using association and amplification in dream work. He favored amplification, stating that

it allows the dream image to be expanded to its full stature as archetype (Aizenstat, 2011, p. 17). However, he went further. Building on Hillman's use of the arts to interact with dream images, a process Hillman called animation, Aizenstat further developed this tool for use with his patients.

Animation assumes that a dream image is a living, embodied reality, and that dream work should include a process of "full immersion, interactive experience" to bring the dream to live in the present moment (Aizenstat, 2011, p. 20). He theorized that association was closest to the ego, amplification explored deeper into the psyche, and animation entered into the deepest level.

Animation welcomes the dream image as having a life of its own, separate from one's associations and amplification. Aizenstat recommends specific attitudinal qualities and language that help a person to enter into the dream. Attitudinal qualities include engaging the dream (a) in the way of the dream (with wonderment and curiosity); (b) with open body awareness (attention to vitality of the image and one's own physical and emotional responses); (c) in the present moment or the here and now; and (d) with an attitude of not-knowing (sitting with the mystery) (Aizenstat, 2011, pp. 23-29). In this spirit of playful openness, the dream is met and questions are asked, such as, "Who is visiting now?" and "What is happening here?" These replace questions like, "What does it mean?" and "Why did it happen?" and open a space for interacting and dialoguing with the dream image. Aizenstat also recommends using present verb tense language to describe the dream, using gerunds to emphasize the here and now, removing articles and using capital letters to give the dream image individuality and character. For example, "A bear chased me through the woods" would change to "BEAR is chasing me through woods" (Aizenstat, 2011, p. 35-38). The step of animation makes it possible for the images to "reveal themselves." Rather than ignore or otherwise dismiss an image that is mysterious or difficult to comprehend, the dreamer can connect with "an important visitor" (Aizenstat, 2011, pp. 24, 25).

Aizenstat's dynamic theory of dreams is in line with the Jungian perspective of the autonomous nature of the unconscious and the compensatory function of dreaming. He posits five characteristics of dreams. First, the dreaming psyche is multidimensional and operates on three traditional dimensions of consciousness: awake consciousness, personal unconscious and collective unconscious. Second, dreams are alive, meaning they have a life of their own that neither the dreamer nor the dream-tender necessarily understand fully. Rather, there is an uncovering or unfolding during which the dream participates in making its message known. Third, he posits the notion that everything is dreaming in order to reflect an intriguing theory that all things have subjective interiority. This enables the dream images to communicate to the dreamer and the dreamer to hear those other voices. Fourth, because Aizenstat believes that dreams happen in the present, they can offer something to the dreamer to help him or her perceive things differently and make changes to affect the present circumstances. The final characteristic is world or ecological unconscious (Aizenstat, 2003).

Aizenstat's approach provides a rationale for acknowledging the potential power of dreams when they are understood in a dynamic and interactive way. It offers animation as an added dynamic method for interacting with one or more key elements of the dreamscape, using present tense language to describe what is happening. In his work with those affected by trauma or in working with nightmare material, Aizenstat recommends his clients connect to their strengths, use grounding techniques and identify a dream friend or image that brings comfort. If any images became overwhelming to his client, the client would be able to stop the work for that session. These protective approaches to working with trauma survivors may include breathing and body awareness for grounding and explaining to the participant that the session may close if it causes distress the participant is uncomfortable with.

This is also in keeping with fully exploring how dreams might make a difference in the context of trauma, in which conscious problem solving abilities may be weakened or absent (Briere & Scott, 2015). It hints at the possibility that the dream stays with the dreamer in a supportive role, as a personalization of a healing force from within. Aizenstat's idea that dreams are alive us to observe how images interact, come alive, move in the dreamscape or otherwise relate to one another, which resonates with the approach of Moon (2007).

Physiology of Dreaming and Benefits

Dream work deals with the subjective experience of the dreamer, but dreaming is also an instance of a universal biological experience, shared not only by humans, but other animals. The physiology that facilitates dreaming (Hartmann, 2001) is the stage of sleep referred to as rapid eye movement (REM), discovered by pioneering work of Kletman and Aserinsky at the University of Chicago in 1953 (Shafton, 1995). REM sleep is a stage characterized by observable eye movements during sleep that are coordinated up and down or sideways, and are faster and more precise than can be performed while awake. This rapid eye movement was associated with patterns of electrical activity in the brain and dreaming. The door had opened to finding an all but "living specimen," (Shafton, 1995, 11) by waking an individual during the REM period of sleep in order to record the dream in progress.

Stages of sleep can be described as sleep cycles in which measurable brain activity can be recorded using the electroencephalogram (EEG). Stages of sleep begin at a waking restfulness, pre-sleep repose, indicated by *alpha* waves in the brain. Stage 1 or *descending stage* reveals a slowing of metabolism and slow, rolling eye movements (SEM's) that are random. The sleeper descends through stages (2-4) characterized by decreasing cortical activity, higher amplitude and more synchronized brain wave activity. Stages 2-4 are called collectively non-rapid eye

movement sleep (NREM) or quiet sleep. Eye movements are absent during NREM sleep and physiological activity like respiration and heart rate slow at the deepest level of sleep. At stage 4 EEG delta waves are recorded that resemble a coma condition, and after 30-40 minutes in this deep sleep, the person returns to stage one. Upon returning to stage one, the REM sleep that is conducive to dreaming begins. This period of sleep is known as the *ascending stage* because it rises up from the deeper stage 4 sleep. The cycle repeats, ascending and descending with REM periods increasing in frequency and length, as well as richness as the night progresses to morning (Shafton, 1995, pp12-15).

An important aspect of sleep and sleep cycles has to do with the body. The “go” and “no go” response of REM sleep is described by Allan Hobson (Shafton, 1995, p. 18). It describes how the brain communicates to the body through the central nervous system during sleep. REM sleep turns on the “go” signals through the motor systems of the brain, but then cancels them through the spinal cord so that large movement is inhibited, a “no go” scenario. Interestingly, while large movement is inhibited, small fine motor movements increase. Facial twitches, smiling or frowning during REM sleep are commonly observed and are often consistent with dream content.

Another phenomenon is opposite responses of physical motor activity and physical brain activity. During light sleep, while a person is dreaming, there is a quickening of respiration, irregular heartbeat, higher brain temperature and an increase in cortical blood flow. At the same time, the body exhibits features of deep sleep, such as *atonia*, immobilization and repressed reflexive responses. This is referred to as “paradoxical sleep,” when the “sleeping body seems most asleep while the sleeping mind seems most awake” (Shafton, 1995, p. 13).

Hartmann argued that REM sleep did not provide a complete picture of the physiology of dreaming. He pointed out that the biology of dreaming goes further: it is located at the level of the cerebral cortex and neural networks (Shafton, 1995; Hartmann, 2001, pp. 197-179). For example, positron emission tomography (PET) scans during REM sleep show a decrease in activity in the frontal cortex and an increase in activity in the posterior areas of the brain that is consistent with dreams as a primarily visual experience (Hartmann, 2001, p. 197). Another example is from neurochemistry. REM sleep is characterized by an almost complete lack of norepinephrine, the neurotransmitter that mobilizes the organism to take action in response to environmental stimuli. That lack of norepinephrine would partially explain why dreams may present potentially exciting or dangerous scenarios, without causing the dreamer to respond by waking up immediately to take evasive action. Hartmann believes that this allows us to dream in a more general sense. Instead of the intense focus required of us during active waking life, the dreamer unblocks the task-oriented thought processes of daily functioning and exists in a global and unfocused way, where rules dissolve and the mind can wander. He called dreaming a way of “wandering off the well-worn paths of neuro pathways” (Hartmann, 2001, p. 202).

The intermediate or liminal space described by Hartmann connects to Jung’s notion of compensation because it identifies a key function of dreams: to assist in addressing unresolved emotional concerns (Hartmann, 2001, p. 193). It points to one of the beneficial aspects dreams may have in the context of trauma. As researchers learn more about the biology of sleep, and as mental health providers give patients the opportunity to explore dreams, the bridge between the biological and psychological can be strengthened. The challenges inherent in trauma, referred to above as existential challenges, can be addressed in a more holistic way.

Cartwright tested the concept that dreams contribute to psychological health (cited in Krippner, 2002, p. 70-71). From a selection of clients who were considering leaving therapy before progress had been made, 48 clients agreed to participate in a sleep/dream program. Participants were divided into three groups of 16. The first group of participants were awakened during non-REM sleep and then participated in psychotherapy. The second group participated in psychotherapy directly after waking up normally, and the third group was awoken during REM sleep and then participated in psychotherapy, where they talked about their dreams. Those in the third group were subsequently more likely to remain in therapy for 10 weeks, and most of them made positive changes in their lives. Cartwright's study indicates that dream work had a beneficial impact on this group.

Dreams in the Context of Trauma

Hartmann (1996) summarized his previous studies on dream subjects to posit the theory that emotion guides the process of dreaming. He believed that dreams function to "contextualize the dominant emotion" for the dreamer, providing an explanatory metaphor that calms the storm (Hartmann, 1996, p.153). His theory was developed based on years of research and clinical practice, and outlines the nature and function of dreams to assert that dreams play an important role in trauma recovery. He observed a dream pattern in clients recovering from trauma in two phases. First, trauma was replayed, rehearsed or relived. Then it was combined and connected with other traumatic material, gradually allowing trauma-related themes to dissipate as the experience became integrated and emotions could be de-intensified. The playing out of this process enabled the clients suffering Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) to transition out of nightmare dreams. In Hartmann's theory, this dream pattern was connected to waking life,

enabling participants to make new connections that contributed to healthy functioning in the waking state (1996).

Wilmer (1986) conducted a study with 103 Vietnam War veterans suffering from PTSD, using a Jungian psychotherapeutic approach. None of the participants had seen combat for at least 7 years. The study showed a progression through three different dream types. Of the 359 dreams recorded by the veterans, 53% contained combat-related themes. The participants' combat-related dreams were followed by dreams that visualized combat events metaphorically, combining them with issues from their present waking life. A third kind of dream was reported containing fantastical or bizarre dreams and metaphors of healing. When veterans progressed through to the third type of dream, healing from PTSD related symptoms was facilitated (cited in Krippner, 2002).

Punamäki (1998) did research on patterns and dimensions of dreams, and their role in protecting the psychological well-being of children in a dangerous environment. She examined the dream content of Palestinian children and adolescents in a trauma group (N=268) and a control group (N=144) to understand what dream characteristics were beneficial to mental health in this context. Diaries were distributed with one page for each dream and the prompt: "last night I dreamt that..." with 20 lines to record the dream. The researchers analyzed and indexed the dreams using a qualitative scoring method that allowed different characteristics of dreams to be measured statistically (Punamäki, 1998, p. 564). Symptoms were measured using 34 items on the psychological symptoms scale. The results of this study showed that dreams could help children by providing a mental lacuna (Punamäki, 1998, p. 581) that is necessary in order for trauma-survivors to integrate traumatic material for recovery and healthy development. The study

conclusions support the idea that dreams have the potential to play a role in recovery for trauma-survivors.

In the Punamäki study, dream content described as compensatory was characterized as “avoiding painful events” and containing a “pleasant atmosphere, positive feelings, bizarre and camouflaged characters and scenes, and happy endings” (Punamäki, 1998, p. 562). In contrast, dream content was different for mastery dreams, which contained scenes of military violence, themes of anxiety, persecution and aggression, and the repetition of aversive scenes and negative feelings (Punamäki, 1998, p. 562). In mastery dreams, the repetition of traumatic and distressing themes failed to integrate traumatic experience, as the intensity of trying to master the experience all at once proved unhelpful. According to Punamäki, the psychic processing of the trauma at a pace the child could handle, as characterized by compensatory dreaming, facilitated mental health in spite of trauma (1998, p. 581). This points to the function of dreams to integrate experience over time in ways that cannot be achieved through the reliving of nightmarish scenes that relive or intensify the trauma itself. It supports the hypothesis that dreams, in their compensatory function, offer other data that contrasts with conscious awareness, making their own unique contributions that balance the psyche and rectify the subjective experience of the dreamer (Jung, 1959).

The Self as inner guide. Lusebrink (1988) reviews the concept of the inner guide which appears at times of intense stress or mental illness. The inner guide might be considered a manifestation of a big dream. It builds upon Jung’s theory of the autonomous nature of the unconscious, with the capacity to transcend individual, conscious thought and propose insights, solutions or ideas not previously considered. The inner guide is a metaphor for benign aspects of the unconscious and might be understood as related to the Jungian concept of the Self. The Self

is defined as the organizing principle of the psyche, larger than the individual ego, which can become manifest when a person is “forced to give up his or her ego position” (Lusebrink, 1988, p. 99). Lusebrink draws on Jung in positing that the Self normally appears as symbolic imagery: animals (when perceived symbolically), mandalas, light images, and places of emergence, such as water (1988, p. 100). Using active imagination to explore that archetypal imagery in nature enhances clarification (1988).

Lusebrink (1988) further connected these symbolic images, to the spiritual or transpersonal dimension. In making this link, Lusebrink recognizes that the symbolic language of dreams can be an important source of information for coping, meaning-making and facing ultimate questions that involve the spirituality of a person (Lusebrink; 1998. Pargament, 1996). The Self, as an aspect of the autonomous unconscious, is here understood as a key source of information on the road to recovery in situations when rational, step-by-step problem solving mechanisms may be weakened. Dreams are the normal medium for the inner guide to arise in conscious awareness (Lusebrink, 1988, p. 101).

Moon (2007) builds on Moustakas’ phenomenological study of dreams to emphasize the function of dreams to provide insight and direction. He states, “Our dreams urge us to let go, to begin again, to find fresh ways of coping, and to consider new ways to resolve old conflicts” (p. 129). In light of the potential of dreams to provide this kind of insight, Moon cites Moustakas’ rationale for engaging in dream analysis: to reveal the meaning of the dream through associations to waking life, and to provide new directions for the future, “for self-fulfillment and well-being” (Moustakas, as cited in Moon, 1998, p. 129).

Supportive dream work in a trauma-informed context. Trauma interferes with the building of a stable identity with self and others (Herman, 2015). Trauma-informed care (TIC) is an approach in which all the elements of care are assessed and in some cases adjusted to include the realization of the effects of trauma on the individual seeking services (Raja, Hasnain, Hoersch, Gove-Yin & Rajagopalan, 2015, p. 217). TIC creates an atmosphere of hospitality that is meant to empower the client to look within for answers to their multiple problems. In domestic violence, in which the individual has experienced domination and control, there is a particular need for clients to see themselves as having agency, the ability to take action as an expression of the self, of one's own ideas, projects and concerns (Broderick & Blewitt, p. 514). Domestic violence involves different tactics of control, such as physical and sexual abuse, surveillance and control over a person's relationships, emotional abuse and economic control (Herman, 2015). Because this type of trauma aims to isolate and control, it damages self-esteem, and eats away at positive perceptions of self, so it is particularly important to recognize these effects when treating clients.

Several studies have highlighted the need for trauma survivors to discover solutions from within themselves, assisted by others. Bowland, Edmond and Fallot (2012) used a spiritually focused intervention with older trauma survivors to test improvement in post-traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, somatic distress and spiritual distress done at three points in time: pre/post-tests and a follow up. The instruments used were the Post Traumatic Stress Diagnostic Scale (PDS), the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS), the Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI), the Patient Health Questionnaire Somatic Symptom Severity Scale (PHQ-15) and the spiritual distress scale (SSD) compiled from three subscales (Bowland, Edmond & Fallot, 2012, p. 4). The interventions were focused on spiritual gifts, spiritual recovery, psychological struggles, potential spiritual

solutions and recovery strategies. The approach encouraged dialogue in which the client contributed to the solutions in an active way and prescribed answers were avoided. The findings revealed a significant statistical lowering of symptoms in the categories measured. To test the effects of the intervention over time, participants were scored on the same instruments in a follow-up session three months after the interventions. The follow-up scores were subtracted from the post-test score, and the results showed significant multivariate changes endured (Bowland, et al., 2012, p. 7). A lowering of symptoms was maintained, indicating that a focus on strengths had contributed to health over time.

Dream work that emphasizes the insight of the client fosters the inward-looking process that can build identity and self-reliance, which are important elements of treatment for this population. According to Briere and Scott, care in the therapeutic context is important for rebuilding self-development in individuals recovering from trauma (2015). Therapeutic interventions that foster safety, nurture self-validity and encourage self-exploration are key to the rebuilding process (Briere & Scott, p. 199). Safety honors the boundaries of the client and provides reliability so that the client will be more likely to willingly access internal experiences and feelings. Self-validity is nurtured to contradict the client's learned assumption that the abuser's view of reality is all-important, which diminishes the survivor's sense of self. Emphasizing the experience of the client in the therapeutic relationship, and the importance of the client's own thoughts and perspectives provides the atmosphere in which a model of self can be gradually constructed (Briere & Scott, 2015, p. 200). Finally, encouraging self-exploration helps the client to know his or her preferences, hopes and desires, responsibilities and potentials, a kind of "identity training," that provides important foundations for healing and recovery from trauma (Briere & Scott, 2015, p. 201).

Themes in art therapy work with trauma-survivors. Art therapy is a natural intervention for work with trauma-survivors (Malchiodi, 1998; Shore, 2013; Gantt & Greenstone; 2016; King, 2016). Tripp calls art created in the therapeutic session “imaginal exposure,” since it often reflects some aspect of trauma or the trauma narrative that has yet to be integrated (2016, p. 176). Tripp’s method follows in the tradition of exposure therapy which aims to treat anxiety through either *in vivo* or imagined contact with the feared object (Corey, 2013, p. 260;). Neuroscience studies show traumatic memory is stored predominantly in the right hemisphere of the brain and not easily accessible to verbal articulation (Tripp, 2016, p. 173). As a non-verbal process, art can function as a bridge between unconscious or semi-conscious material and conscious awareness. In a controlled and gradual way, art can perform the function of exposure therapy (Schore, 2009, 2011, 2012, cited in Tripp, 2016 p. 176). Thus, aspects of unconscious material may become conscious and the individual can begin to acknowledge and process it (Tripp, 2016).

Tripp (2016) utilizes a bilateral art therapy approach to treat trauma-survivors. Bilateral means involving two-sides, referring to the two sides of the body and by extension the two hemispheres of the brain (Tripp, 2016, p. 179). Tripp developed a protocol that addresses the body’s need to heal from trauma using bilateral stimulation. Bilateral stimulation enhances left/right brain communication in order to facilitate integration between thought and feeling. The protocol directs the client to progress through a series of exercises that focus the attention on the here and now and the body rather than a logical narrative. The client is asked to scan the body to identify any physical discomfort or tension, along with negative self-beliefs or contrasting positive ones; next the client makes a corresponding drawing and focuses on those beliefs and the drawing while bilateral stimulation is applied. When this is complete, the client is asked to

identify any shifts noticed in the body, cognitively or emotionally and identify this in a drawing. The protocol concludes with a body scan and review of any positive beliefs that may have been added, or any adaptive responses. In this way, through a series of sessions, the client is able to generate a series of drawings that depict the levels of stress which can be identified moving through the body. With a focus on the here and now stress responses of the physical body, this art therapy intervention processes small elements of traumatic memory. It does not attempt to find a coherent narrative, but small bits of information that might facilitate new solutions to old problems (Tripp, 2016, p. 183).

Gantt and Greenstone (2016) base their work on the Instinctual Trauma Response (ITR) theory that states the brain is hard wired to initiate a series of responses to life and death situations. In a trauma situation, a person will startle and then fight, flee in response to danger. A trauma will then evoke a freeze state, then an altered state of consciousness, automatic obedience and finally efforts at self-repair (Gantt & Greenstone, 2016, p. 357). The memory itself will be fragmented since the cognitive operations of the brain, including sequencing, are not properly engaged and the person may be in a dissociate state. The nature of the way trauma is experienced in the body guides the treatment approach for these practitioners. First, they use grounding to help the client function in the here and now and to uncover traumatic material in a safe and progressive way. This is accomplished by creating a graphic narrative of one traumatic episode in a step by step process. The protocol calls for the client to create a series of drawings on separate pieces of paper. The first two drawings are done as scenes depicting before trauma and after trauma states that serve as bookends of the traumatic episode. This has the effect of locating the entire traumatic experience as a past event. The context of safety is established in each session with regular check-ins, and simple materials are used, such as markers or oil pastels.

Once the sessions are complete, the drawings are used to order sequentially and to retell the story, situate it in the past, and recognize the end of the story. Finally, a ritual is conducted to enable a letting go and closure to the experience (Gantt & Greenstone, 2016).

As in the work of Tripp above, this type of art therapy intervention goes to the heart of dealing with traumatic memory. Traumatic memory is unconnected from day to day experience and unassimilated, yet can impact the individual in the here and now like an “indelible force” (LeDeux, 1996, cited in Tripp, 2016, p. 177). Making art facilitates a rapid access to the “core imprint” of trauma to help provide awareness of internal states instead of avoidance (Tripp, 2016, p. 177). As applied to using art therapy in conjunction with dream work, inspiration can be drawn from this work. The attempt to reimagine a sequence of events that happened in the past so that they can be acknowledged and let go of is not unlike the exercise of taking up the context of a dream, reimagining its message and letting go of the traumatic event that gave rise to the dream. However, in both these interventions, the fragmented nature of traumatic memory and the enigmatic and timeless nature of the dream are allowed to be respected dialogue partners. The work consists of letting the images themselves speak, rather than superimposing order from a distanced and ultimately uninformed impulse to make sense of the traumatic event. This can be referred to as staying with the image as it transforms, and performs the healing work (Tobin, 2006, as cited in Tripp, 2016, p. 181).

Another art therapy approach to work with trauma survivors is task-oriented, which identifies 6 basic tasks for the treatment model: safety planning, self-management, telling the trauma story, grieving losses, self-concept and worldview revision, and self and relational development. Different interventions are adopted to address each task (Rankin & Taucher, 2003, p. 139). Task-oriented treatment has the advantage of meeting each client where he or she is in

the process of trauma recovery, taking care to match the art therapy intervention with the treatment goals at any particular point in the process. The authors group the types of art therapy interventions they have identified as meeting specific objectives. They are interventions that (1) facilitate *expression* of current emotional, mental, and physiological states; (2) produce a narrative of events, including feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that happened at that time; (3) promote *exploration* of meaning regarding emotions, thought, behaviors, events, self-perception, family dynamics, interpersonal relationships, and including that of perpetrator and victim; (4) facilitate *management* of behaviors, self-esteem, affect, stress, physical reactions, intrusive and or avoidant symptoms; and (5) facilitate *integration* of traumatic and non-traumatic events into one's life story (Rankin & Taucher, 2003, p. 139). The combination of the six tasks with the appropriate interventions is a practical and important tool for art therapists who work in a trauma-focused environment. They help to identify where a client is in the process of recovery, and offer the appropriate intervention. The tasks can also be applied to dream work as a way to meet the objectives of integration, grieving and revision of self-concept and worldview.

Dream work, like art therapy, functions as a bridge between unconscious/non-verbal and conscious/verbal material. Dream work is a natural tool for art therapists because the dream can serve as a starting point for artistic expression and use of imagery to assist clients to assimilate and integrate non-verbal material. In the population of individuals suffering psychological trauma, there are parallels between the experience of trauma and dreams: both involve a temporary diminishing of cognitive, more left-brain functions in favor of imaginal, more right-brain functioning (Tripp, 2016, p. 176).

Phenomenological Approach to Dreams through Art Therapy

Phenomenology states that any inquiry begins with the phenomena of consciousness ('givens') and these phenomena can "reveal to us what they really are when we look at them w/concentrated gaze... and purpose to see all that can be seen" (Betensky, 1977, p. 174). This approach fits well with both dream work and the use of art to explore the dream's significance for a trauma survivor, since both are visual in nature. Phenomenology is also integral to the practice of art therapy, which depends on the ability of the practitioner to explore the artistic expression of the client with an open mind, allowing the client to discover meaning instead of interpreting it for him or her (Naumburg, 1987).

The concept of intentionality in phenomenology applies here. Intentionality describes the act of looking intently at the object under observation. It is theorized that this act of focusing with all one's attention leads to its *existing* for the person more than it did before. The objective act of looking is to allow a phenomenon to become more apparent to the conscious mind, increasing its importance and meaning through this process (Betensky, 1995). In Freudian terminology, the parallel would be pre-conscious, while in phenomenology it is pre-intentional. In dream work the exercise of increasing intentionality/consciousness is fostered. Through exploring the dream using art and then intentionally beholding the image and its elements, the dream becomes more real as its importance and meaning become more apparent to the dreamer. This is therapeutically indicated when a particular dream comes up in a clinical setting and is identified by the client as something of significance, as if to say, 'I am already looking at this... help me to see what I am looking at.'

One application of intentionality that assists individuals to see what they are looking at is horizons (Moon, 2007). Horizons are dream elements which are visible in the art or articulated in

the written description of a dream, the script, that hold special importance to the client. They can be a simple list of observations from the perspective of the client as he or she experienced the dream. Once the horizons have been identified, the art is placed between the client and the art therapist. The client is invited to make associations with the horizons. For example, if the horizon is, "In the dream I am standing in a lonely place," the association might be, "I was struggling when I had this dream and felt isolated" (Moon, 2007, p.131). The art therapist then reflects back these amplifications of the dreamer as closely as possible to verbatim, without making any interpretations.

Moon (2007) outlines a way of uncovering the horizons of a dream using 12 steps, a journey of self-discovery with the purpose to discover or create meaning (p. 128). The steps (Moon, 2007, pp.130-132) were modified for consistent language and listed here with a brief explanation:

1. Create an image of the dream, to reveal the elements of the dream, and so the art becomes a partner in the dream work, along with the art therapist and the participant.
2. Create a script, to reconstruct the dream in a conscious state.
3. Place the image between the art therapist and the participant to help the participant become aware of associations.
4. Read the script aloud (first the participant, then the art therapist) to stimulate additional associations.
5. Identify the horizons of the dream to find what is most significant.
6. Use amplification of the horizons to explore related meanings.
7. Repeat the associations and ask the participant to clarify or expand.
8. Cluster the horizons to identify connections among images.

9. Create existential statements of concern to integrate key elements of the horizons.
10. Summarize statements of existential concern to find the essence of the dream's message.
11. Define a course of action in response to the dream.
12. Commit to a course of action in response to the dream.

The collaborative process of dialogue with a dream honors the creativity and inner wisdom of the participant, as well as their autonomy as the work progresses (Moon, 2007, p. 132).

A second aspect of phenomenological theory that is important to this study is relatedness. Relatedness refers to the idea that intentionality has a direction, that is, it directs us to the real world of our actual lives, what Husserl (1913) called *Lebenswelt*, and our immediate experience of phenomena in the world (as cited in Betensky, 1995). This conscious experience relates to something or someone, and dream work leads a person, paradoxically, to connect with those objects that relate to the dreamer's real world (Betensky, 1995). If not, dream work would be an exercise in fantasy, without any purpose to serve the dreamer in waking life. One could reap the benefits of the *effects* of dreaming physiologically but not the benefits of conscious compensation or meaning. In the processes of association and amplification described above, the elements of the dream are painted, drawn or described in a scene or horizon that directs the dreamer to conclusions about the world of relatedness in which he or she lives.

These aspects of phenomenology are helpful to understand the approach used in the methodology, but also the rationale for using dream work as a therapeutic intervention. It reminds us that dreams are part of human experience, and can be taken as data that may inform

our waking life, our reactions to events in our lives, even decisions that may affect our future.

Not every dream is a “big dream,” but dreams that are significant to the client may have an important role in motivating the client to more active participation in the healing process.

Phenomenology focuses on the conscious propensity of human beings to actively experience self and others, with a potential to “change something in ourselves, not just passively to bear the burden; or even to change something in the world, and not merely adjust to it” (Betensky, 1995, p. 13). This view fosters the trauma informed approach, but also the notion that individuals are resilient and have an important, collaborative role in their own recovery, and that practitioners should promote this clinically.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This intrinsic case study of dream work was designed to explore whether a person's dreams mediate traumatic experience by providing immediate guidance when that individual is in crisis. The art therapy dream work intervention was designed for use by art therapists (Moon, 2007, p. 128) and was conducted by an art therapist. The study took place in a domestic violence shelter in an urban area, and the participant was a former shelter resident who was still receiving services during the time the study was conducted. Data was gathered by the bilingual investigator, who recorded each session and transcribed it into English from the original Spanish. Each session was reviewed personally by the investigator and checked for errors. A review by the University Internal Review Board was not required for this study.

Art therapy and Dream Work Sessions

The entire study consisted of six sessions conducted over the course of eight weeks. The sessions were based on Moon's phenomenological-existential model for dialogue with a dream outlined above (2007, p. 130-132). Six sessions were chosen because each of the 12 steps did not require a full hour and because the participant could not be available for 12 sessions. An extra step was added to the fifth session to implement the method of Aizenstat (2011) called animation. The rationale for adding animation was further explore the central image in the dream as a dynamic entity, to pay closer attention in order to learn what it might say or how it might guide the participant (Moon, 2007). The final session included sharing of the results with the participant and a closing ritual.

Informed Consent and use of client's dream image. This session corresponded to Moon's step 1 (Creation of an image of the dream). Since this step was completed in the course of art therapy, the image was taken from the file, as describe below.

In the first session, procedures were clearly defined, including written informed consent, procedures for confidentiality and anonymity, and the possible uses of the findings (Kapitan, 2010). The Informed Consent Form (Appendix A) was signed and included (a) a definition of the roles of the investigator, participant and supervisors; (b) articulation of the potential impact of the study in the participant's clinical context; (c) request to include previous clinical work and art created based on the dream as part of the case history. The first session also included a review of the participant's personal history, a description of the dream's impact, and the participant's perceptions regarding being the subject of the study.

Writing and recitation of the script and viewing the image. In the second session, based on steps 2, 3 and 4 of Moon's process (creation of a script; placing the dream image between the art therapist and the dreamer; reading of the script aloud), the client created a script or written narrative of what happened in the dream. Next, the participant viewed the image of the dream (from client's file) and recited the script aloud. The art therapist then also read the script aloud. The purpose of this step was to reconstruct the dream in a conscious state (Moon, 2007, p. 130).

Identifying the horizons and amplification. This session and subsequent sessions included grounding techniques and informing the participant she could stop if she felt uncomfortable or distressed. This was done at the start of the sessions, and included breathing for relaxation, lasting approximately 5 minutes. The third session was based on steps 5 and 6 of

Moon's process (identifying the horizons of the dream; amplification of the horizons). The participant engaged in identifying key visual images and phrases that point to the horizons of the dream. Next, these horizons were explored using the method of amplification to explore associations with each element. The art therapist repeated these back to the participant.

Clustering horizons and statements of existential concern. The fourth session was based on steps 7 to 9 of Moon's process (repeating the associations; clustering the horizons; creating existential statements of concern). The art therapist read the notes of all the associations, and identified their source in the visual record of the art, inviting the participant to clarify or expand as desired. The participant then was instructed to cluster the horizons and write a statement of existential concern. By clustering the associations, the participant was able to see relatedness or patterns from which to form statements of existential concern.

Refining the statements and defining a response. The fifth session was based on steps 10 and 11 of Moon's process (summarizing statements of existential concern; defining a course of action in response to the dream). Animation was added to Moon's process, asking the participant to choose one element of the dreamscape and interact with the image in present tense language. The refined statements of existential concern to one statement. Next the participant defined courses of action in response to the statement of concern and decided upon one course of action in response to the dream to which the client is willing to commit.

Before the last meeting with the client, the data and dream work sessions were transcribed to form the bases of the "portrait of the case" (Kapitan, 2010, p. 108). The data analysis consisted in using the dream work to identify linking patterns in the verbal and artistic clinical record to the theoretical proposition and interpreting the patterns (Mertens, 2015, p. 246-

247). This was done in the phenomenological tradition of beholding the verbal and artistic work of the client, so that the findings could be arrived at together with the client, as equal partners in exploration of the participant's experience.

Sharing the findings and closing ritual. The sixth session was based on step 12 of Moon's process (committing to a course of action in response to the dream), but was extended to also include a sharing of the case and a ritual for closure. In this session, investigator and participant together explored the insights gained and what, if any, conditions or behaviors in daily life were improved through the dream and through the process of dialogue with the dream.

The closing ritual was adopted as an important way of dealing with any feelings of loss that may have been awakened through the dream work. Ritual can be a powerful tool for healing (Rogers, 2007, p. 130). The goal of the ritual was to assist the participant to acknowledge the loss of meaning or control that resulted from the death of her loved-ones, and to mark progress, if any, in using the dream and dream work to process grief. The form of the ritual was a culturally appropriate ritual taken from the *Día de los Muertos*, (Day of the Dead), a custom with which the participant was familiar. It included the lighting of candles, words and offerings to memorialize the dead, and sharing of the bread that is part of the celebration (Rogers, 2007). The closing ritual was designed to assist the participant to benefit from the entire process of exploring her experience of the dream as it relates to the trauma and her overall life story (See Appendix D).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The results of the investigation were summarized in narrative form for the case study and in tables for dream work findings. The case study was based on the transcriptions included in full in Appendix B (Art Therapy Dream Work Sessions B-1 through B-6). All sessions were conducted in Spanish to accommodate the participant and later transcribed and translated by the investigator who is fluent in Spanish. Appendices A (Informed Consents in English and Spanish), C (Images C-1 through C-6) and D (Ritual) were also referenced. Key images identified by the participant were organized in tables.

Case Study: Client Pre-dream History

Isabela was a 40-year-old client of Hispanic origin with a history of spousal abuse and trauma related to loss of family members in an automobile accident. Isabela grew up in rural Mexico in a large, but nurturing household. She had a strong connection to her father, whom she called her “hero.” Her father was a farmer and a rancher and the children began working in the fields after school at age 10. The client reported pleasant memories of carrying food to her father in the fields after work and having a picnic, and other memories of her father teaching her about the constellations in the night sky.

At age 15, Isabela was married and her life changed abruptly. Her husband used alcohol and was physically and emotionally abusive, usually when intoxicated. Isabela’s parents had explained that once she left the household she could not return, so she was fearful of telling them about the abuse and kept it hidden from them. After the birth of the couple’s third son, they moved to a different town and Isabela felt isolated and sad without the close proximity of her family. Her husband exercised his control over her with greater intensity at this time.

The participant was planning to leave her husband, but he convinced her to try and make a new life together in the United States. Isabela agreed to give her husband the opportunity to change as long as her children accompanied them. Once settled in the US, there was a period of calm and then the client experienced an incident in which her husband pulled a knife on her in the presence of the children. The client's oldest son called the police and Isabela fled to a shelter with her children. In the wake of this incident, the client's husband agreed to get couples therapy and things improved. The client reported feeling good about her decision to work to keep the family together and that her husband was doing his part. However, he continued to use alcohol and the client had to use caution to not upset him. It was during this improved time in the client's 17-year relationship with her husband that a tragic car accident occurred that was devastating to Isabela and to her family.

The night of the accident, the participant's family was at a birthday celebration in a different town. After the celebration, Isabela insisted on driving because her husband was intoxicated. He agreed that if she would allow two extra passengers in the car who needed a ride, he would allow her to drive. Unfortunately, this left several family members without seatbelts. The crash happened in mountainous terrain when the brakes gave out and the car tumbled over an embankment. Isabela was conscious after the accident and took the responsibility of looking for survivors and calling for help. The accident took the life of her husband and her 9-year-old son, and it severely injured her 2-year-old son who was originally pronounced dead but was revived by hospital staff. The client was open with her emotions as she shared these difficult memories.

In the aftermath of the accident, the client stayed constantly at the bedside of her surviving 2-year-old son, while relatives cared for her other three children. Isabela described

being in a dissociative state, and of being surrounded by darkness and despair. After the funeral for her husband and 9-year-old son, her sole task was caring for her youngest child, which gave her purpose. However, she was unable to return to normal functioning and experienced anxiety, sadness and fear each day as evening approached, likely related to the accident taking place at night. Isabela described daily decompensation and an inability to recover from her grief, which seemed to be intensifying even two months after the accident. At that time, a friend Isabela's told her that a loved one who has died cannot rest if their family members continue to grieve without moving on. At this point, Isabela began to desire to recover from her grief as she believed it might have an adverse effect somehow. She decided to pray and one evening asked for a sign: "My God, give me a sign that my son is okay, and that I shouldn't cry for him... I will do everything I can to overcome this" (Appendix B-1). The dream followed the same evening the client made this request.

Dream Work Summary

The client described the dream differently in different sessions, generally adding details over the first several sessions recorded. In the first session, the client's description of the dream focused on the dream as an answer to a prayer or wish, "I dreamt, well, practically what I was hoping for..." (Appendix B-1).

Session one. The first session was the history of the client, and also included a brief description of the dream. The dream took place at a gathering where there were lots of people and where the son who had died was playing with other children. In the dream, Isabela described herself seated in a chair when her son came to embrace her and said, "Mama, let me go." She resisted, but her son insisted, saying he really wanted to go with "a lady"—a silhouetted image at a distance. Isabela asked her son how she could be in contact with him if she let him go, and he

responded, “Mama, look at the sky and you can send me a message with the stars.” In the dream, the participant turned and saw the words forming themselves in the stars, “I love you.” She agreed to let him go, convinced that this would make him happy. As he turned to go she saw the dream image of her son place his hand in that of the silhouetted lady, then turn and smile as he left. Isabela felt a mixture of sadness and peace, and then awoke.

The participant described how she wished to continue dreaming after waking up. She also felt the impulse to go outside to look at the night sky, as she hoped to see something. So, she went outside her home to the patio, where she stayed for a long time, looking at the sky. The smile her son gave her in the dream made her feel she was doing the right thing to let him go.

Session two. The session opened with a check-in to see how the participant felt after session one. Isabela stated she felt sad and nostalgic but also relieved and calm.

Moon's Steps	Findings in the script and painting	Associations
2. Create a script of the dream	Children were present, playing on the left side of dream painting; her son was playing with them	
3. Place the image between art therapist and participant	The dream painting was focused on the moment of letting go and farewell	Participant's surprise at her son's words: "Let me go"
4. Read the script aloud	There were voices and noise	
	The face of the silhouetted lady was not visible	
	There was a structure like a house on the left side of dream painting	
	Words written in the stars, "I love you."	Release of pressure, space to grieve in remembering

Table 1: The Script and the Dream Painting

In the second session, the client created a written script of the dream. The script (Appendix B-2) was then read aloud first by the participant and then the investigator while

looking at the dream painting (Appendix C, Figure C-1). This painting had been completed before the study began as Isabela had wanted to share the dream in her first therapeutic encounter with the investigator. During the reading of the script, Isabela wept when she read the words, “I saw among the stars of the sky...” Isabela stated that she carried a lot of pressure, and remembering the accident, the dream and allowing herself the space to grieve helps take away the pressure.

Session three. After a breathing relaxation technique as a check-in, the researcher instructed the client to focus on each of the dream elements separately. In this session, the client summarized six distinct images present in the dream, and she drew all those that were not included in the original painting: the structure (Figure C-2) and the table and children (Figure C-3). Next, the client listed each image and wrote a phrase that she associated with each image and then an amplification of the significance of that phrase. The participant was not asked to order, rank or organize the images. These findings were summarized in key themes described in Table 2 below and are listed in the order the client brought them up, although they are listed slightly differently in the drawing (Figure C-4).

Moon’s Steps	Horizons -Dream Image	Association	Amplification
5. Identify horizons of the dream 6. Use amplification to explore meanings	House	A safe place	Everyone wants one
	Children	When I played with my siblings	The joy of life
	Sky and Stars	Deep feelings, satisfaction	Connection beyond this life
	Silhouette	Doubts, confusion	Mystery
	Chair	Support in any situation	Pause to assimilate something
	Table	Gathering at a given time	Necessary aspect of gathering

Table 2: Summary of Dream Images

Specific aspects of each dream image were salient. For example, the chair image included opposites of good and bad. The participant described how when a person receives sudden news,

good or bad, they are asked to sit down to receive it, and in a similar way, the chair supported her during the dream as it progressed through both good and bad experiences. The silhouette was more clearly defined as a protector: “Like a person that is going to protect another person...” (Appendix B-3) but was also an unexpected element. The table was defined as a normal aspect of daily life, for the most part, and the client stated it was not so important, but then stated that perhaps the table meant she was “invited to this, to a dinner or gathering that was more profound” (Appendix B-3). The participant ended this session with a summary or title statement: “The dream of our goodbye, looking him in the eyes and feeling the embrace that touched my soul!” (Figure C-4).

Session four. After a review of the previous session’s work and reading the notes of the associations already made, Isabela was asked to cluster the dream images.

Moon’s Steps	Cluster Groupings of horizon-dream images	Associations	Statement of existential concern
7. Repeat associations to clarify or expand 8. Cluster the horizons to identify connections 9. Create existential statements of concern	Group 1: the chair, the table, the house	“places and things of comfort; feeling safe and able rest, perhaps a support; also, the glasses (on the table) speak to me of satisfaction.”	“Remember to value what you have and what you need in life. I learned to appreciate what I have.”
	Group 2: the children, the silhouette, the starry sky	“joy and peace that are changed to worry about mystery when faced with a situation that is unsure, and the consolation of the light of hope in the stars”	“... there are good times and bad, but if we have faith we keep going, because we know all things end and nothing is forever. Life is like that, up and down, fall and get up and dust yourself off and continue. Don’t lose faith.”

Table 3: Groupings of Horizon-Dream Images

Without hesitation, the participant grouped the images as listed in Table 3, identified the patterns in the two sets of images and discussed the clusters articulately (Appendix B-4; Figure C-5). After a discussion of these groupings, the participant was asked to create statements of existential concern, described to the client as things that apply to her life now or that concern existence for people in general (Figure C-6).

Session five. The session began with a review of the clustered dream images and the statements of existential concern expressed in the previous session. The participant was asked to refine the statements of existential concern down to one statement associated with one image. Isabela stated she was drawn to the image of the silhouette because it was the image she understood least, and she was curious about the mystery she connected to the image. The step of animation was added to this session to further explore the central image. The participant was asked to define a course of action in response to the dream.

Before the animation exercise, the participant was reminded that if she became uncomfortable the exercise could be ended. First relaxation and breathing was used to focus and relax the participant and then she was guided to envision the dream scene and sensory experiences in that setting. The figure of the silhouette was then invited into the here and now of the therapy session, to experience different sensory aspects of the figure, and to question the figure. In this short exercise, lasting approximately ten minutes, the client arrived at some subtle new information:

Moon’s Steps and added step	Central Horizon-dream image; New information	Statement of existential concern
10. Summarize steps of existential concern 11. Define a course of action Added step: Animation	The silhouetted lady: -This figure will continue to be a mystery and elusive -The clothing was that of a woman, and included a long covering, like a mantle and it was flowing and tied at the waist -The figure was not frightening, rather something good -Participant was not afraid something would happen to her son if he went with the figure, but sorrowful of losing him -Participant voiced frustration that she could do nothing to change the situation -Participant expressed gratitude to the figure -Participant revealed her nightly practice of keeping an image by her table (of <i>la Virgin</i>) and lighting a candle, giving thanks, asking protection for her children -Participant stated she is not afraid of the darkness of night since the dream -Participant has been in dialogue with the dream for years	“Why did something so strange take my beloved son, and how was it that I gave permission? What mystery is concealed in this?”

Table 4: Central Horizon-Dream Image

Isabela expressed some indignation at the dream image, “How is it that something appears practically out of nowhere, to rob me of something that is so mine? Right? Take away what is mine!?” Yet the participant also stated the dream contained a request and was not forced: “I permitted him to go. And how, if I knew nothing about this figure? But there was something more that told me, ‘It has to be.’ So, I don’t understand this part” (Appendix B-5).

Session six. In the final session, the participant was invited to do a closing ritual (Appendix D) and given a time to commit to an action in response to the dream.

Moon's step, added step	Action in response to the dream	Paraphrase of participant's statement
12. Commit to action in response to the dream Added ritual	Look at the stars as an act of hope	'I look up and can't see, because of the clouds when it's overcast; but I know they are there, so I look for him and hope he is there waiting for me, though I can't see him: I must do this.'

Table 5: Action in Response to the Dream

The ritual consisted in setting up a small altar space with images from the dream work, a lit candle, bread and a photograph of the deceased child with the participant and two other of her children. The ritual was an opportunity for Isabela to share memories of her son and to celebrate the work of the study and any benefits she had experienced. Memories of her son centered on his relationship with his brother who was close in age, and who had a special connection to the deceased. Isabela had called this brother that same day, and he had offered to bring balloons to the son's grave since he lives nearby. Another memory Isabela shared was how meaningful it was to her when her son would come out to greet her every day as she returned from work. She described him as very affectionate. In these memories, the participant emphasized a special connection and intimacy with this particular child who had died. She expressed the need to maintain a connection, mirroring the special bonds she described in the memories: "To me this is really beautiful and important, to feel there can be this small connection." In the action response to the dream, the participant expressed hope, indicating a potential coping and regulation of emotion, and functioning as she stated she wanted to be present to her other children (Appendix B-6).

The final session ended with the investigator thanking the participant for her work in making the study possible, that the study would be made available to others who want to learn

about the role of dreams in trauma recovery, and that this was an important contribution she had made. The participant expressed repeatedly that she benefited from a deeper understanding of the dream and its meaning as it related to her recovery from trauma, especially because, at the time of the tragedy she had had no therapeutic intervention. The dream work sessions revealed dream images that the participant stated were meaningful and supportive of her recovery.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The dream state is an exchange between the conscious and unconscious mind. The participant in this study experienced a dream that facilitated an inner dialogue to help her in the aftermath of acute trauma. She was confronted with existential questions, such as, ‘Where did my child go? Is he suffering or at peace? Can I have contact with him? How?’ The ultimate question expressed was, ‘Can I let him go and continue living myself?’

The art therapy dream work used in this study allowed the images to speak, providing a structure for the participant to organize the material herself and to make sense of the dream as a response to the traumatic event. By staying with the various images of the dream, they are transformed and are able to perform the healing work (Tobin, 2006, quoted in Tripp, p. 181). The dream is both fulfillment of a wish, and a natural compensatory function in dealing with the aftermath of trauma for the participant. All the sessions were conducted in the original language of the participant, without which an in-depth exploration of the images would not have been possible.

The Dream as Wish Fulfillment

The dream took place approximately 2 to 3 months after the acute trauma, as the participant was struggling to overcome overwhelming emotional states and decompensation in her daily life. She sought understanding that would enable her to resolve the roadblock that kept her from moving forward: the fear that her son was suffering after death. The participant even imaged that her deceased son was cold and saw herself going to open the earth to take him from the grave to hold him (Appendix B-1). Thus, the participant’s waking life had a nightmarish

quality, as she could not easily escape these imaginations. They plagued her and fueled her emotional decompensation.

The function of the dream was expressed by the participant as the fulfillment of a wish. She expressed this wish as an overwhelming desire, offered in the form of a prayer, for help to overcome her intense feelings of grief. Specifically, she sought understanding that her son was no longer suffering: “My God, give me a sign... and I will do everything I can to overcome this.” The participant stated, “I dreamt, well, practically what I was hoping for” (Appendix B-1). Faced with an impasse, the dream gave her what she needed to move forward. The impasse is experience when external supports are not available, when the usual ways of doing things do not work, and the individual is stuck. In coming to terms with this situation, rather than avoiding it, a person is able to move forward (Corey, 2013, pp. 216-217).

What did the dream provide that helped the participant move forward? The participant was not employing a high level of psychological defenses post-trauma. Instead, she was confronted with death as a terrifying reality. To move forward, she needed to find a protective defense, an answer to the nightmarish question: is my good and innocent son suffering and am I also powerless to take action? Ego strength is defined as the capacity to acknowledge reality without resorting to denial and other primitive defenses, as well as the ability to use more mature defenses (McWilliams, 2011). The participant was trying to master the situation, confronting her grief with a minimum of defenses and a weakened ego strength that became overwhelmed. Unable to cope with the existential crisis of death, she had become more and more desperate. At this impasse, the dream functioned to assist her to bring overwhelming life events under control (Punamäki, 1998). Through symbolic images that guided her, the Self as an aspect of the

autonomous unconscious provided the needed information to help the participant perceive her situation in a way that facilitated better coping and progress (Lusebrink, 1988).

Compensation as a Necessary Aspect of Trauma Recovery

In the aftermath of trauma, dreams may serve a function of mastery, rehearsing the trauma until some resolution is reached. In this case study, the participant was already rehearsing the trauma in her waking life. The psyche compensated through the dream, giving the client supportive visual and symbolic imagery to provide needed meaning, needed psychological defenses. The dream functioned as a countering influence that could balance her inner psychic struggle with death. This happened in several different ways, through supportive and archetypal symbols and through specific images that provided hope.

Compensatory horizons: Inanimate objects. Specific horizons or dream images were connected to compensatory functions of support: the chair, the house and the table.

The chair. The chair, was related to the participant herself and could be representative of her resiliency. The participant stated she was seated in the chair for the duration of the dream and that she associated this with needing support to accept or assimilate news (bad or good). The chair also might represent a sense of ambivalence or ambiguity because the client experienced a sense of peace and relaxation initially, as she watched the children play, but then it turned to doubt when her son approached and asked to go with the silhouetted lady. If the participant and the chair became one in the dream, as it appears, it may reveal her inner resiliency as she finds support in good times and bad, a theme the participant stated she learned from the dream.

Individuation. Individuation is the unfolding pattern of a person towards wholeness and integration of a unique self (Jung, 1959). Jung held that “dreams are natural reaction of the self-

regulating psychic system,” and that vivid dreams offer contrasting and purposeful content especially when conscious attitudes may undermine vital needs (Jung, 1976, p. 248). In experiences of decompensation after trauma, the self is split and disorganized; similarly, in dissociative post-traumatic states the self is untethered and ungrounded. The chair provides an image of grounding and unification that is important for the participant, a unifying element she was not experiencing in her waking life. The participant is seated for the duration of the dream and is able to assimilate what happens in the dream from this grounded situation. Thus, the chair is symbolically related to Individuation, as a unifying factor in which the person becomes aware of Self as one reality. In Gestalt theory, a holistic approach that emphasizes here and now awareness, the chair technique is used to help clients imagine someone or some part of self is seated there and to dialogue with that entity (Corey, 2013). The participant may be involved in a dialogue or inner debate within herself, for which she needed support in order to have the possibility of a resolution.

Jung believed that the conscious ego should investigate and bolster the compensatory functions of dreams (Shafton, 1995, pp. 114-115). The art therapy intervention in this study is aimed at this work. The sessions used drawings and images to process the dream, and this led to the participant becoming more conscious of unconscious processes. As she stated, several images were not included in the original drawing, but were elucidated through the sessions, and as the participant became increasingly aware of them, she was able to find new meaning. The supportive elements of the chair, the house and the table all became more conscious, as they were either not present or minimally so in the original figure, but later became important elements. The dream, as a natural occurrence, itself a living experience, was listened to by the participant, and took on a large presence in her awareness. The use of free-association,

amplification and animation—together provided a framework to investigate and bring this information into awareness.

The house. The house image was a meaningful metaphor that had been overlooked in the original articulation of the dream, but contributed to the general experience of support. The image of the house was described as a way of escape by the participant, as it provided a door (Figure C-2) or a way out of her impasse. The image was depicted as two-story house, which may be reflected in the client's preoccupation with things 'above,' things that happen after death, the stars in the sky, the lady coming from another realm. According to Bogart (2009), the second story of the house archetype represents a higher plane of existence (p. 96). In contrast with the chair, in which only one person may sit, the house has a connotation of family or community, of the post-trauma continuance of the participant's life with her other children. Another meaning for the house might be a threshold: the person is invited to pass through the doorway of personal and psychological growth into a new way of being. As a representation of the inner structure of the personality, our "life edifice," the house could indicate ego strength (Bogart, 2009, p. 96). Finally, the house meant a haven for the participant, as she stated there was a protective or covering aspect of a home, something "that everyone desires" (Appendix B-3). Still, the house also had an ambiguous aspect. Whose home was this? Did it represent a homecoming for the Isabela's son? An opportunity for her growth and hope for the future? These are questions that could be explored through on-going therapy, and they elucidate the richness of dream imagery, especially in supportive post-trauma care.

The table. The table represented fellowship, an important and well-known value in Hispanic culture. The Spanish term, *convivencia*, literally means "to live together." The dream image of the table was set with elements of a meal that had either already been shared or was

about to be shared—another ambiguous element of the dream. The elements of the table were discovered through the dream work sessions, as a peripheral element that gained meaning as symbolic of satisfaction, especially the glasses on the table, and of a wider community, possibly indicating the community support the participant received at the time of the accident. The comfort, satisfaction and well-being of a celebratory meal are reflective of the events preceding the accident, and also of the archetype of the Feast or shared meal, the Banquet of Heaven. The table may also represent the inability to enjoy life, and the need to gradually return to taking food and drink for survival, to living again after trauma has robbed one of the desire to live.

Compensatory horizons: Dynamic archetypal figures. The children, the lady and the starry sky are horizons or dream images that possess interactive, dynamic characteristics. It is helpful to understand these images in terms of archetypes, symbols Jung described as “congenital and pre-existent instinctual model, or pattern of behavior” (Shafton, 1995, p. 78), which emerge from the unconscious. Especially the lady, an image the participant identified as covered and only seen partially since the face was not visible and there was no direct interaction with this figure (Appendix B-1). The lady could be a figure of the primordial mother. The dynamic archetypal images have a dynamic quality in the dream, and each one evokes a response from the dreamer. They animate the dreamer to take action.

The children. The dream image of children playing reminded the participant of her own positive and happy childhood. It drew her to the possibility of finding joy again in life. This image and its connection to her past memory was vivid for the participant. As one of the clearer experiences in the dream sequence, it was unmarred by any negative feelings. The participant stated that her son was in this group of playing, happy children. This indicated a resolution of her conflict as to whether or not he was suffering. It contrasted to her waking life images of him

suffering from the cold or experiencing suffocation under the ground. Only when he left this group of children did the dreamer's joy falter.

Although the dream image of children playing was not the central dream image for the participant at the time of the study, it provides one of the most important answers to her wish for a sign that her son was at peace. This detail is important for therapy, to pay attention to such supportive symbols in dream work invites the dream symbol to have a role in recovery and will likely strengthen the therapeutic relationship. Since this image was the one most tied to joy, and since it related directly to a happy state after death, it set the tone for the entire sequence as supportive. The dreamer saw the children first, and from them her son emerged.

The starry sky. A second image was the starry sky, which carried meanings of hope and transcendence for the participant. The night sky was a symbol of light in the darkness, similar to the one she had experienced in the hospital, when the hospital staff told her they had revived her youngest son: "I saw a small little light, far off. I felt like I was in a tunnel. I saw darkness everywhere, and I didn't want to see or hear anything, but deep down I saw this little light that gave me hope" (Appendix B-1). That was her first moment of hope in the midst of total darkness. The stars reflected a similar experience of tiny lights in the context of overwhelming darkness, enabling the dreamer to begin to hope again. Seen as an archetype, the starry sky connects the participant to things cosmic, and to the universal theme of light and goodness that overcome darkness and evil.

The stars inspired the participant with a second hope that was pivotal in the process of letting go during the grief process. Only after she believed she could *communicate* with her son, through the stars, did she allow him to depart. When the dream image of her son spoke to her, he

stated she could be connected to him through the stars. When the stars formed the words, “I love you,” she was able to let go. This imagery also constituted the action she took after the dream (Appendix B-6), going outside to look at the stars. The participant stated she continues to receive hope and consolation from this simple practice. It was also identified as an important memory, for like the dream image of the children, it was connected to the participant’s childhood memory of her father teaching her about the constellations. This shows how emotion guides dreaming (Hartmann, 1996) to provide a context that the person dreaming can relate to and which has a calming affect (p. 153). The participant had a positive relationship with her father, and a consoling memory that was connected to the times she spent stargazing with him (Appendix B-1). This contextualizing of the dream may have assisted her to imagine a happy ending for her deceased son after the tragic accident, thus helping her to integrate traumatic material (Punamäki, 1998).

Another important aspect of the starry sky is that it exemplified the phenomenological principle of intentionality, a focused attention on one object which leads to the object existing more for the client than previously (Betensky, 1995). The participant eventually (Appendix B-6) expressed the desire to keep her focus on this image by looking at the night sky as a daily practice. This may indicate a need to let the dream become more real and its meaning more apparent. This is in line with Aizenstat (2003) who viewed dreams as alive and open to on-going understandings or layers of meaning: uncovering or unfolding of the dream in order to make its message known to the dreamer.

The transcendence of the stars also links this dream image to cosmic themes, such as nearness to God and heaven, things that are beyond. The participant stated it was the most beautiful element in her dream, that it made an impression on her and has stayed with her over

the years (Appendix B-3). The element of the stars is what she chose to live with as an on-going ritual of the dream, a hope ritual that provided a possible way to communicate with her son in the here and now, through her reflections and longings, and to hopefully be reunited with him after her own death. The stars provided a symbolic answer to some of the participant's existential questions: they answer that there is hope, although how hope is possible remains a mystery, a mystery expressed most clearly in the last image, that of the silhouette of the lady.

The silhouette. This dream image symbolizes mystery. The participant could not see the face of the silhouetted figure clearly, or speak to her directly, and at first this prevented the participant from being completely at peace. Initially the figure was very ambivalent, and only the assurance from her son in the dream, his insistence in fact, equipped the participant to allow her son to depart with the lady. Her painting shows the silhouette as a central image, with the son taking the hand of the lady, a gesture of trust, and departing with her.

One of the benefits of the dream work in the study, was that the participant stated that some of the doubt and confusion around this figure was resolved (Appendix B-5). She chose to confront this most problematic aspect of her dream through the exercise of animation, and was able to come to a sense of gratitude towards the dream through reflection on this image (Appendix B-4). Animation (Aizenstat, 2011) was used to help bring the dream image to life in the present, and to respect the dream as having a life of its own, in a spirit of openness and playfulness. Although the participant did not engage in audible, present tense dialogue with the image during the animation session, she did articulate several ways in which the image did “reveal itself” (Aizenstat, 2011, p. 24).

The exercise of animation used with this image was not satisfied by one session, as the participant stated, “I don't think I got a lot of answers” (Appendix B-5). This points to the need

to have further sessions to explore this image. However, it should be noted that the participant did uncover some new information through the animation exercise, such as the silhouette having a more benign character. The participant also related the paucity of “answers” to the on-going and mysterious nature of the image and the dream, an expression of her willingness to live with the questions and to tolerate ambiguity. Her willingness to accept this ambiguity in waking life is a sign of ego strength (McWilliams, 2011). An interesting observation was made, that the participant changed her speech regarding the image after having done animation. In session six, she spoke of the lady in her dream using present tense language and emphasizing connection, saying, “I hope she is happy with him and he is happy too. That he may be now like a spirit of light, I imagine, and even so, that they would have a good connection between them” (Appendix B-6). The participant seemed to spontaneously repeat the exercise in animation that was done in session five by speaking of the image as a here and now, dynamic entity, and this seemed to hold meaning for her. The participant also repeated that acting this way helped her to cope, although she did not claim to know the certainty of these connections. She stated that this dream image and the others seemed strong to her and that living with them helped her.

Although the participant stated she felt more aware of the dream image as benign, it would continue to be mysterious to her (Appendix B-5). She identified the silhouette as a female protective figure, possibly a mother or angelic figure. While the participant did not articulate the image as the primordial mother, a central archetypal figure, one might say that it functioned as such. The mother as archetype represents the full cycle of life, from gestation and birth, to nurturing and protection throughout life (Bogart, 2009, p. 76), which mirrors the consistent theme of protection mentioned by the participant. This archetypal image could be seen as a type of transcendent mother, such as the Lady of Guadalupe, whose veil is covered with stars and

popular in Hispanic cultures. It could represent some other figure of Mary, considered to be a cosmic Mother to all, who comes to mother the small child who recently was separated from his own mother. Another possibility is that the silhouette figure represents the archetype of Self. By assisting the participant to let go of her grief and to move forward in trauma recovery, the silhouette as Self archetype may be seen as enabling the participant to mother herself. However, what she consciously recognized as the key consoling factor was that her son who had died would be safe, cared for, secure.

The lady dream image is a powerful contrast to the horrific images of death and loss the participant struggled with. It provided a guide for the child's journey to another place. Another way to perceive this image is to see the lady as a guide to the participant herself, who behaved as a lost child in her overwhelming grief. The participant too was going on a journey, seeking to go forward without her son. This way of seeing the dream shows its important compensatory function in survival after a traumatic event, especially since the person in the case study had no therapeutic intervention to help her at the time. In this way of seeing the dream, the silhouetted lady emerges from the deepest psychic, primary process functioning to provide guidance to the participant: a wounded child, a wounded self that cannot find a way forward.

Existential Questions

The dream helped the participant confront her existential crisis by providing her with a metaphor to sort out her many questions. Her statements of existential concern were, first, the transitory nature of life: "To dream it maybe, is like to desire it," and the dream helps us to value "each thing, although it might be simple," since we can't be sure how much longer we will have it (Appendix B-4). Second, the participant expressed the existential concern of uncertainty: "We

can plan what we are going to do and how things will go, and anything can interrupt us.” She tempered this uncertainty, however, with statements of hope and resiliency: “Then, at the same time that light of the stars is like faith we feel in believing” (Appendix B-4). The dream finally helped her feel at peace and left her that memory, “that consolation, that everything would be well.” Thirdly, the participant expressed the existential concern of the general mystery of life, a mixture of pain and consolation because in the dream there was “nothing too bad, only mysterious. But life itself is a mystery! That we are in the process of discovering day by day” (Appendix B-4).

While psychology does not address questions of theology, it does study questions of existential concern, for they are questions our patients must face. No psychological study can say whether or not someone who has died is in a “better place,” but it can test the function of belief and hope in the midst of death and loss. Attending to existential questions is important for contemporary care. It recognizes that the needs of clients are complex, spanning biological, social, psychological and spiritual factors (Corey, 2013).

This discussion is written on the day called Holy Saturday in the calendar of many Christian churches. It commemorates the day after the death of Jesus but before his resurrection, a day when his mother is honored in the midst of indescribable sorrow. It is a liminal space, much like that of the dream the participant describes. It is a post-trauma state before hope is woken up and a new day can dawn. Holy Saturday is a metaphor for post-traumatic liminal space, in which the individual must sort out a response. In the case study presented here, the participant was in this space for over two months, and reported that during that time she felt the hopelessness that is a risk factor for PTSD (Peres et al., 2006). The images of the dream were significant enough to the participant to alter her perception of hopelessness and help her get

beyond the existential crisis in which she was caught. The case study sheds light on the effects of regained hope, resiliency, and self-healing in survivors of different types of trauma. Paying attention to such supportive and constructive dream images provides important information to guide treatment and provide care to survivors of trauma.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has the potential to guide clinicians in offering treatment for trauma survivors through dream work that explores meaning-making from the client's point of view. Trauma disrupts the power of individuals to make sense of a world that has been devastated by tragedy or violence, so investigating a dream the client has stated was supportive for recovery is likely to provide insight into the recovery process. This approach supported the participant in this study to become more aware of self and of personal resilience, while increasing hope and other positive emotions necessary for recovery. This was shown by the participant's initial desire to share her dream, her enthusiasm for the study, the identification of compensatory horizon-dream images and dynamic archetypes that she stated had meaning for her in the integration of trauma. The study provides a rationale for providers to use dream work as a beneficial therapeutic focus in treatment. Trauma survivors may be assisted by a greater sense of empowerment as a result of finding insight within their own psychic experience and processing of the dream by identifying specific factors that create meanings that help them integrate traumatic experience.

While the study was limited in scope, spanning six sessions, it provided a rationale to for using dream work that contains supportive imagery and the use of art therapy to reveal the richness and power of this imagery. The dream imagery in this study offered a great deal of information about how the participant survived and continues to recover from trauma. The process of uncovering those images revealed aspects of the healing process that originated within the imagination and unconscious processes of the individual, to which the therapist is a handmaid. Understanding the experience of trauma survivors at this deep level provides an important orientation for treatment. Through listening first to the client, through recognizing in

what ways they are already engaging in the process of healing, the therapist is able to foster strengths and better provide supportive care. An important recommendation would be to design studies that embrace client autonomy and self-reflection in treatment.

This study sets the stage for further research into the use of art therapy in dream work, for art deals in the world of imagery that is also the world of dreams. Art therapy was an important aspect of this work, as the client chose to share the dream in the intake session and to make a painting that revealed some key elements of the dream. Dream work combined with art therapy could be a useful tool in helping individuals to live with their dreams over a longer period of time and allowing the images to be part of the conversation. Dream work is more of a process or a relationship than an interpretation, so creating images, keeping them and living with them can foster this relationship. This happened for the participant in the study, who ritualized her relationship to the dream by keeping an image near her kitchen table and by intentionally looking at the night sky as an act of hope.

New studies could identify further methods of using dream work in the trauma population. New interventions using art therapy and dream work could be created for use in acute trauma recovery or for continued use in a shelter for survivors of domestic violence. This kind of approach would be designed in a way consistent with trauma informed care. For example, it would be helpful to identify trauma survivors who experienced compensatory dreaming or other dreams important to the client, and to track the sources of the imagery and which kinds of imagery were most helpful. The stories of people's trauma are as diverse as the people themselves. In a diverse population such as the US, it would be constructive to learn more about how culture, religion and experiences in the family of origin might influence dreaming. When dreams help, what enables individuals to find that source of help from the depths? It

would be important to use the primary language of the participants of such studies in order to foster communication of the dream and dream images in a way that respects cultural experience.

Another interesting question would be to learn under what kinds of conditions compensatory dreams are reported in contrast to mastery or other types of dreams, and to seek to learn the impact of dreams in trauma recovery in a larger number of clients, or in a specific ethnic group or population. Further research in using art therapy in dream work would help provide insight into the relationship between verbal and nonverbal responses to trauma. Studies are needed to better understand the relationship between dreams and PTSD, and what kinds of interventions in dream work would help individuals who experience trauma to avoid developing PTSD. Studies using dream work and neuroscience would be especially helpful in identifying the ways in which dreams of different types may affect stress levels.

This study combines the work of art therapy and dream work to offer a unique way to approach working with trauma survivors. While it does not provide a new art therapy and dream work intervention, it offers important theoretical foundations for further study and development of new interventions. This case study provides the rationale needed to support further investigations into dreams, to discover how dreams can be supportive in trauma recovery, and to develop new art therapy interventions that facilitate trauma-informed dream work.

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APPENDIX A: Informed Consents in English and Spanish

Figure A-1

Informed Consent for Dream Study**Type of Study**

This is a case study using dream work and art therapy.

The role of the investigator is to meet with the participant in individual sessions to review the participant's individual history and to explore the dream and its impact on healing from trauma.

The participant agrees to meet during six sessions at the prearranged counseling center to participate in the study. The participant understands that the sessions will be recorded and transcribed. A brief description of the purpose of each session follows. The participant will:

1. Review personal history, the impact of the dream and the art created
2. Write a script of the dream, view art with investigator and read script aloud
3. Identify key meanings (horizons) through association; read aloud
4. Review notes of associations and identify their source in the art; clarify and comment; cluster key meanings (horizons)
5. Identify main areas of concern and possible course of action
6. Commits to action in response to the dream, and share in a ritual of closure

All work will be supervised by the on-site art therapist and the thesis advisor.

Potential Impact of the Study

There are various outcomes that may affect the client. During the course of dream exploration, the client may experience some anxiety related to traumatic memories. The objective of the study, however, is to explore a dream the client reported was helpful, and which could be understood as a source of healing and resilience. A potential benefit to the client is a better understanding of the dream and its meaning in the healing process and a more intentional commitment to the healing process.

The clinical context is a shelter for survivors of domestic abuse. The participant is a (former) resident who is receiving on-going care.

Request use of art created in previous session(s).

This study is based on previous work in art therapy with the client, who agrees to use the art and initial report of the dream as the starting point for this study.

Art Therapist:



Client:



2-03-17

Figure A-2

Consentimiento Informado**Tipo de Estudio**

El estudio es de un caso particular utilizando sueños y arte terapia.

El papel del investigador es reunirse con el participante en sesiones individuales para repasar la historia personal del individuo y Explorar el sueño y su impacto en la sanación del trauma.

El/la participante consiente a reunirse 6 veces al centro de terapia para participar en el estudio. El/la participante comprende que las sesiones serán grabados y transcritos.

El trabajo será supervisado por el arte terapeuta y la asesora académica.

Sigue una corta descripción de cada sesión. El/la participante hará lo siguiente:

1. Repasar su historia personal, el impacto del sueño y el arte creado
2. Escribir un guion del sueño, mirar el arte con el investigador y leerlo en voz alta
3. Identificar los significados claves (horizontes) por medio de la asociación; leerlos en voz alta
4. Repasar las notas sobre asociaciones e identificar sus orígenes en el arte; clarificar y comentar; agrupar los significados claves (horizontes)
5. Identificar áreas de preocupación y posibles acciones como correspondencia al sueño
6. Hacer una resolución como correspondencia al sueño y compartir un rito de resolución

Impacto Potencial del Estudio

Hay varias eventualidades de este estudio que pueda impactar al cliente. Durante el curso de la investigación del sueño, el/la cliente puede experimentar ansiedad acerca de la memoria de la tragedia. El objetivo del estudio, sin embargo, es de estudiar un sueño que el cliente declaró que fue de ayuda, y que podía reforzar el proceso de la sanación y la capacidad de recuperación. Un beneficio potencial para el/la cliente es una mejor comprensión del sueño y su significación en el proceso de la sanación y un compromiso más intencional al proceso de sanación.

El contexto clínico es un refugio para supervivientes de violencia doméstica. El/la participante es o fue residente del refugio que está recibiendo servicios.

Pedida de la inclusión del arte de una sesión anterior.

Este estudio se basa en trabajo que se hizo en una sesión anterior de arte terapia con el/la cliente, quien está de acuerdo con utilizar el reporte del sueño como punto de partida de este estudio.

Arte terapeuta:



Cliente:


 2-03-17

Figure A-3**Informed Consent for Dream Study****Type of Study**

This is a case study using dream work and art therapy.

The role of the investigator is to meet with the participant in individual sessions to review the participant's individual history and to explore the dream and its impact on healing from trauma.

The participant agrees to meet during six sessions at the prearranged counseling center to participate in the study. The participant understands that the sessions will be recorded and transcribed. A brief description of the purpose of each session follows. The participant will:

1. Review personal history, the impact of the dream and the art created
2. Write a script of the dream, view art with investigator and read script aloud
3. Identify key meanings (horizons) through association; read aloud
4. Review notes of associations and identify their source in the art; clarify and comment; cluster key meanings (horizons)
5. Identify main areas of concern and possible course of action
6. Commits to action in response to the dream, and share in a ritual of closure

All work will be supervised by the on-site art therapist and the thesis advisor.

Potential Impact of the Study

There are various outcomes that may affect the client. During the course of dream exploration, the client may experience some anxiety related to traumatic memories. The objective of the study, however, is to explore a dream the client reported was helpful, and which could be understood as a source of healing and resilience. A potential benefit to the client is a better understanding of the dream and its meaning in the healing process and a more intentional commitment to the healing process.

The clinical context is a shelter for survivors of domestic abuse. The participant is a (former) resident who is receiving on-going care.

Request use of art created in previous session(s).

This study is based on previous work in art therapy with the client, who agrees to use the art and initial report of the dream as the starting point for this study.

Art Therapist: _____

Client: _____

Figure A-4**Consentimiento Informado****Tipo de Estudio**

El estudio es de un caso particular utilizando sueños y arte terapia.

El papel del investigador es reunirse con el participante en sesiones individuales para repasar la historia personal del individuo y Explorar el sueño y su impacto en la sanación del trauma.

El/la participante consiente a reunirse 6 veces al centro de terapia para participar en el estudio. El/la participante comprende que las sesiones serán grabados y transcritos.

El trabajo será supervisado por el arte terapeuta y la asesora académica.

Sigue una corta descripción de cada sesión. El/la participante hará lo siguiente:

1. Repasar su historia personal, el impacto del sueño y el arte creado
2. Escribir un guion del sueño, mirar el arte con el investigador y leerlo en voz alta
3. Identificar los significados claves (horizontes) por medio de la asociación; leerlos en voz alta
4. Repasar las notas sobre asociaciones e identificar sus orígenes en el arte; clarificar y comentar; agrupar los significados claves (horizontes)
5. Identificar áreas de preocupación y posibles acciones como correspondencia al sueño
6. Hacer una resolución como correspondencia al sueño y compartir un rito de resolución

Impacto Potencial del Estudio

Hay varias eventualidades de este estudio que pueda impactar al cliente. Durante el curso de la investigación del sueño, el/la cliente puede experimentar ansiedad acerca de la memoria de la tragedia. El objetivo del estudio, sin embargo, es de estudiar un sueño que el cliente declaró que fue de ayuda, y que podía reforzar el proceso de la sanación y la capacidad de recuperación. Un beneficio potencial para el/la cliente es una mejor comprensión del sueño y su significación en el proceso de la sanación y un compromiso más intencional al proceso de sanación.

El contexto clínico es un refugio para supervivientes de violencia doméstica. El/la participante es o fue residente del refugio que está recibiendo servicios.

Pedida de la inclusión del art de una sesión anterior.

Este estudio se basa en trabajo que se hizo en una sesión anterior de arte terapia con el/la cliente, quien está de acuerdo con utilizar el reporte del sueño como como punto de partida de este estudio.

Arte terapeuta: _____

Cliente: _____

APPENDIX B: Art Therapy Dream Work Sessions

Interviewer: Researcher

Participant: Trauma Survivor

Interview Setting: Domestic Abuse Shelter

Appendix B-1: Dream Work Session One 2/3/2017

I: I'd like to thank for you for being willing to participate in this study on dreams. I believe you have already reviewed the Informed Consent?

P: Yes, for me it's a pleasure to participate in this and I'm glad to share with you and certain others about this case.

I: Thank you. Now I have the Informed Consent written out in English and Spanish. After you have finished reading it, if you are in agreement please sign both. I have added a description of each session so you may see in greater detail what is involved and what we will be doing.

P: Very good. [reads and signs Informed Consent]

I: We are recording each session, and I will let you know if I have to stop and restart the computer. Let's get started then. Can you tell me about your life, how you grew up and where, and about your family so we know more of your personal history?

P: My name is _____ and I was born in a small farm in the state of _____, Mexico. I grew up with my parents and my 11 siblings. For me it's the most beautiful memory I have from my childhood. I really loved playing with my younger sister. I loved my dad very much. I think I was more partial to him, although I loved my mother very much too and we were with her a lot. I

was more with my father and he was like my hero. I don't know why I saw him that way, perhaps because he worked so much, and when he went into town he always brought us things. And this for me was a big deal, in the afternoons when he arrived so tired and even though he was tired, I still would come up to him so he could caress my hair, and I loved that. I still remember it like it was yesterday. I loved to look at the stars and ask him, 'What is that up there,' and he would explain that constellation is such and such and the other is such and such, and in earlier times people used the stars to guide them, and they knew it was almost dawn because the constellation was in a certain place, like the Goats or the Ox could be seen. I loved that he explained these things to me.

I: A lovely memory for you...

P: Yes...

I: What was it like to have so many siblings?

P: For me it was really nice to have lots of brothers and sisters. The older ones would leave the home when the rest of us were small. They started getting married and there were fewer of us, but we knew how to get along really well. We participated in games and all that and for me it was really lovely, and maybe for this I also had six children. And wanted to see them play like we did, although of course times change and today it's not the same thing but amongst themselves they have adapted and have learned to get along.

I: And what work did your dad do?

P: He was a farmer and you could say he was a rancher because he owned cattle. He sowed corn and beans, a little of everything. And we helped too, and for this reason I know a little about these things, farming and harvesting and so forth. Although when it was time for fertilizing the corn, it's called *milpa*, we complained because the leaves were rough and we'd say we didn't want to go, but when we were working we'd find the pleasure of being there.

I: At what age did you start working in the fields?

P: Oh, something like 10 years old. They would start to take us. Before that they'd say, "No, you are too small." Yes, we went anyway, when we were very little and I remember that once we hit 10 we could go more often to help and everything.

I: Did you go to school?

P: Yes. We went to school and we played a lot too [laughs]. But it was only one class for 1st through 5th graders in those days so we all went together. We went from 9 in the morning until 2 in the afternoon. So, we had the whole afternoon to go and help. And sometimes, since my dad went early, when we got out of school my mom would prepare lunch for us and we would take food for my dad. Yeah, I really enjoyed that. We would eat something, what do you call it when you eat in the country?

I: Oh, a picnic?

P: Uh huh! For me it was something like that.

I: It seems like a life very close to nature, pleasant?

P: Yes, it was like that.

I: Can you tell me something about your life as you got older? After the time when you were working and as part of your family, as a girl?

P: Well, I think my girlhood and part of my adolescence, because I got married so young, at 15, was the best and there weren't things that traumatized me. All the bad things started when I was married. Because when you are young, you think that getting married is a dream. You don't imagine what it really is and less so at that age, right? I imagined it was only honey, honey like my dad used to say, but it wasn't true. After I was married, he didn't show so many kindnesses towards me, and then he began to behave badly because he drank a lot. That's when I started to realize how different life is from what one dreams.

I: Can you repeat that? [resets transcription]

P: That is when I started to realize how different life is from what one dreams. In a way, it makes you kind of, what should I say... sad, to see that things are not what you thought. And more when you feel that there is no way to go back, you can only keep going, find other ways of continuing. Wanting to be well, but perhaps it's out of your control.

I: Can you describe your marriage, how long it lasted, how your first... your husband behaved and when you had children?

P: Yes, well, as I was saying, I started to realized that marriage was not as beautiful as I had believed, because of the way he treated me, and the only bad thing my parents did was tell us that when we got married we had to choose well, meaning... it was true and right that they said this, right, because when you want to get married you have to look well who you are choosing because once leave the house you can't come back home. So, I left home believing this, and when I got tired of this person, I had no ability to consider that I could talk to my parents and return, because although I knew they loved us very much—we had their support—but to a certain extent I believed they wouldn't support me in this case because they had already told me so clearly, right? So, whatever happens you have to put up with it, because for them it was a belief that if you get married you have to stay. So then, yes, it was a bit long but to some degree I am grateful that God gave patience to tolerate everything I had to live through because in the midst of the suffering and other things I also had many blessings, also that of having children with this person. Because those were the most beautiful moments for me, and I believe in some way for him too because during the time when I was pregnant and had my children was when he showed me the most kindness. And that's when I thought, 'Do I really matter to him, then? Because he was kind and took care of me and everything, but when he was drunk nothing mattered to him, and he said lots of things, he was disrespectful towards me and many times he even hurt me.

I: Physically?

P: Yes. And I wasn't even capable of telling my parents. They didn't know about it. They just thought he was a little crazy, yes, they know when he would go around drunk and that kind of thing but they didn't know he hit me. Then, many times he ended up hitting me and I just had to tolerate it. Until we left the family farm, after we had children.

I: How, old were you then?

P: Well, I got married when I was 15; my first son was born when I was 16, almost 17; my daughter when I was 19; and the third when I was 21. And that's when we left the farm where my parents lived. We went to a town called Morelia and at first I thought it was better my parents not know that I had a life that was... not so pretty. But once I was there I felt sadder, because I was more alone and didn't have my family, and then he felt like he had more rights or more power over me, right? And that's when I had my fourth son. And for a time, he came here to the United States, and when he came back he was even worse. He said he didn't know what I had been doing during the time he was away. During that time, I made the decision that I didn't want to be with him anymore, because it was such a stressful life not just for me but for my children. But when I told him, and he saw that I was decided to do this, he proposed coming here, because here it was going to be a different life. And we talked to his brothers, who were here already, and they said they would agree to be supportive of me, because they knew him and how impulsive he was, right? And that's when we decided to come here, But I told him I accepted but only on condition that we all came together, he, I and the children. Because at first, he suggested leaving the children and coming just us, but I couldn't separate myself from them. I said, no, all together. And yes, we came all together, first we sent the children and when they were safely here, we came.

I: The children came first?

P: We came, and we stayed on the border of Mexicali, and the children came and stayed with his brothers and then we came about a week later. So, we arrived here, we stayed a short time with his brother and everything was going fine. They helped us find an apartment.

I: Which state were you in?

P: California. They got us an apartment and we moved in and we lasted barely a few months doing well, 2 or 3 months and he began with his things again...

I: With hitting you?

P: Yes, he started drinking with his friends, and he would wake me up to make food for them... until one day he attacked me in a really ugly way and argued with me about things that to me were of little importance, things that he could see were not true, what he was saying. It was because in that time we had only one telephone in the house and he called, but a cousin of his

was calling me to ask where he son was, and he was with him (my husband) drinking. And right then he called me, but I didn't answer because I was speaking with his cousin. So, he could hear that the line was busy and he came to the house and when he arrived I had finished talking. He stated demanding, 'why didn't you answer the telephone? With whom were you speaking?' and I told him the truth, 'your cousin was asking about her son.' But he didn't believe me. He broke the telephone and we started to argue. Then he took a knife from the kitchen and I was so afraid that I wanted to run out, but when I went to open the door I could sense he was near me so I turned around and held him off with my hand and him with the knife in his hand. And well, the children saw this. They were all crying and yelling, 'What are they going to do? What are you going to do?' And we were struggling and we fell to the floor. My oldest son ran out and called the police. There was a police station nearby, and then they arrived and arrested my husband and they sent me to a shelter.

I: The children too?

P: Yes, with the children. And I went to the shelter but in those days, you couldn't do much to help a person who was illegal and whose husband was also illegal. They could help you if your abuser had documents. They explained that for me there wasn't much help. Then I was afraid I would lose my apartment, so I decided to leave the shelter, the placed was called _____, and I really like that name. It seemed to me perfect for my situation at that time, but since my husband was under arrest, they thought it was alright to return to the apartment. So, I went back with the children. Later he was released from jail and went to live with relatives and started to call and get in touch with me, saying the everything would be fine, that he was sorry and things like that. I told him that if I didn't have enough proof that he would in fact change, I would not give him any opportunity. I will give you a chance when I see that you are truly ready to repent, because in Mexico you told me that coming here, things would be different and here we are and things get worse and worse. So how am I going to believe you? Then he told me he was going to do it. So, then he began therapy and did everything the court ordered him to do. In the end, well, yes, when he finished with everything and he brought his diploma of completion of the therapy sessions, he said, "I did this for you and for the children. Here it is, and I want an opportunity for a different life. I realize I am ill and it was my fault." So, we decided to give it another chance, and I believe this was right, because... it wasn't as perfect as we would've liked, but he never hit me again at least, and this brought me a little relief. Then my fifth son was born. And when I finally thought we had a better life, when my son was two...

I: the last one, the youngest?

P: Yes. He was two, and my husband behaved better. I believed that now we were going to have the family that I wanted, and it was during that time the accident happened.

I: Ah.

P: I don't know, I don't understand how it's possible that all the time we were together, 17 years, and of those 10 to 12 were so bad, such a bad relationship, and the other 5 to 7 when things were getting better... it ended.

I: It ended with the accident?

P: Yes. But in the end I was at peace because sometimes I was afraid of what people said, that if your marriage ends God will punish you, but I didn't think it was my fault, because perhaps I was also not a perfect wife, but I felt I gave a lot of myself, and he didn't value it. And then afterward, when he was doing his part, then this happens, and I reflected, how can things happen like this, that when things are getting better it all ends?

I: Um hum.

P: But to some degree I felt at peace because I reflected that at least I gave him the opportunity to return, to show that he had repented and to improve his family life. So, I feel like I did what was in my power to do.

I: Um hmm.

P: So, this helps me a little to feel better because I think, if I had never forgiven him or accepted what happened, and it was his destiny that this was the length of time he would live. Then I don't know how I would have felt if I had never given him the chance.

I: Can you describe the accident so we have this description for the study?

P: Yes. Sometimes it is still a little painful, a little-a lot! Because, as you know, along with him I also lost one of my children, that hurts a lot. But it's something that, in reality, it's good to share it [pause]. That day we went to a family gathering, not a large party but a birthday party for a child who was only one year old. It was his nephew, the grandchild of his brother. And those children I knew them as well since they were little and I had a lot of affection for them. It was a Sunday. I had worked that day because they had asked people who cleaned offices to work clean the offices. Normally I didn't work Sundays, but that day they asked me to, and I accepted and so I went to work in the morning and he went to his brother's house to help. When I left work, I called him and he came to my work to pick me up, and he told me we were going home to get the children ready and then spend some time with his brother, and I told him that was fine. Then went home, I got the children and myself ready and we left. Everything was going well, we were enjoying the food at the party and I remember my child, the one who died, he loved to go to the, Winchell's, something like that.

I: The restaurant?

P: [nods]. He loved that place and he asked to go, there was one near my brother's, my brother in law's house, and he asked me, "mom, can I go buy something from there?" and I told him, "Son, we just ate here." There was food there, but he wanted a hotdog with toppings, and I told him it was okay and gave him some money. And he went and bought his hotdog, and he was really happy and was playing with his cousins. And we played music and were dancing and having fun. The little child was dancing in the middle of all the people. It was around 10 or 10:30pm. And then he said we should go home because he felt very tired, and I think he was quite drunk. So, we started saying our goodbyes and we left, but he was saying he was going to drive but I knew he was quite drunk because he went to get the car and didn't turn the lights on but was just driving and he stopped the car so we could get in, and he told me we had to give a ride to a friend of his who didn't have a ride to the same city we were driving to. They were two different cities, small ones, from _____ to _____. And I didn't want to because we didn't have enough space, barely enough for us and the children and even then, we were short one space. I didn't want to fight. I knew we were doing better but also that something could upset him and he might get on the wrong side of me. And even more since we were with so many people, I thought, if he gets on my wrong side of me and makes a scene, really ugly, I accepted. My daughter wasn't there, only the other four. So, I told my (other) daughter they should put on the seatbelts two in one so they would leave a space for the other man, my husband's friend. But my son, J wanted to go with his Dad, so he put him in front on his legs. And he agreed that I could drive as long as we took his friends. We made a deal, we take your friend but I drive, because you aren't even turning the lights on.

I: Um hum.

P: So, we left but we took a route, maybe it wasn't the best because there wasn't a lot of light or rather, there wasn't any light. There were lots of ups and downs; it was in the mountains and when we were about half way or closer to _____, just minutes before arriving I felt that the car was speeding up and I tried to brake, and it was the greatest terror to feel that the brake didn't respond! And I remember so clearly how I felt that fear and I thought and said, "My God, the brakes are not working!" and I remember he told me, "You aren't pressing it hard enough. Brake hard!" that's all I heard him say to me. Everything was so fast. I just thought I have to stop the car when I have space, so I wanted to veer left but there was a mountain side and on the other side, there wasn't... it was empty.

I: Like a cliff?

P: Uh huh. It wasn't too deep but on that side, there wasn't anything to stop me. But at the moment I was about to veer left I saw another car coming and I had to turn back to the lane but it was a narrow two lane road and there was dirt, sand, and I think one of the tires hit the sand because I felt us go flying...

I: At that moment.

P: I can explain it, and I feel like people would think there was enough time but, in reality it was seconds, everything happened like that, so fast! I just felt we were flying and I heard a kind of sound, and when everything stopped I was grabbing the car's steering wheel. When I turned to one side I saw that my husband wasn't there, and I felt something surge through my body, like "what happened?" I turned at that moment and thought of my children and I said, "Children, where are you?" and no one answered. There was no one except the other gentleman, my husband's friend who was also in the car, but I couldn't see anyone else. The impulse or instinct of a mother—well I saw there was no window, because I tried to open the door but it was wrecked and wouldn't open. Since there was no glass in the window I jumped through the window, and the moment I got out of the car I heard my son, who was riding with my husband. He was crying out from under the car, "What happened to us? Where am I?" and things like that. Then I bent down and I touched his hand because at that hour—I think it was around 11pm—and so it was dark and because we were in the middle of the desert. So, I could only put my hand in and touch his fingers. I wanted to pull him out but I could tell he was stuck. I thought, how could I possibly lift a car, you know, to get him out, but at that moment I felt the sand was loose so I made like a hole and I dragged him out through it, and that's how I was able to get him out from underneath the car. When I realized, he was out and he stood up on his own, I felt a great relief. I thought that maybe it wasn't that bad.

I: Was this your youngest, the two-year-old?

P: No, he was 11. Then I checked to see he was okay and told him, "Let's look for the others." So, then I walked a little and that's when my whole being was torn apart, because I saw my 9-year-old son was lying face down on the ground and I could see a large pool of blood next to his head. I bent down and I lifted him up. I don't know if it was wrong, but I didn't think it was possible he would survive. They say it's better not to move a person, but I thought, how could a mother hold back in a situation like this? You can't imagine and so I bent down and turned him around hugging him, and then I could see he was also bleeding from his mouth, nose and ears and in that moment, I felt as if life was leaving him.

I: Were you able to speak to him?

P: No. His eyes were already closed. It seemed he was not breathing any more. Then I took his hand but it just fell. I held him and told him not to go, and I just look at the heavens and cried, "My God, don't take him! Don't take him, please!" His name was _____ and I just yelled his name and held him. Something within me was saying, "You won't accomplish anything with this. With just crying he is not going to return to life," and I said to myself, "I have to get help." I and laid him down on the ground and I walked a few steps and I saw the other child, the two-year-old. He was like scrunched up in a ball, I mean it was different, and not sprawled out and limp, but like making an effort with his little body. So, when I hugged him he felt hard, and I felt as if he was having trouble breathing.

I: Um hum.

P: I don't know from where, but it came to me that sometimes you have to give air to a person, so I opened his little mouth and I tried to give him mouth-to-mouth respiration, and he coughed, he started to cough.

I: Wow.

P: Yes! And I thought, "Oh, God, he's alive!" It's okay! I wanted to tell myself, right? So, I brought him to the other child, I put them together and went towards the road, thinking, "Someone will help me." And I saw a car that was going slowly, and I made gestures with my

hands. He stopped and rolled down the window. I told him, “Please, call the police! My children are dying.”

I: Oh, um hum.

P: He said, okay, I’m calling. I saw he was on the telephone and I turned and, I felt my children...

I: You really didn’t know?

P: Yes, I wanted to be near them because I knew they were suffering, so I went back and on my way back I saw my daughter, who was 13, and I saw her get up from the middle of some scrubs—desert plants and she came out, but she was leaning to one side, saying, “My arm hurts, my arm hurts!” I went to her and saw her arm was broken and she had a cut on her leg. I told her, “They are coming to help us.” And I saw they were going towards the car that was there, and I don’t think they were conscious of what was happening. Because I told them, your little brothers are dying, because she was crying that her arm hurt. So, I told her yes, they are coming to help me. but I have to be with your brothers because they are dying. I don’t think they could understand me. They just walked and I saw them arrive at the car. I went back by myself and hugged my two sons. Then I went to the car because I was wondering, “Where is my husband?” So, I went back to our car, maybe he was thrown into the back seat? I don’t know. But he wasn’t there. So, what I did was grab the other gentleman who was there, and I grabbed him so forcefully by the shirt—because it looked as if he had fainted—so I shook him and yelled, “Help me! My children are dying.” I think it helped him in some way...

I: He responded?

P: He responded and asked me, “What happened?” and I told him “My children are dying and I can’t find my husband. Help me!” Then he got out and he said something that confused me and I didn’t want to pay him any heed, thinking he was drunk too. He told me, “Perhaps he left because he was drunk and was afraid the police would come.” But I thought, he’s not thinking, how would (my husband) leave me in a situation like this, with the children so hurt? So instead I thought maybe he had hit himself, or because he was so drunk he doesn’t even know what happened. But I was sure my husband was lying somewhere nearby, but that I just couldn’t see him. Then for me, so much time went by, but it wasn’t really a long time, only a few minutes when the ambulance arrived. But for me it was [pause] because I could see my son who was

unresponsive. I cried to him, "Open your eyes! Look at me!" But he didn't answer. When I heard the ambulances, for me it was a relief but at the same time a lot of fear, because I don't know how I felt... I felt that when I walked I wasn't feeling the ground but was floating...like it was a force stronger than me that made me move and think what I should do, because I felt I was in pieces but at the same time that I had to do something to save their lives...

I: Um hum.

P: When they got there, I asked them to help me, to save them. They took charge of the children and asked permission to rip their clothing. I told them to do whatever they had to but help them. They told me, in a few minutes they'll be in the hospital. I believed and prayed with so much faith that they could still be saved. When they were taking, the children I spoke to them and the police and told them my husband still had not be found. Because the other gentleman was there, they said, he's right there. I told them he wasn't my husband, he was traveling with us but wasn't my husband. Then they asked how many people were in the car and where they were sitting, and they went towards the car. I heard them say there was someone next to the car or underneath the car, and I wanted to get up to go and see but they wouldn't let me. They told me he was going to be okay and that he too would go to the hospital. So, I thought he was only bruised like me, and I said I was fine and wanted to go with my sons, but they told me I had to go to the hospital to get checked out as well. So, they took us all to the hospital, and in the hospital just said, "I'm fine. I want to see my boys. I want to know how all of them are." They told me all of them were in different places but we will find out where each one is. Then they told me they had taken them to a different hospital, and at this hospital it was only me and the gentleman that was with us. A little later, they came to tell me they had very bad news, that my husband and the two younger children had died in the accident.

I: The two children?

P: Yes, they told me that the two children had died.

I: Oh! Um hum.

P: It was as if my life ended. How can it be, three people at the same time? It is too much to take! So, I refused to accept it, saying it was impossible. It's not true! And besides that, I felt it was my fault and I didn't know what to do. I yelled at them, "It's my fault, it's my fault, its' my fault they have died!" I think I was so bad because I was in a state of shock, right?

I: Yes.

P: I mean, not wanting to accept it, not being able to and feeling the guilt.

I: Um hum, um hum.

P: Sometimes when I remember it, I feel so bad about myself. I'd like to be another person so that I could hug myself...

I: Um hum.

P: Because people perhaps can't understand. Only when you are in that moment you see how hard it is [weeping].

I: Umm, yes. [touching participant's hand]

P: They knew I was so upset so they called a priest.

Tx: The hospital staff called a priest?

P: Yes, they had those services there, because they brought the priest, and I remember he said a lot of things but really, I wasn't listening. I only remember he said something like God was going to give me strength. But I asked him, "Where is God? If God exists, why did this happen? It can't be," and I denied God in that moment.

I: Umm hum.

P: I understand and accept that I couldn't comprehend in any way, if God exists, then why is this happening to me? Why?

I: Umm hum.

P: A little later, the doctor returned, the one who had given me the news. Although I didn't want to listen to him, they spoke so loudly, telling me that he had to tell me something, that it was something very good: "Your son, the youngest, we were able to revive him... and he's alive. You have to be okay, because he needs you." It was like I saw a small little light, far off. I felt like I was in a tunnel. I saw darkness everywhere, and I didn't want to see or hear anything. But deep down I saw this little light that gave me hope. I said, "if this child could return to life, perhaps they are treating him... or they are doing something, and in a few minutes, they'll tell me the other child is also okay, or even my husband." I don't know, right? Maybe they said it at first, but weren't so sure.

I: Uh huh.

P: I just wanted to give myself some hope.

I: Hope, yes.

P: Hope that maybe the others were going to be okay too. And, well it didn't happen but I held onto my son, the youngest, he was only going to be 3-years-old, I said, I can't leave him alone, you know? I wanted to have courage for his sake. I waited but unfortunately there wasn't any more good news.

I: Um hmm.

P: But this was so good that he was alive. Although I knew, and they told me, you have your other children. But the pain was so great that I thought, "I won't be able to... I won't be able to bear it." And when I went to see my son, he was in such bad shape that he could hardly open his little eyes. When I told him, "I am here. Mama is here with you," he opened his eyes and his tears flowed.

I: Oh, when he saw you.

P: Yes, since he couldn't talk but he looked at me and cried. Then I knew he was aware I was there, although he likely didn't understand what had happened. Little by little, he got better.

I: Um hum. Those months must have been a very difficult, immediately after the accident.

P: Yes, this was only two days after when I went to see my son, and I stayed there with him; a week later they gave us the bodies of my husband and my son, and I spoke with the staff of the hospital and told them I want to see them for the last time. I don't want to leave my son, please take care of him. A friend who had taken care of my children while I was at work, she offered to come and take care of him, so I could go be with them. So, I could leave him, because she was their babysitter and he really loved her.

I: Um hum.

P: So, she stayed to take care of him and I went to the vigil and to bury them. The same day we buried them, in the afternoon, I asked them, "Please, take me back to the hospital. I'd rather be there with my son." People sometimes only ask you things, and they make you feel worse [pause] and I had no desire to talk to anyone, or to tell anyone anything.

I: Did you have friends or family for support?

P: Yes, in fact, thanks be to God, there were many, many people to help. So many people got together to help. We were living hand to mouth. We didn't have money for emergencies, nothing. I don't know what happened because my husband had gotten his salary check Friday and this was Sunday. I thought he would have had money with him, but those who came for him and brought him to the hospital said he didn't have anything. I don't know what could've happened to the money and I only had barely 20 dollars when this happened.

I: Wow.

P: People got together right away when they found out. I still hadn't left the hospital. I had to give in and go sleep a little and when I woke up my room was filled with people.

I: Oh.

P: Everyone was there to encourage me, you know? I thought, “wow...” Although, I wanted them to go back home. Yes, I felt good about it, but I felt no one could help me with what I was going through.

I: Yes, I see.

P: So, I realized there were a lot of people who cared about me, and there were there.

I: They were there.

P: Yes, even the policeman who found my telephone and my purse came to return them to me. And I was thinking—because I felt guilty because I was driving, when I saw him I thought, “He’s coming to arrest me!”

I: That’s what you thought?

P: Yes, and thought he was coming to arrest me! And I looked at him and started to cry and said, “Please, don’t take me right now! If perhaps I am guilty, but I want to see my son in the hospital and please, please let me go and see my husband and son who died. Then, if you want to you can take me to jail.”

I: Oh my!

P: And the policeman took me by the hand and said, “Please, don’t think about that now.” And he said, this is yours and I came to bring it to you, but I didn’t come to arrest you. Don’t worry.” And this gave me some peace.

I: Um hum.

P: Right? Because I didn't care about going to jail. What mattered was not getting to see them again.

I: This was the day after or two days later?

P: Two days later. Then when I went to the hospital with my son, I stayed there. Then I went to the vigil of my husband and son. There were tons of people. And throughout I was in contact with my brother-in-law, since they had the other children. They helped me quite a lot, quite a lot. They came and went and were involved with everything. They told me, "Don't worry. We know you can't take care of everything." And my brother in law, the brother, told me, "I just need your signature at times for your permission to take care of things." Yes, they even came to the hospital with papers so that I could sign.

I: They realized that you couldn't do more than stay with your son who survived, taking care of him?

P: They saw—they didn't tell me at the time—they were afraid that the boy would also die. He was stable, but he was so bad off, they believed he wouldn't survive. They didn't tell me why, but only said, "It's better for you to stay and take care of the child; we will see; we'll come for you;" and things like that. It was only later they told me, "In reality, we thought he wouldn't survive, but we didn't want to tell you that because you were already so upset. So, we just wanted you to be with him."

I: Um hum.

P: Well, so I stayed there. My other son, the older one, he helped and participated, and did a lot, even though, well, he was only 15. And I think, obviously, he was affected. Well, yes, I imagine it's like, all of a sudden, to face the hard truth that your dad died and your mom is in the hospital. Your little brother is in critical condition and your other siblings are all bruised and cut.

I: Of course!

P: But he was very courageous, and he started to do things with his cousins, his friends. For example, they organized a car wash two times.

I: Oh, to earn money? What is his name again?

P: His name is _____. Yes, to earn money. The people got their car washed and donated what they wanted. They said, they didn't want to put a price on the car wash, just what you want to give as a donation. And they got a lot, because lots of people participated. Another day, they did an event with food, they offered food, and it was the same. They didn't sell the food. You ordered and donated what you wanted.

I: That's really nice.

P: Yes, for the expenses. They told me not to worry, saying "We have enough to cover everything. If anything is left we'll give it to you, so you have something to start with." And in the end, we were left with 600 dollars, when all was said and done, my brother-in-law gave me the 600 dollars. With this I was able to pay my rent. Even in this, I think that God was really with me. Only I didn't want to see it.

I: Um hum.

P: He also touched the heart of the man who rented us the apartment, and he told me, that the first month in which the accident happened, he wouldn't charge me rent. Even the following month he said, "I'll wait for the next month." And so, I could gather enough to pay rent with what he gave me and then I started to work [pause]. And, well it was really hard. They told me my child was going to be okay, but he was still in a cast from the waist down. It just had a small hole for him to go to the bathroom and a tube to urinate. His back was cut up, and he had one big cut that he still has a scar from, really big.

I: Um, wow.

P: I had to nurse him.

I: Take care of him?

P: Yes, wash him, feed him, apply things

I: How long did he stay in the hospital?

P: He was there about a month and a half, almost two months. And then afterward, the lady, his babysitter, helped me take care of him while I went to work. But every day, every night, was so hard for me.

I: During the night?

P: Yes, for me the evening brought on feelings of sadness. I didn't want to see night coming. Even if I was with people. I started to feel fearful at night. I don't know if it was because that day, it was night time when the accident happened, right? And because it was so dark that day. Whenever I saw it was getting late, in the evening, my fear grew.

I: You could feel it in your body?

P: Yes, I started to feel fear of the night, and I told them, "I'm afraid of the night, I'm afraid of the night!" And people asked me, "But why? You have to sleep, to rest." But I said, "I can't sleep." And all night the child was complaining and I had to be watching him during the entire night, so I slept little.

I: He couldn't sleep the night through?

P: Yes, because he was in lots of pain, and things. I had to—I had him in like a little cart, and I had to be rocking him in order for him to be calm. I was giving him medicine frequently. And so, every night while I sang to him, I cried and cried for my other child.

I: Oh.

P: I would get up and look in on the other children, and ask, "My God, why did you take the other one? If only I could see all my children here." And it was that way every day. People came and saw me and told me, "Don't cry for him anymore. Let him go." But I couldn't, I told them

and they didn't understand why. You have your other children, yes, but each child is special and I sought my child at night.

I: Yes, of course.

P: Then one day, after some friends had visited, they were talking to me about this idea that if you grieve a lot over a person you don't allow them to be at rest.

I: You mean, a person becomes fatigued from too much crying?

P: Uh, it's like if a person dies and you cry and cry and cry a lot for that person, it's like that person can't rest in peace.

I: Oh, I see.

P: Because you are calling, calling, them. So then, that night when my son finally fell asleep, I was thinking, "I want my son who died to rest, but what can I do, if it hurts me so much?"

I: Um hum.

P: And I started [pause] right then to pray and talk to God, and I said, "My God, give me a sign that my son is okay, and that I shouldn't cry for him. I am very dense, and I don't understand things, but you know why things happen, so give me a sign, just a small sign so I will know my son is well. I will do everything I can to overcome this." And I went to bed thinking about these things, that I didn't want my son to feel badly because I was suffering. I didn't know if in reality he could see me or not, but if he could, he wouldn't want to see me that way, right? But how can I smile at him if all this hurts me? And I fell asleep thinking of this when I had that dream.

I: Um hum.

P: I was in a deep sleep, and I was dreaming, and I dreamt, well, practically what I was hoping for. Because I dreamed that we were at a party and like it happened that day, I saw lots of people

and I saw my son playing and running around. Then suddenly he ran towards me and hugged me around my waist. And I was seated in a chair and he hugged me and said, "Mama, let me go." And I told him, "I can't let you go, how can I, because I'm your mother?" And he told me, "Yes, but I want to go with this lady." And I said, "What lady?" And I turned to look and only saw a silhouette. I couldn't see her face or features. I could only see this image that was at a distance from us. And he said, "That lady, I want to go with her." And I asked him, "But son, how are you going to go?" And he said, "Yes, mama, I want to go. I really do, let me go!" And I said, "Son, how can I let you go, when I want to tell you something, what will I do?" And he said, "Mama, look at the sky and you can send me a message with the stars." And then I turned and saw how in the sky it said, in English, 'I love you.'

I: In English?

P: It seemed like, in that moment of my dream, it was like you could express something. I don't know, I was looking like through a telescope. It seemed the letters formed themselves in the stars. And I thought if it was true I could also write something to him. And I told him, "It's alright son, if you say you want to go I will let you because *you* want to go. I don't want you to go. But if you want to, I will let you go so you will be happy." And he said, "Si, maim!" And then he hugged me and he let me go. And he left, and he gave his hand to the person that was standing there, that to me seemed to be a woman, because he told me it was a lady and, in reality, when I saw it, when she took him by the hand and was leaving, he turned to look at me and he smiled. And I felt... well, I felt very bad, because my son was going to leave with someone who, for me, was unknown, right? But at the same time, I felt peace because it was what he wanted, and I was letting him, like, get to know that world he wanted to know.

I: Is that when you woke up?

P: At that moment, I woke up: when he turned to me and smiled and I felt that something that caused me sorrow but at the same made me feel I was doing the right thing.

I: Um hum.

P: I woke up, and realized I was dreaming and wanted to keep on dreaming. Then I remembered what I had seen and I got up and ran outside to the patio to look at the sky. I hoped I was going to see something!

I: Ah!

P: Everything was normal- there were stars and everything that night but not like in my dream, right? So, I stayed on the patio looking at the sky and remembering my dream. And I thought, “Maybe this is the sign that I was asking God for.” I mean, he’s going to be okay, no matter where he is. Only I had to let him go. And since then, I have kept this idea, that yes, it was good to not torment myself so much. And that perhaps, to some extent, not provoke more suffering for my son, or something like that. Because from that time on, it was a little easier to bear this. Even though I still suffer and it affects me a lot.

I: I want to thank you for being willing to share all of this, because I know it’s a little like re-living it.

P: Yes.

P: But the goal is to enter more deeply into the significance of the dream that helped you, and see if it can be of more help.

P: Or maybe, from someone who knows more about dreams maybe I can learn a little more. Did it really have that meaning or not, right? Although I took it that way.

I: It’s like an investigation that we are doing together. There are some things that only the dreamer knows. Because it’s your dream. Through a participation between the two of us—it’s to go deeper to discover its significance.

P: Yes. I ask myself, sometimes, and say, “Yes, it must be like a sign,” because what a coincidence that the same night I prayed for it with so much faith and so much desire for a sign, that the same time I had the dream, right?

I: Um. Hum.

P: That’s why I took it that way, that it was my sign and that is what I had to do. From that time on, I promised, I wasn’t going to cry so much. Sometimes, after a time, it would come back,

during those times of Day of the Dead, or an anniversary of the accident. Sometimes I get a little depressed and then I cry and I see his picture and I tell him, “Now I remember, I promised you I wouldn’t be so sad.” I knew he’d like it if I smiled and to see me happy. “I know you are in a good place and I am not going to continue to cry and cry.”

I: It is normal during an anniversary to remember and think about the person and grieve, but it also seems that the dream has helped you to not give up or just continue crying.

P: Things happen for a reason. Yes, it was painful, but now I don’t have to be—before I couldn’t sleep thinking that my son, wherever he is, might be cold... Afterward, I wanted to think that he really doesn’t feel these things anymore, that he is in a better world and he doesn’t have this suffering. So, it helped to show me he isn’t going through all that, like I was feeling and imagining, “How must he feel?” Or I imagined he was under the earth and I wanted to open it and take him out and hold him a little longer, then leave him again. But then after the dream I wanted to understand how he doesn’t feel that anymore. Just that it’s a process and now he is alright.

I: Um hum.

P: That’s how I took the dream, to help myself more than anything else. And well, yes, it did help me.

I: We have to finish for today. The next time we meet we’ll talk more about the dream, maybe make some art. Does that sound good?

P: Yes.

Appendix B-2: Dream Work Session Two 2/17/17

I: What we are going to do today is begin the process of looking at the dream you described last time. In the first place, I'd like to ask how you are feeling today after sharing everything we discussed in the previous session.

P: That day, when I remember it, it makes me a little nostalgic and sad, because I relive it, because it's with me as I dreamt it every time I remember it, exactly as if I had dreamed it yesterday. So, when I think or speak of it, it's like, I don't know, I feel a little, I don't know if its nostalgia or sadness or both together, but then once this passes I feel a little relief.

I: Oh.

P: yes, it's interesting, but that's what happens. That day, after I left, I felt calm and I had a good day. So, yes, I feel okay, and I want to continue with this.

I: Very well. Okay... what we are going to do today is to enter into the dream by writing a script of the dream. In other words, you'll write what you see in the scene, what you hear in the scene, basically whatever you see or are experiencing in the dream, writing it down to get more information. After you finish this, I'll explain the second step. Okay?

P: That's fine [writes].

Dream Script, by Participant:

“My dream began with me sitting on a chair, next to a table. I saw myself in the midst of a small family gathering, where I could see children playing and running around. I could hear lots of noise, voices, but they were unclear, until I saw my 9-year-old son approach me and say in a soft voice that he wanted my permission to go with a lady who would take him to a good place, and that he really wanted to go with her. I was very surprised because I couldn't believe that he would want to go, and said, “But I'm your mama!” But he insisted that I should please let him go and that he would be fine. I told him if that was really what he wanted, I would let him go, although it would hurt me to let him go. He

smiled and hugged me tightly, and at that moment he tried to let me go, I held on to him and asked, “What can I do when I want to tell you something?” and he told me, “Look at the stars and I will look at them too no matter where I am. That way, if you look at the sky you will be able to see something. Then in that moment I saw among the stars of the sky a message with lights that read: “I love you,” and I felt peace, something like relief. Because I thought if there could be communication like that. Then he went and took the hand of the silhouette. Because I could not see the face and something covered the entire figure, like a long mantle. My son turned towards me and smiled and then they disappeared and I waved goodbye, while I felt that the tears were falling from my eyes, but I felt I had done the right thing, because he wanted to go. In that moment, I woke up and right away ran outside to look at the sky, looking for a sign; I didn’t find one, but from then on, I promised I would look at the sky with a smile so that my son wouldn’t see the tears in my eyes.”

I: Thank you for writing this. Now we are going to look at the image you made in the drawing, and then read what you have written as we look at the drawing, or rather the painting. Then we can talk for a bit. Then I will also read the script. The idea is to make the dream present. Is that okay.

P: Yes, that’s fine. Okay, I made the drawing, although remembering, I could have put more children, because at the beginning I could see lots of children playing. But because in this large drawing it was only the moment when the boy was leaving, the moment that was most in mind, when he said goodbye and he left.

I: So, there are more scenes?

P: Yes. You could see lots of children in that place, and I could hear voices, although I couldn’t hear very clearly. You could hear lots of noise.

I: Now, would you read the script?

P: Yes. [reads, weeping at “I saw among the stars of the sky”]

I: You may take all the time you need...

P: [finishes reading]. I say that I am okay, but when I tell the story it comes back to me how I felt and how I experienced it.

I: Of course.

P: It still hurts quite a lot.

I: Well, yes. Tears are—sometimes, I don't know, they can be good.

P: Yes, because in the you feel that, like they get rid of something for you. I feel that way, that it's something that helps me to take away that pressure I feel sometimes. Many times, I've felt that, when days go by and I try to not remember and stop thinking about this anymore. I focus on the other children and all that, but time goes by and the day comes, the moment when I think about it again and I realize I carry a lot of pressure within me. And I, when later I think it is gone, that which was weighing on me. So, yes, I do think they aren't bad. But I believe that I understood that they dream was telling me I had to let go of him, let him go. And that's what I've tried to do, although in some ways I haven't been able to completely. But yes, whenever, whenever I look at the sky I remember that dream, more when it's getting late and I look at the stars and immediately the image of my son comes to me. This gives me a hope or something that from someplace he can see me, although I can't see him. You see?

I: Um hum.

P: Well, I think he'd like it better to see me smiling instead of seeing me crying.

I: Now I am going to read the script while you can look (at the painting). We are seeing what might be significant, and if you want to imagine the other children that were there.

P: Yes

I: [reads script] Thank you.

P: No, thank you for this opportunity.

I: How are you feeling, as you are writing this and seeing (the image), making it more present?

P: Well, it's something—how can I explain? It painful, but I like that we're doing it.

I: Um hum [pause]. Can you say more?

P: It's because—it's painful, because that's what I was feeling—a lot of pain, since it's giving up someone you love so dearly. And I had to do it.

I: Um hum.

P: But I'm glad because I remember and can feel it was a goodbye my son gave to me in the middle of the dream. That is what I think the dream really means, like possibly the goodbye we never had. Because the accident happened so fast, and by the time I found him he couldn't open his eyes anymore.

I: Um hum.

P: So, I think I was wanting to look into his eyes or that he would say something to me, something that would give me a little peace. But because this never happened, perhaps this is what I was wanting, and for this reason I was feeling so much pain and couldn't be at peace. After I dreamed this, it was like that goodbye that I wanted.

I: Um hum, wow.

P: That's how I remember it, and how I feel: that this was our goodbye.

I: It's as if that were the title of the dream, 'Our Goodbye'?

P: Yes. Um hum.

I: So, what we'll do next is to continue exploring, like opening our eyes a little more to see what more the dream is telling us. Like a process of dialogue with the dream.

P: Yes.

I: So, there are other things in the dream: the children, what you've put here, the stars, the figure that is hard to see, the place. And sometimes, thinking about the dream, more things or ideas come to a person.

P: Yes, like looking at it now [looks at painting], I would say that I there was a figure like a house. Because it seemed to me that it was like a patio outside, but in the background over there, you could see, like a house. But not really see it—well, just a structure.

I: So, the structure was on this side [points to left side of the painting].

P: Yes, and also on that side is where the children were playing. Because he came from over there [points to right side of painting]. It was like he was playing and this person came over to him and asked him to go with her. But I didn't see any of that. But when he came to tell me, she was already waiting for him.

I: Oh.

P: That's how it was. When I think about it, it was like that: she arrived, asked him, and he went to ask my permission. After that I looked and she was already there waiting for him. So, then he went and gave her his hand.

I: But first he asked permission, right? There was an interaction between the two of you.

P: Yes. He didn't just disappear. When I saw, him come over, I felt something like an emotion, but I had no idea what he was coming to say to me. So, yeah, it surprised me when he said that. I couldn't understand. I also don't know why I accepted it. I mean, I knew—I saw he had the desire to go to that place.

I: Um umm. Well, for today we are finishing up. Perhaps thinking during the week, between today and the next time, perhaps think a little about it, like last time, how you are doing after sharing more about this experience.

P: Yes, um hum. I think that after talking about it I carry it in my thoughts but I'm thinking more also about what more meaning there might be in this dream. It's what I ask myself at times. If there was something more that I hadn't discovered, or not at least not yet, what message it wanted to leave me in this dream. Because I give it, how do you say, the interpretation that I want to give it. But in reality, I'm not one hundred percent sure if that is all there was in this dream. I find it was, like I said, like a goodbye from him to me and I like this, because I found this, that we hadn't had this between us. So, remembering that embrace he gave me is something lovely, really beautiful.

I: Lovely, right? So, it was like letting yourself return to this. What else, any elements that made your curious? Okay, so we'll finish for today and we see each other again in 1 week. Okay?

P: That sounds fine.

Appendix B-3: Dream Work Session Three 2/24/27

I: This is the third session, in which we are continuing our investigation of the dream. So, as I told you, we are going to begin with some breathing exercises in order to be more relaxed. But first I'll explain what we are going to do today. Today is a time in which we are going to look more at the individual elements of the dream. For example, you take one image, or one scene that seem to have more significance and we can focus on each of these elements one by one. It may be that the elements will be in this picture you made or from the script that you wrote earlier... and you had also told me somethings that are not reflected in your art and they're not there, for example the building. So, in this part we are going to take one page for each image or scene or element and then one by one see what significance it has, what it makes you think of. Does that sound okay?

P: That's fine.

I: Then, let's begin with breathing exercises. Have you done this kind of exercise before?

P: No.

I: It's similar to yoga, or any exercise that helps a person relax and become calm. [leads client through relaxation and breathing]. We will continue with our session now. The relaxation is important to practice because it helps us remember our bodily existence. Sometimes we tend to live in our heads.

P: We don't even remember to think of others [laughs].

I: Yes, exactly. Okay, so scenes or individual images. So, you can use a piece of paper for each. You can use a pencil or black pen, and if you want to look again at this [places painting of dream image in front of the participant] again to guide you. It's just a question of what is important to you.

P: [pause, as participant begins to work] Because it seemed that there was a table next to me. On the table, there were glasses (unintelligible). Well, then this would be the table that was next to me and I made another (drawing) where the children are.

I: Yes, you can put each element on a different page to separate them a little, or you can draw a line, as you wish. [participant continues to work]

P: I didn't have to draw them well, right? [laughs]

I: Is that a picture of the children? [laughs]

P: The door, and windows [building image] and I saw there was another level above it and so I could see there were napkins or papers thrown in one direction, like little towels or napkins, something like papers... [laughs]

I: Interesting! [laughs]

P: So, those are the things in the dream that are more clear, besides what was already there.

I: Yes, can we put them there too, as these things have been added we can put all the elements, and you don't have to draw, you can simply write the words. You understand, to identify each? And then we'll continue.

P: It's me, and the table. Can we add these?

I: Yes, it about including all the elements in the dream that are significant. Now we can begin with one. You can choose one of these things to start.

P: Perhaps the children?

I: The children? Okay. If you'd like to draw a circle. This part is association, in other words, what it brings to mind. "The children make me think of ... or they make me remember..." to find the significance.

P: It's like, as if everything was peaceful, something fun was happening as I was looking at the children. They communicated joy to me, seeing them play. But then, when my son came and said that to me, of course everything changed. But in that moment that I was dreaming and seeing them play, I was feeling joy at seeing the children play and run. Like when you're enjoying something.

I: And was it reminding you of something in your own life too?

P: Maybe it reminded me of the times when I used to play with my brothers and sisters. It was something similar, seeing them play was like remembering my life.

I: Your own life experience?

P: So, I don't know if this is, if it also held meaning for me or if it was just part of the dream that was adapted to the situation.

I: Would you write a phrase that describes the meaning for the children in the dream? Just a phrase is enough.

P: [writing]

I: So, while we're talking, if you want to go over another element. Could you choose the second one? If you'd like you can number them so we know we started with the children. That would be number 1? What is the second element you wish to investigate?

P: There was something there, like safety, so that if something happened, I don't know, maybe, well, I didn't think it but *felt it*. Like seeing a place that is safe for whatever might happen, I saw that door where I could enter. That's what it communicated to me. As I remember the dream I see it and think that that's what came to me: whatever happens there is a place to go, ah...

I: Safety?

P: Ah huh.

I: Does it relate to anything in your life, or during that time, was there something of security in your life?

P: No, I think rather, I was looking for it. To have that security that everything was going to be okay.

I: Could you write a phrase that describes these impressions you have?

P: Yes [writing].

I: For the third elements, what would you like to investigate?

P: [pointing to image, to the starry sky]

I: The sky and the stars?

P: Yes. This was really important and meaningful for me, right? Because it's like the memory or the sensation that's most beautiful in my dream.

I: Oh, yes? Tell me more. That's interesting!

P: Yes, because it's what really left an impression on me. The moment I saw it and felt that connection between, that there was going to be this communication, beyond that which could be with my son. Because in the dream I was not thinking that he had to die or that he had died, but to me it was just, letting go, going away from me. Upon looking at the starry sky and the writing

I saw, I felt that it was really true that there was going to be a communication. That made me feel something within, that made me feel good, even though at that time I was feeling so sad. But when I saw that I felt something that was connecting me to him. It's something I still feel is with me. It's something I feel is really there because the stars are there, whenever night falls and I can look, how can I describe it? Sometimes I see a lot and sometimes few but I almost always find one that appears soon after it gets dark and to me seems larger. With this one I identify more, and I *believe* it's something that left me the hope that, if I look at the stars perhaps he is looking at me. I can't see him but maybe he can see me.

I: We don't really know, right? [laughs]

P: We don't know [laughs] but we like to think it's that way because it makes us feel better, right? If I thought it wasn't really that way, perhaps it would be painful, so I prefer to think it is.

I: You said it was the most significant- the stars and the sky- because of this communication?

P: Yes. It's number 3 but it's something that is *very* important for me. [writing phrase]

I: So, then, with the sky and the stars, do the stars have, do they bring anything to mind or is it more just a unified experience?

P: A little more like the stars than the sky, but at the same time they are part of the whole because they are together and the stars are what bring me this feeling.

I: I see. Okay. The next element?

P: The silhouette. This silhouette keeps me as if in a mystery because I felt, it left me with a little haziness because I wasn't able to have the satisfaction of speaking to this person or seeing her face clearly or anything like that. Instead, I saw her, yes, but only as a silhouette. It was something that prevented me from being totally at peace, although I accepted it and I gave assent to my son that he could leave with her. But in truth, this wasn't as clear to me as the rest. I was left a little unclear about [earnest], who was that covered silhouette that was there?

I: Covered...

P: Yes, it left me unsure within myself, the feelings came together at the same time and were mixed up, because it was like, something unknown, to me.

I: Yes, unknown.

P: So (unintelligible) left me with, like doubts? [writing phrase]

I: Is it the most mysterious aspect of the dream?

P: Um hum.

I: What does the silhouette remind you of when you remember it?

P: Um, I'd like to be able to give it form, to imagine what, who my son is with, but because I don't have this, well I can only feel that I should have confidence it was something good.

I: But it doesn't make you think of anything in particular related to your life at that time or now?

P: More like, a person that is going to protect another person. That's what it makes me feel. As if, if that was me, I'd feel that with her I'm going to be well, because I felt that...

I: At the same time doubts?

P: Yes, but I doubt because I couldn't see her face and I didn't talk to this person. So, it was just this image that cause me a little, I don't know what feeling, but something that I would relate to doubt or being unsure. But upon seeing such determination on the part of my son to go with her, that communicated to me that he would be well.

I: Um hum.

P: Another would be the chair. And me. Because they were together. And this makes me go between good and bad.

I: The chair?

P: Yes, because it was good at the beginning, I felt good, only that in the end I felt bad because of the situation I was going through at that time. But it was as though the chair was a support for me that kept me there at that moment from the time I was doing well to the time I was doing worse, I never got up from there. I mean, it was a comfortable place...

I: You were in the chair during the entire dream?

P: Yes. During the entire time, I never got up from that chair. I don't know if that's a good or bad thing but it's what happened right?

I: But you felt it was a support and comfortable?

P: [writing phrase] And in this, I think that when we feel sad sometimes we look for a place to sit down. We sit down, right, as if to stop a minute to think. And sometimes when we get really good news, suddenly we get the news and we can't believe it and we sit down for a bit in order to absorb it more easily. So, it causes me to think about this, that a chair has a lot to do with this, apparently no but it does because whether it's because of joy or a bad impression you look for a place to sit. A place to sit and breathe.

I: It's symbolic, no?

P: Yes.

I: And do you feel both are possible, or the two tougher?

P: Um hum. And this would be, the fifth? The last would be the table, that for me at the time was not something important but something shared, like a place to leave your glass or to eat or drink something that was there. I don't know. For me it was normal to see the table there because it seemed to be in the midst of a dinner or a party. It was like something that made sense to be there, and I could see it because it was something next to me. It didn't seem to me to have a special meaning, just something in common that can appear in any place. Perhaps it came to be in the dream because was something I have seen so often.

I: Maybe you can ask what a table brings to mind in general, like you're saying.

P: Yes, because there were other people, there were children. So, it's like at some point we were gathered to eat and for that reason the table was there.

I: Something to do with a gathering?

P: Yes. [writing phrase] Yes, because it could be that moment had already happened. I don't know if it had already happened or it was going to happen. That seemed to be why the table was there, that we had already eaten, had dinner or we were waiting... [laughing]

I: Interesting, isn't it? [laughing] It's said that in dreams there is no time, that it's not linear but global...

P: It's like saying, because it was all at the same time together, you're experiencing it all at once. So, I couldn't say if dinner had already happened or the dinner hadn't happened yet. That moment of being there didn't take place but it seemed that this was going to happen or had happened [laughing].

I: Interesting! [laughing] So seeing all of this, is there another image that you attach meaning to, a phrase or significance. Do you include your son with all of the children, or is he rather separate?

P: I think that I saw him at some point playing but then saw him come over here. [pointing to picture of self in chair]

I: Then when he came towards you he separated from the children?

P: Um hum.

I: And in the dream, your son brings to mind (you have told me) the goodbye and going away?

P: Yes. For me this was the meaning of the whole dream, as I said, it was that goodbye we didn't have at the time. When they took him, I went to the hospital to wait, although when I saw the situation it seemed a little unlikely they could help him. But faith keeps you hoping and I felt that faith: it *might* be that he could survive. When they told me, nothing could be done and he had died, it was like, I didn't have time or I didn't tell him this, or if only I had at least seen his eyes, something more he could have said. In the dream, he came to give me that hug, that hug that I really needed and that was the goodbye. So, if they were to ask me (indistinguishable) I would say it was the dream of my goodbye.

I: Um hum. Now, could you write a phrase about this you have told me, hug, goodbye, seeing his eyes?

P: [writing phrase]

I: What we'll do next is to simply read everything out loud, beginning with number 1.

P: Okay. Number one is the children that gave me the joy of being alive perhaps because I remembered that that was what my childhood was like. Number two was the building, where I would be thinking of a safe place in whatever situation might arise or whatever moment perhaps. I don't know. Anything, but it made me think there was a place nearby that was safe for us. The third was the sky and the stars, a great deal of feeling as I remember this and I like to do it often because, how can I tell you, I don't know if really that way, but to me it makes me feel good. It makes me believe that that connection does exist and that's virtually it. A connection to the memory of my son [unintelligible word]. The fourth is the silhouette that carries a little haziness and doubt because it was something mysterious that wasn't completely revealed. But I think, at the same time, it's that, no? A dream in which you don't finish deciphering what happened. So, then this is the mystery of the dream. What it really means, we don't know but it's something that provides help probably.

I: Do you feel it helps?

P: Yes. And the fifth would be the chair and myself, where I did feel in a place of support, well yes, that more than anything, it was that. It was something that helped me cope with whatever was happening within me, because I don't think I could define all the emotions I was experiencing at that time: from being at peace, ... "How is this going to happen?" from being relaxed and seeing everything very lovely, he came and it changed everything until reaching the point where it made me cry because of the pain I felt seeing him leave. Because I knew when he left he wasn't coming back. This was very clear to me in the dream. So, that chair supported me [laughing].

I: Interesting, isn't it? [laughing] The dream provided you the chair

P: And the table for me, it was just an element that—maybe I didn't give it much importance but in reality, it had its role. Because there was something more there that wasn't included or was shared in a group with other people and with the children. And this, I was being invited to this, to a dinner or a gathering that was more profound, you see?

I: Yes. Does the table hold some mystery, like the silhouette?

P: A little, but less. Because it was more common to see a table than to see a silhouette.

I: Yeah. You could see what was on it?

P: Yes, for me there was more reason for the table to be there because it was something that normally is present in any place. And the silhouette came from the unknown, because at first wasn't there and only when the child came to tell me that he had to go with a lady was when I saw the silhouette.

I: Oh, I see.

P: It just appeared and disappeared and so the silhouette was much more mysterious. The table, it was more normal for it to be there. So then, defining it was that, the dream of our goodbye, looking him in the eyes feeling that embrace that shook my soul. Because it was as if I didn't want him to let me go but it happened.

I: Okay. Now, if you could write a phrase next to each image that connects it to your life now or during

P: [writing]

I: Could you share the new part you've added?

P: Yes [sighing] I've added that: the children remind me of my childhood, the house or building made me feel it was a safe place because everyone wants to have one, I think everyone. And maybe that's why I found it there.

I: You mean a house to live in?

P: Yes. For the sky and the stars, it's like continuing to have a connection beyond this life itself. And the silhouette, I don't yet know how to give it a meaning. The chair and myself, it's like it makes me think of a place to pause to absorb something. And the table is, I define it just as common and necessary element for a gathering of people.

I: Okay, very good. So, then this provides the connections to all that happened (in the dream), the whole picture. That is all that I had planned for today. Just to see the whole picture, what significance it had and has now and also to see it in greater fullness. Do you have any questions or comments?

P: No, I think, only, well maybe a comment that I don't think I had really stopped to think about each of these things. I always remembered the dream and overlooked everything around me and focused on the message I thought the dream had, that it was a goodbye and that the child told me to look at the stars. I only focused on that but really, seeing it all. Yes, if you stop and ask, "What did this mean, and that?" You see? So then, who knows? What I can say is that it was something

lovely. Each thing then, had something to do with this, or something more to say. Then everything taken together was really a lovely dream.

I: Um hum. Well, the next time we will continue, and we will focus, focus on just one thing...

Appendix B-4: Dream Work Session Four 3/03/17

I: We are going to start with reviewing what you've already shared [Displays art and written phrases]. You have shared these images and the significance of each one, which we read through in the last session. You began with the children and you've written that it reminds you of the joy of being alive and your childhood. Then number two, the image was a house or building and this represented a safe place, that for you it was something anyone would want. Number three, was the sky and the stars, and you experienced a lot of feeling remembering this (aspect) of the dream, saying you liked to go out and see the stars often. It was connection to what is beyond this life. Then number four, here, was a silhouette, and this caused—made you experience doubt and feel unsure. It's this image, right? [points to painting].

P: Yes.

I: So you have the phrase and then the image, and this brought to mind mystery. Then number five, which was number five? Okay, then the chair you were seated in, right? It was an image for support, to stop or to absorb something. You had described what a person does when they receive news, a place of support for any situation. Then six was the table. These other images you have drawn here because they weren't in the original painting. So, the table represented a social event at a given time, a shared and necessary element for gathering together. Then, this part is like the dream of our goodbye, looking at his eyes [stopping momentarily for technical reasons] and the embrace. So, we are going to start with this part you describe, that concerns your son [participant sighing]. So, recognizing the words you've associated with the images, today the work is to group them, meaning which of the images could you join because they seem connected or similar. In each portion (of the paper), you may list the ones that go together [giving the participant paper]. Okay?

P: [writing]. Well, I think these three [points to chair, table and house] and these three [points to starry sky, silhouette, children) go together.

I: Okay. That's fine. It doesn't have to—you can group them as you like [pausing, participant working]. So, your son was between you and the lady (silhouette), but also with the other children?

P: Yes.

I: Now, can you write a phrase for the three things—the chair, table and house. That are—that shows why you grouped them together?

P: Because to me it seems like they are all related to things that can give you a little more peace, security. The chair supports you, you can put any number of things you may have on a table, and you can protect yourself in a house. So, to me, these things go together. If you have one, you want the other two, to always have a place to put something down, a place to rest and a place to be secure.

I: Before you go on, would you write a phrase that describes what you've said for this part?

P: [writing]

I: [reading] "A place and things that give comfort." Can you say more about this word, comfort?

P: That it makes us feel we have a place to rest and protect ourselves...

I: Okay, you can continue, so we have more information about your feelings related to the images [participant writing]. In these two images, you also have drawn things on the table. Did you see them in the dream?

P: Yes.

I: What do those images represent for you?

P: Like we've had something to eat or drink.

I: You may add that too [pausing]. Okay, next—the children, the silhouette, and the sky with the stars. Can you tell me how you are grouping these three things? Or, sorry, there are four, right?

P: Well, my son can be included with the children, because I saw him—how can I say? More—like I was focused more on him, maybe because he was my son I saw there. So, I saw more children, but I didn't pay much attention to them.

I: But the others were close by?

P: He was playing with them, then all of a sudden, I saw him come from among them, leave them and come towards me. And when he tells me he has to go with this person, that's when I turned and saw the silhouette. So, it was like they were together. And because my son came and told me about the message with the stars, for this reason I relate the two as well. So then, the stars show me or maybe they teach me about that light (and) that there is some kind of connection with him now. Children, well, I think they give everyone that joy, don't you think? You see a child and it causes this joy, it makes you think—sometimes you might be worried and when you see a child you smile although it has nothing to do with you. It takes a lot of preoccupations from you.

I: That is a really neat experience.

P: And the silhouette will perhaps continue to be the mystery of the dream, because it's the one that I really can't decipher. What is it, that's what it made me feel something like doubts, maybe a little insecurity and fear, but when I saw my son's confidence about going with this person, that gave me confidence.

I: At the same time, you mean?

P: Yes [writing].

I: So, can you tell me something about what you've written?

P: So, I wrote: "Joy and peace that is changed to worry, as I'm confronted with a situation, and consolation, the light of hope in the stars."

I: Um hum.

P: Perhaps you don't understand it like I do, because at the same time that I felt joy at seeing the children, it was changed to worry when my son talked to me about this person, you see? And because it was a bit mysterious, I experienced a feeling of a little fear, but then consolation that I got that through the stars we could be in communication. They will always be something very lovely for me [laughing].

I: [laughing] Yes, and you have images of light in the stars. Uh huh, okay. So, we are going to return to each one to focus on this part and think or discuss what this may have to do with your present situation today. It may be related to a place or things that give comfort, feeling safe, being able to rest and have support perhaps. Also, the glasses telling you that there is satisfaction. So, if you can say more about how the themes may affect you or tell you something about your life today.

P: Well, right now in my life today I see it the way the dream taught me, that certain things I need are basic in order to feel well and for those who are with me to feel well. Because that's what these things resemble or bring up. (It's) the place I saw and that I still think of as a place I'd like to be.

I: The place of the dream?

P: Um hum.

I: Can you tell me how your life now, and this part of the dream resemble each other?

P: Yes, well, it may be that it doesn't—it's like things were in the dream are things we can't do without.

I: Yes, everyday things, or things that have to do with human life that are things of security, to have a place to live, to have support, and to have this—the satisfaction of being with others, of having something to eat and drink...

P: Yes. If you have a glass you can serve yourself something and drink or maybe you already did. But a glass represents this, don't you think, it reminds us we have to drink... (unintelligible word) [laughing]

I: [laughing] Okay, now on the other side if you could put the other phrase that represents something—you could say existential because it concerns the existence of all of us, and also, for this reason, it affects us in the present as in the time of the dream, because it's something continuous, right?

P: Yes [writing].

I: Would you read what you've written?

P: It's, "Remember and value what we have and what we need in our life."

I: And can you say something specific regarding your life now? That theme—how do you see it now in your life, today? [pausing] Do you understand?

P: Not very well [laughing].

I: In other words, do you have these things in your life now, or are you searching for them...?

P: It's like when I said, "to value what we have" is like if I see them I remember the dream and I think, "To dream it maybe, is like to desire it" you see? To desire it. So, when I have it I think I should value it, each thing, although it might seem to be simple, you see? We can't always be sure we'll have it.

I: Oh, I see.

P: For example, recently when I left the shelter I started out with very little, just some basic things, and as I gathered these few things I really valued having finally, well, a little table to eat at with my children. Every object that a person acquires to have more convenience, although we

may learn to live with the basics. But if you can have some things that make things more convenient, you try to get it, right?

I: Sure, exactly.

P: And when you get it you have, like—you don't have to—I think we shouldn't want to have too much of material things, but if they're things that you really need or that help you to have that convenience...

I: Of course, yes.

P: So, if you are okay, I mean if the physical body is, then you feel well on the inside. So then if we have the necessary things to feel well then, we feel well. That's how I see it.

I: That is something that you are experiencing now, and if you could put a phrase the describes how you are experiencing it now. Is it that appreciation? Is that it?

P: Um hum [writing].

I: Would you read it?

P: "I learned to appreciate more what I have."

I: Each thing.

P: Yes.

I: Do you want to add anything for this part?

P: No.

I: So, then for the other grouping you have made, we will do the same thing. Thinking about how it's something that affects everyone, meaning an existential question because it concerns what it means to be human, right?

P: Um hum.

I: So, it has to do with joy, peace that then becomes worry when confronted with mystery. It's the mystery, right? That caused you to worry, being unsure when faced with this situation. And on the other hand, consolation of hope and of the stars.

P: Yes, and I think this is something we also live every day, because every day is quite different. We can plan what we are going to do and how things will go, and anything can interrupt us—what we had planned. So, when something happens we feel insecurity, that things are not going to be well. But in the end, you find something that gets you out of that situation, and you continue being okay [laughs]. So then, for me it's this: there's always uncertainty about what might happen, if things will really be well and hoping that nothing bad will happen, right? Then, at the same time that light of the stars and that is like faith we feel in believing. Because I believe all of us—many of have different beliefs about who God is. But we believe he exists and for this reason we move and exist. And I always believe he lifts me out of depression and all my things that bring me down. And when I think of him, and I have so much faith and believe so much in him, because, as I said, this dream came out of speaking that way from the heart, asking for a sign, an answer to all this that was making me spin. And this dream came to me in which I finally felt at peace, being able to say goodbye to my child. And it left me that memory, that consolation, that everything would be well. So, that's what it makes me think of now and what I feel when I find myself faced with any bad situation, I think of this dream, you see? In which there was a moment of joy when everything was fine and then suddenly, it changed.

I: During the dream.

P: Yes, during the dream. Everything can be fine and the situation can change. And it can be such a terrible blow, but with this feeling that everything will be well. So, that is what this image brings to mind: to see children in my dream, something unknown and *light* in the stars. So, it's like the light that will always be there, right? Because they never leave! [laughing].

I: They are still there, right? Although we may not be able to see the sky, they are there [laughing].

P: It might be a cloudy night, but they move on and they (stars) will still be there. So, that makes me feel, when I'm going through a difficult time, I want to close my eyes and say, "It's not going to last forever, because everything ends. Good or bad, everything ends." Right? Sometimes we may be so happy, and like I said, some situation arises and it changes things. But this doesn't last long either. It gets resolved.

I: So now, on the other side, these thoughts that you have explained to me so clearly... one or two phrases.

P: Yes [writing].

I: Would you read it?

P: Yes [reading]. "I think it's similar to how life is. There are good or bad times, but if we have faith we go on because we know everything ends. Nothing is forever."

I: And can you relate it to something specific in your life now?

P: Maybe it would be you have a problem, but then you find a solution and that's how life is. You go up and down, up and down [writing].

I: So then, would you read this part?

P: This part is, "That is life. You go up and down, you fall and get up, dust yourself off and keep going."

I: That's how you live.

P: Yes. I can fall, but I don't remain lying on the floor, you see? I'm going to get up and keep going.

I: It concerns—I don't know if we've talked about this in group, maybe we have—resiliency. I don't know if it translates well, but it is the capacity to cope. The significance of this part...

P: It would be that, or it might be, as I've added, we shouldn't lose faith, right?

I: The question is, what does it signify for you? What I hear you saying, about the ups and downs, then the ups would be resiliency.

P: Well, I don't know, I think of this I think of a lot of things, such as what it made me feel and what I feel now, how it gives me peace when I remember. Some parts still hurt but in the end, when I analyze the dream (because we've been talking about it, I analyze it more), I think it was in reality a good message given what I could see. There was nothing too bad, only mysterious. But life itself is that, a mystery! That we are in the process of discovering day by day.

I: So, was it helpful to group them and see how the dream has different levels of significance or meaning? So, the next time we will choose something more central. Now we have two themes. We are going to focus on one thing and then enter into the dream a little further. Inviting one image of the dream to be more present. Is that okay?

P: Um hum.

Appendix B-5: Dream Work Session Five 3/10/17

I: What we are going to do today, is go deeper. We have already talked about two themes of the dream. We are going to review what we've already done and then chose one image that you would like to learn more about. So, would you please read this part and the phrases you wrote, and then this part as well?

P: Chair. Table and House. Place and things of comfort, feeling safe, being able to rest and possibly support. Also, the glasses (on the table) tell me there is satisfaction. Remember and value what we have and what we need in life. I learned to appreciate more what I have.

I: Um hum. Thank you. And now the second part, the other group you identified?

P: Yes. The children, a silhouette, sky and stars. Joy and peace that are transformed into worry because of the mystery of being uncertain when faced with a situation; consolation, the light of hope in the stars. I think this is similar to how life is. There are good and bad moments but if we have faith, we keep on going, because we know everything ends. Nothing is forever. That this is life, ups and downs; we fall and we get up, dust ourselves off and keep going. Don't lose faith.

I: Um hum. Then today what we'll be doing is ... this has been like a dialogue that we are doing with the dream, asking what did I see? What were my impressions? Write and draw responses to see more of what was there, right? And so, we have noticed a certain view, like a scene in which things are happening like in a drama. Today what we are doing is more entering into the time of the dream, because the dream is always happening in the here and now.

P: Um, hum.

I: So, to experience the dream, to learn more, we can enter the here and now of the dream, you see? We are using the imagination and chose one image to animate. It's kind of like doing a meditation of the dream as if it were happening now, as if seeing the dream as alive now. Do you have any questions?

P: I don't understand well how to imagine it's happening at a certain time, like afternoon or morning or nighttime...like that?

I: No, more like... have you ever done a guided meditation? It's imagining right now that you are in the dream. That's it.

P: Oh, oh.

I: It's not so much the time of day. We have already been doing this to some extent, right?

P: Yes. We have been using the imagination.

I: What was it (the dream) like. And you have found new things that you saw in the dream but which didn't appear in the first drawing. So, now we are going to choose one image of those that you've identified and this is the one you decide to meet, or learn more about, or that most draws your attention. So, identify which part of the dream, which image using meditation. I'll help you to focus on that part of the dream. I am placing the image and the drawings here so you can choose something. It relates as well to what is meaningful for you today [looks at the images].

P: Well, I think I'd really like to learn more about the silhouette, because that's what I still don't understand or don't know how to describe. Like, what she was like [pause] she appears and disappears just like that, you see?

I: Uh huh. So, could you write, here on this side (of the paper) a sentence to describe what you are looking for, and what it would mean for you, or why you want to know more.

P: [writes]. I have written, I wanted to ask, perhaps something I'm asking myself, right? How is it that I allowed something so strange to me to take my beloved son? Because, how is it that you, loving someone so much, you could let him go? And, how was it that I permitted, how was it that I permitted it? What mystery is hidden in this?

I: Ah...

P: You see?

I: The very fact you permitted it? She, the thing or image appeared.

P: How is it... that's what I'm saying, how is it that something appears practically out of nowhere, to rob me of something that is so mine? Right? Take away what is mine?! But at the same time, it wasn't like I was forced, right? I permitted him to go. And how, if I knew nothing about this figure? And how is it that I felt pain and sadness, because I wasn't going to have my son anymore... because I didn't know what it was. But there was something more that told me, "It has to be." So, I don't understand this—this part.

I: I see.

P: Yes, it's very difficult to understand that at that moment I accepted this And why I didn't feel too worried because, what was it?

I: Um hum. Okay. What we'll do now is—it is sometimes called guided meditation, but it's really for you to engage this question, through this image. To imagine if you can see more, okay. So, we'll do a breathing exercise for relaxation, and then I'll ask some questions. We'll do an exercise as if the image were entering in the room in order to interact with the image, asking questions. You don't have to answer the questions I may ask, it's more to help your thought process and enter into the moment. It's not to respond to me, but rather for your imagination. Also, as I always state, if there is something that you don't want to continue, just say, "I don't want to continue." Okay?

P: That's fine.

I: So, we are going to put our feet firmly on the floor, the hands in your lap, very relaxed (gets up briefly to take out loud, ticking clock) I am getting up do take this out as it will distract me.

P: [laughs]

I: Let's breathe. I won't count each breath because I'd like you to set your own pace, but each time breathing a little more slowly and deeper breaths as you inhale and wait a moment before exhaling. Let's take three breaths, each slower than the preceding [pause]. As you are breathing... let us leave the past in the past and not think of the future, but simply in the present, breathing and feeling the breath enter the lungs and leave when we exhale [pause].

Now, in this moment we are going to imagine the scene of the dream, all the things you've described: the children, the building, that you are sitting on the chair... what do you hear in this scene? Can you hear something? Are there voices of the children or perhaps music if there is music? And if there is a smell. What do you smell in this place? Perhaps too you can hear something from nature. What can you feel in this scene? Is it sunny or not? Are you inside or outside of a house? Can you taste anything? Can you taste anything that's on the table? What are your emotions in being here? Are you calm? How are you? Now that we are in this place, we are going to welcome this figure that appeared and is here now. Let us imagine it is here now and that you can ask anything, what you'd like to ask. We are going to ask, or you are going to ask and then we can wait and see if it says anything. Let us listen to what it says. Also, let us observe what it looks like. Is it a person, a man or woman, a young girl or young boy or adult? What is the clothing like? If the figure responds, what is the voice like? Now, how close is the image to you? Is it far? On the other side of the room, or is it approaching you? How is this figure acting? If you are experiencing any emotions as you interact with this image, what are the emotions? You may ask your own questions, I really don't know what questions those might be. Now, in the silence you may ask and see if there is a response [pause].

Now we will begin to come back and leave this moment in which we have been present to the dream, this moment when your imagination gave you a space to learn more about your life. You may return here in the future if you want. We can thank the image because it came here and showed itself to you in the dream. We can see the place in which you have been, where you saw the children and the chair, the building, the stars, and we say goodbye to this scene, and say thank you again for this opportunity to go deeper in this experience that was important in your life [pause]. So, you can begin to move your arms, hand and feet to wake yourself up a bit and leave this meditation. How was this experience for you?

P: Good, but, I don't think I got a lot of answers [laughs]. But I think it's because of this, it's something that's going to continue being this, a mystery. Because it appears... and the more I tried to say, "Who are you, who are you?" right? But, she, this figure, who for me is a woman because my son told me, "It's a lady." Also, you couldn't see her clothing clearly, but it seemed to be the clothing of a woman, only it was something long that covered her like a mantle. You couldn't see her face. But you could see, if you looked at the figure, it didn't seem like something frightening, you see, rather something good. But I couldn't see anything beyond that.

I: But you have said more than you did before, that's it's a figure that isn't bad, but good, right, and that the clothing is that of a woman, that it's a woman and you don't have, you want to let your son go with her.

P: Yes. I didn't feel fearful that something would happen to him if he were to go, rather my sorrow was that he wouldn't be with me anymore. But it wasn't because I was afraid of where he was going. Even though I didn't know where they were going to be, just that I wasn't going to be there with him. But not knowing exactly what place they were going to, even then, yes, I felt they would be well. He would be well, because he told me, "I will be well" right? And, "I want to go with her!" So, when I saw his determination to go with her, that was what made me think I have to let him go because he wants to.

I: And was she like a type of mother, do you think?

P: Yes. I could say, like something divine. Like that because, it was like whatever she had covering her, it didn't seem to me I was seeing something fearful, but something that, perhaps I too would have gone without thinking.

I: Like, it attracted you?

P: Yes. Something that makes you want to come closer to it. I want to think that it really is something like that, right? Something that isn't bad, like my son told me, "You can look at the stars," I mean, perhaps it's something closer to God. Seeing it's... we still believe, I mean, that there's a heaven and that God is beyond all this. I think that in relating the things I was seeing and the figure, yes, it has to be something, right, that has to do with all this?

I: And this time could you see anything of her face?

P: No. I couldn't see it.

I: Could you see her clothing more clearly, what it was like?

P: A little. It had something, like, tied and then flowing. Like that.

I: Maybe you could look up some images on line, that could give you more ideas, because our imagination uses things we already know, right? We already know what a woman is, what a mother is, what clothing is. So, sometimes it helps us to look for images we've seen already, to find out how we were making associations with that image or figure. There are figures we all know. Human beings know what a mother is, and we all know what birth is. Because we have an experience that is universal about birth and mother and other things too, lots of things, like home, security. We've been talking about these things. Sometimes, beginning with a figure like one of these, we can look for more answers for right now.

P: And make connections between them...

I: Exactly. Although we already have more information, like about the goodness of the figure, how it was attractive and that it had something here [points figure's waist]. Sometimes the imagination works that way: it knows more than we consciously do. It has its own—it's way of knowing is different. We know things intellectually, but there are also other things that we can understand or know that are more (indistinct), like intuitions.

P: Or that at a given moment perhaps I was looking, but I didn't pay attention to each detail. I was focused on seeing what was going on at that moment but I didn't stop to examine each detail.

I: Yes, because it was a lot, a lot was happening all at once.

P: Yeah, and when you we pay attention to each element, and say, "This was like that, and that was this way." But at the time, well, I believed... I was looking at everything but not paying attention because I was concentrating on how it was possible that, for me I was virtually losing my son. But at the same time, I knew it wasn't about losing him but that he wanted to be in that place and I had to accept it. That was what was most important at the time, and what cause me that feeling of sadness and a little, what world would it be? When you feel, when you feel something and there is nothing you can do to change it?

I: Like, resigned?

P: No, more like frustration. You want things to be different but no, they have to be as they are in that moment. Right? So, you'd like that, I would have liked my son to say, "No" and to come back, but he went and didn't come back.

I: Yeah. As you learn more about the figure... what are your emotions now?

P: Now, I feel a little calm, some peace. Possible because it's what's best for me. But it has to be something, most of all, because I had asked God for a sign or evidence that my son was okay. And if I had this dream, I have to think everything that was happening there, well, it wasn't anything bad, it was like telling me that things were going to be well. And [sighs] everything, that image was like an angel of light or a silhouette of something more mysterious, more divine, more of God. And well, [more animated] the boy was a 9-year-old boy that is innocent. So, I don't think it was something bad, but something good. Perhaps, one never knows what will happen to them here, perhaps something worse would have happened. And so, I think I have the memory of this boy who was so loving with me and I know he's in a good place as he told me, "I'm going to be well, let me go, I'm going to be well, I want to be there." Then, I want to believe that what it was, that he's in a better place and that maybe someday I will be reunited with him. I always ask myself... right now, March 28th would be his birthday, this month.

I: The 28th of March?

P: And he would be 18. And I ask myself if a person is reunited after, would he continue being a boy or would he have changed? [laughs]

I: It's a good question! [laughs]

P: Because for me, time is passing but after, I think that, perhaps after death time doesn't pass, but I think people remain with just one image. But that's my idea, right? I don't know! [laughs]

I: These are things we don't know! How can we?

P: So, I don't know. Maybe if he were here he'd be changed but perhaps there, no. But what I do know is that it doesn't matter if he has changed or not. I believe I would see him and recognize him no matter what his present image was.

I: Good, well, sometimes in these exercises, we can learn *a little* more, in other words, it's not like it's a revelation. But knowing a little more and also seeking to know more. If you can seek to know more about this figure in your life now. The last step in this exercise of entering into the dream and dialogue with the dream and letting the dream become animated in the here and now, is to respond with an action. How can I live now in response to this dream, in terms of what it was for you and what it meant for you? So, the next time we meet we will have a closing, like a ritual, a little like Day of the Dead... and it's quite lovely that it will coincide with his birthday, almost. It's going to the 24th of March. So, we can honor the dream and at the same time the memory of your son, what was revealed in the dream, and you can also think and maybe we can talk about it a little now, what positive action might you want to take in response to the dream.

P: Well, I think that I just take things day by day, because for me the silhouette is something towards which I feel gratitude because I felt that she was going to protect him, take care of him. So, then every day I have the custom of lighting a candle, every night even if it's just a short time. I light it and I pray and give thanks. I pray that wherever he is he'll be calm, he'll be happy wherever he is. Like I've said, I've always tried to avoid him seeing me crying or so sad, but rather I always want to smile for him, and tell him that someday, I don't know when, maybe I will see him again. And I always pray that this same image, I mean, even if it is so mysterious, that she might also be close to all my children.

I: Your living children?

P: My living children, maybe that the way she appeared, she took my boy, even though it may be a person that you can't look at, you can feel it. And I think, I can't perhaps always be right behind all of my children, but, "If you are so mysterious, maybe you can be there when I am not."

I: This is what you do before going to bed each night? Like a dialogue?

P: Yes, I always, well I put it next to my table, near my dining table, on the wall like a kind of [inaudible] and I have a picture or image, like a *Virgen* or something like that has like a mantle, and a dress kind of flying and a little angel. And I always put a candle there. And I like it because after we eat and the children, sometimes they stay behind for a while, sometimes they go to bed... but I always look at that and it calls me to talk a little and say what I am feeling. That's when I say, [animated] "Thank you for each day I am alive!" and I go on with this. I like the dream because when I remember it it's like being there again, having the goodbye that, like I

said, we never had. Being there, it's like, "Yes. It happened." Remembering it's like saying, "Yes. It happened," and this gives me peace and I like to remember it quite often. Sometimes my children also come over and they ask me, and they like it as well. I think it draws their attention, you know? Sometimes I show them a little saying or prayer for our protection and they like it. They like to learn how to bless themselves and things like that.

I: Perhaps it's something for them as well, then, something that can help them.

P: Good or bad, whatever happens, I think you always have to give thanks, because sometimes a day doesn't go well, but if we make to the evening, we had the strength to cope with it. Then we can rest, and in the same way I hope also, before I was afraid of night time, but now I'm not afraid of night time. Now I like nighttime because I hope for another dream, to see something again, something more, you see?

I: Yes. Do you write down your dreams?

P: [hesitates] No.

I: It is said that if you can write something down when you wake up in the morning it can help you dream—rather, not dream but remember the dreams you have. Because we dream every night. The thing is, we don't remember our dreams. So, it's said that writing something, even if you write, "I don't remember my dreams last night," they come to you...

P: You start to recall...

I: Your memory of them is better. It's seems that you have already been in the process of dialogue with this dream.

P: [whispers] Yes.

I: Over the years.

P: Yes. Maybe that's why it's so vivid, because I always think about and go into it. It was all I had left. Or it's like when I take a hold of myself and look at my photos of my child, with me or with his sisters and brothers. Something like that, is what the dream gives me, do you understand what I mean? If you see pictures of your family, you look at them, and sometimes it brings up memories of other things. But it feels good and this is kind of what the dream (memory) does for me. If I go into the dream and remember everything. How shall I say, there are things that still hurt but also make me feel better as I remember.

I: Um hum. [pause]. Perhaps for our next meeting, you could bring the picture you have so we can use it in the closing.

P: I know it's time for us to finish today.

Appendix B-6: Dream Work Session Six 3/28/2017

I: [greet participant and sets up ritual space with participant: a table with a candle, bread, images the client has created, a photo of herself with her son who passed and his two brothers] So, now we have our ritual... and we have the elements of bread, like an offering; this is to honor your participation and your courage to share in order to learn.

P: I want to thank you for putting up with me all this time. I always wanted to come prepared but found myself crying... I think it has helped me a lot because we have analyzed quite a bit about this dream I had, and I could define it as that dream of farewell to my son. And now I keep this as a beautiful memory.

I: [nods] Yeah. I was thinking we could offer some words to commemorate those who died, and include a favorite memory of him, or your family to share.

P: Well, there are many memories, but I really enjoyed seeing him and his brother playing together. They were always together. And it was funny because I used to get them mixed up, so I would call one and the other would turn his head. And he'd say, "Who is who?" I would call "_____, _____!" and he would turn, and I'd say, "Oh, I thought it was _____." And I'd call, "_____, _____," and he wouldn't turn his head because it was the other one. And he's always say, "Why do you always mix us up?" Because they always wore similar clothing and anyway were very similar in appearance, almost the same size. And I liked... when I saw them playing and laughing out loud...! and when they would fight, it only took a little time before they were back laughing together again. Maybe that's why he misses his brother. He left me a message saying he hasn't found, either in his other siblings or other person the same kind of trust he had with his brother. He feels like, "He was the only one who understood me... well. The others do listen to me, but I feel like I could tell him things and we could discuss anything at all." Um hum.

I: Yes, well sometimes brothers are brothers but they don't like each other so well.

P: The others are a little older, more mature than he is. And this boy was only one year or eight months younger. So, they were [inaudible word] and for this reason they got along well and got into trouble too!

I: They were like, 8 and 9-years-old?

P: Yes. And so, when we get together—last year the other three came to visit me we were remembering, or they were telling me some things they had experienced. And some, I had no idea the naughty things they did, and they hid it but now they were remembering. Sometimes he told them not to tell, but if he made them angry they would come and tell me. But what I most remember about him is that he was a very joy-filled child and very affectionate. He would always run out to meet me when I came home from work. I would just barely be parking my car and I would see him coming out of the house, running.

I: How sweet, right?

P: Yes, he would always run and hug me and say, “Mama, you are home!” After that it was always hard when I’d arrive home and look at the house and feel as if I would see him coming out.

I: Because that’s what he regularly did.

P: Yes, sometimes he would forget to look at the clock if he was playing, but usually he was waiting for me.

I: Such a lovely memory.

P: Yes!

I: Well, today would be his birthday.

P: Today would be his birthday, 18-years-old. I remember when he was born, he was a bit ugly, he appeared very dark. The mother of my husband at the time, his father’s mother, came in to see him and said to me, “_____, I think they switched babies. This one doesn’t look like your son.”
[laughs]

I: [laughs] They’re always born that way.

P: Right? So, a week went by and she said, “You know, they didn’t switch babies on you. It’s yours. He’s looking better now.” But he was born a little, I don’t know, swollen, his face was a little misshapen. He looked a little strange.

I: Yes, it's said that when a baby is born his head, his cranium is still soft, precisely to make it easier to be born. Sometimes the shape is changed but then it goes back to normal. Nature's way of making it easier to come out.

P: Yes, only a week went by, I think, and he was looking like himself. So, then I believed he was my son! [laughs].

I: [pause] I wanted to also have a chance to talk about the image you chose to help you better understand your dream, the lady that your son said he wanted to go with...

P: "With that lady," he said. So, I don't know if it was like some type of angel or the *Virgin* (Mary)—something like that I think it was. I don't know if that image or silhouette, or however you call it, listens, but many times I have tried to say [pauses, sighs] that, well... that if she is close to my son, that she might care for him. That I know he is such a good son, that I know he's okay, because he knew how to make people love him.

I: Maybe hers, right? [laughs]

P: Yeah, maybe, I hope she is happy with him and he is happy too. That he may be now like a spirit of light, I imagine, and even so, that they would have a good connection between them. That is what I hope for. I would also tell my son I miss him *so much*, very much, but I also know he is in a good place. Here, life would be very different, very difficult, and where he is, I am sure I can have peace that's he's in a better place. Maybe better than we ourselves, right? And I possess the faith and hope that one day I will be reunited again with him. So, I will continue in the hope that this will come about. On that day, I will be waiting for night to come so I can look at the stars, if it's going to be cloudy, because it can be cloudy. But even so, I believe that he will be there waiting, right?

I: It still helps you in some way to look at the stars?

P: Yes, I still feel I want to do this. Like, it's like having this meeting with you, that I know I have to be here. Like that!

I: Oh! Like a commitment?

P: Ah huh! I feel I must do this. Especially on special days. I feel like it's going to happen, and it *has* to happen. I dedicate a time to look, to think, to speak. Although perhaps he can't hear, but for me it helps me calm myself. And today I feel happy too, because I sent money to my son, _____, so he could go to the cemetery and leave balloons there—he *really* loved balloons, so we always brought him balloons. When I would bring him flowers and a candle for him there. And now my son asked me, "Do you want me to do it?" And I told him, "Yes [inaudible word], I will send you the money. Buy the things and you can take them to him." So, I believe it will be a lovely commemoration. And also, we will have one there. [pause] But thank you, Julia (investigator) for having helped me with all of this. To be able to continue here, for making all this possible. Really, for me it's really beautiful and very important to feel that there can be this small connection.

I: Yes... truly it is interesting—I didn't know before—that looking at the stars, something drives you to it.

P: Yes! I feel no one understands it the way I do ... because it's something I feel, in myself, you see? Maybe it can't be understood because others have not experienced like I did in the dream. So, since then—already I had always liked, since I was a little girl, to look at the stars. When the moon was full, all those things I already liked. But when I had that dream? *Well!* I knew it would be part of me!

I: Wow. Yes? I remember your father taught you to look at the stars since you were little.

P: Yes. He also explained to me how they formed constellations. And sometimes I couldn't find what he said was there—some yes and others no—but I still paid close attention to what he said. Yes.

I: [pause] Now, we come to the sharing of the bread (of the ritual). Is it correct to share the bread or leave it on the table?

P: Yes, normally for the Day of the Dead, the offering is left during the night. The next day the offering is shared among the family. Since we can't leave it during the night... let's eat something! [laughs]

I: [serves bread] I couldn't remember if this is something he liked. You chose something the person liked, right?

P: Yes.

I: The Bread for the Dead, is it something specially made only during that time of year?

P: Yes, they make a special bread, but I don't know exactly what's in it. But it doesn't matter, you can put whatever you like. Many people put out sweetened squash, all kinds of sweet things are used.

I: And they use sugared figures, right?

P: [pauses] Mmm. It's good!

I: It's apple.

P: You know, it's like this is his birthday cake, and we're sharing this, right?

I: That is his portion there [points to table] These are customs we don't have very much in our Caucasian communities, you know. But I like having something [inaudible phrase]. I like having a rite or something to talk—an excuse to talk about them, to remember.

P: Because it feels good, I mean, it feels good to know you are dedicating a time, something for them. [pause].

I: [gestures to drawings on the wall in front of ritual space] I will be photographing each one and to be included in the paper I'm writing. Afterward I will return them to you. [looking at image] I realized that the house you drew is the same (in each drawing) and you also told me there were papers in front of the house. Do you know what they were?

P: I don't know, but I think they were napkins like you'd have at a little party; you know how...

I: People litter at parties?

P: Yeah, like that.

I: When I finish the paper, it will be in the library and it forms part of the research, the studies done by all the students researching therapies. It will be included with the other research, taking out names so the subject isn't known. All that (identifiers) is taken out. But there will be added knowledge of how dreams can have an impact, after an experience like you had that was so difficult.

P: Yes, it helps quite a lot, it was like when I was in that state of confusion, and it was something that came to give me clarity of mind, the idea one has about... he died his death, and you have this image that is more... more... stronger, right, within you. But then in the dream you see everything so normal, so real, that it gives you some peace that you need.

I: A letter of gratitude [hands client a card]

P: Oh, thank you. May I open it?

I: Of course!

P: [reads] Oh, thank you.

I: It was an honor for me.

P: For me as well. It was very helpful to have your support and everything, because every time we came together it helped me feel better. You know, I could feel how you listened and everything. Sometimes people appear to be listening but I don't think they really consider (what you're saying), and yes, it feels really nice to be able to share with someone like you.

I: Even though the study has come to a close, if you would like to return for another session, the door is open.

P: Thank you.

I: And we still have the group that will continue this week [shares details about group] Well, I will be thinking of you and your dream.

P: Yes, it's something that sticks with you, right? Oh, yes, I'd like to take a photo together [takes photo]

APPENDIX C: Images



Figure C-1: Dream Painting

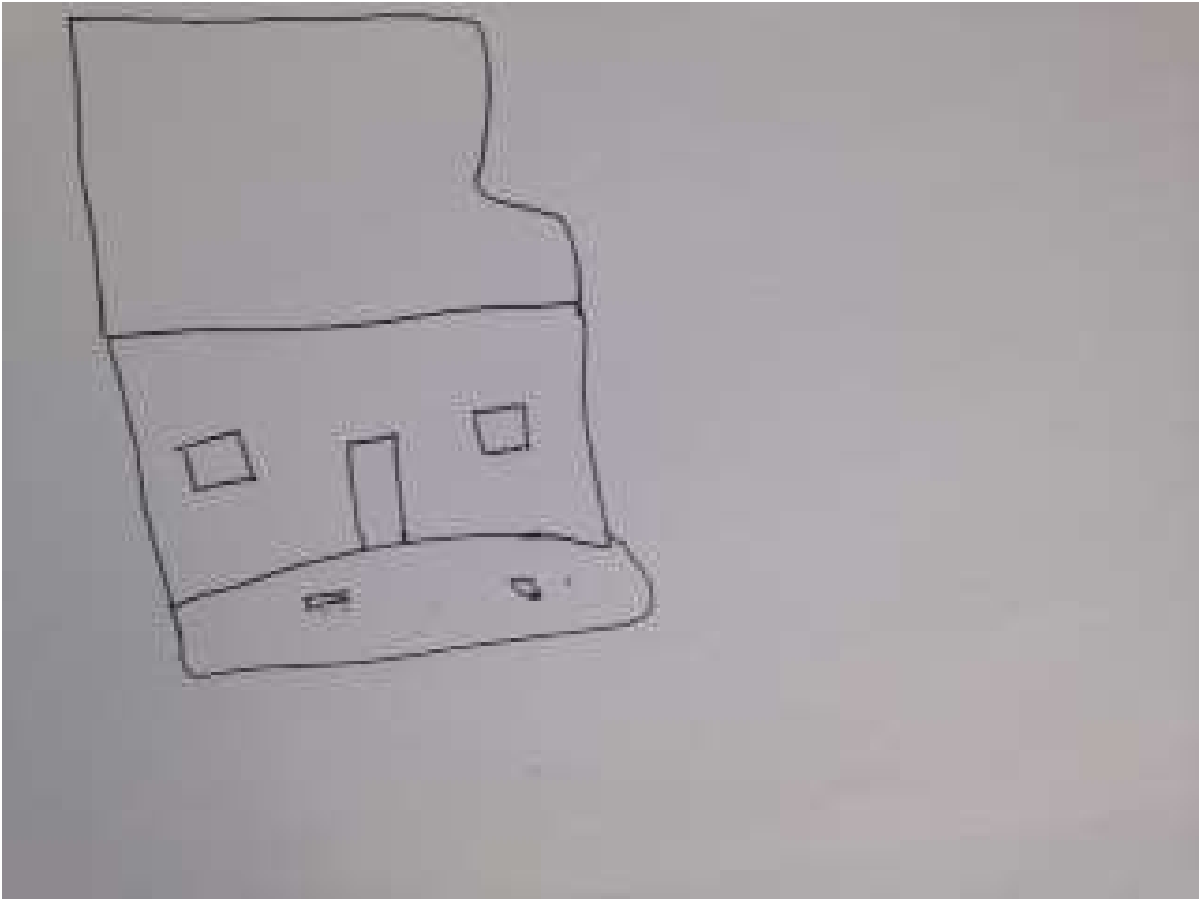


Figure C-2: House

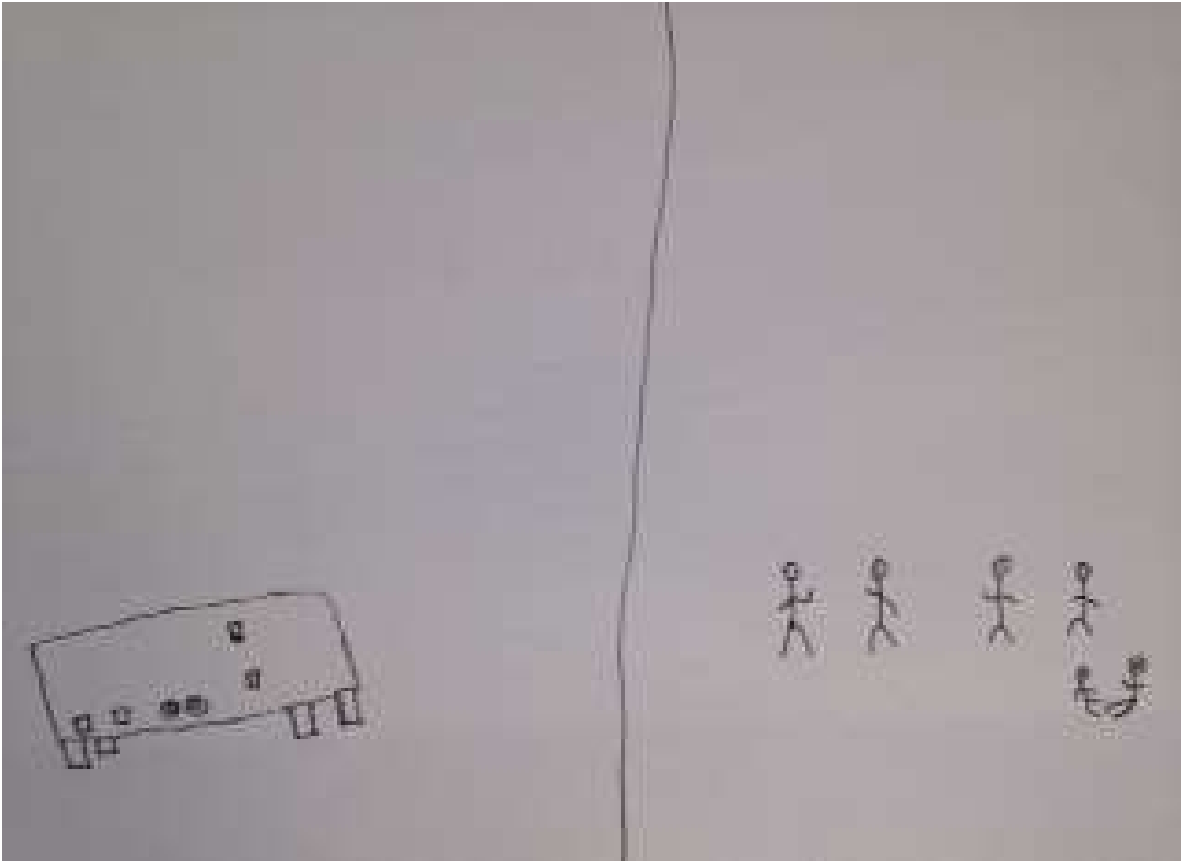


Figure C-3: Table and Children

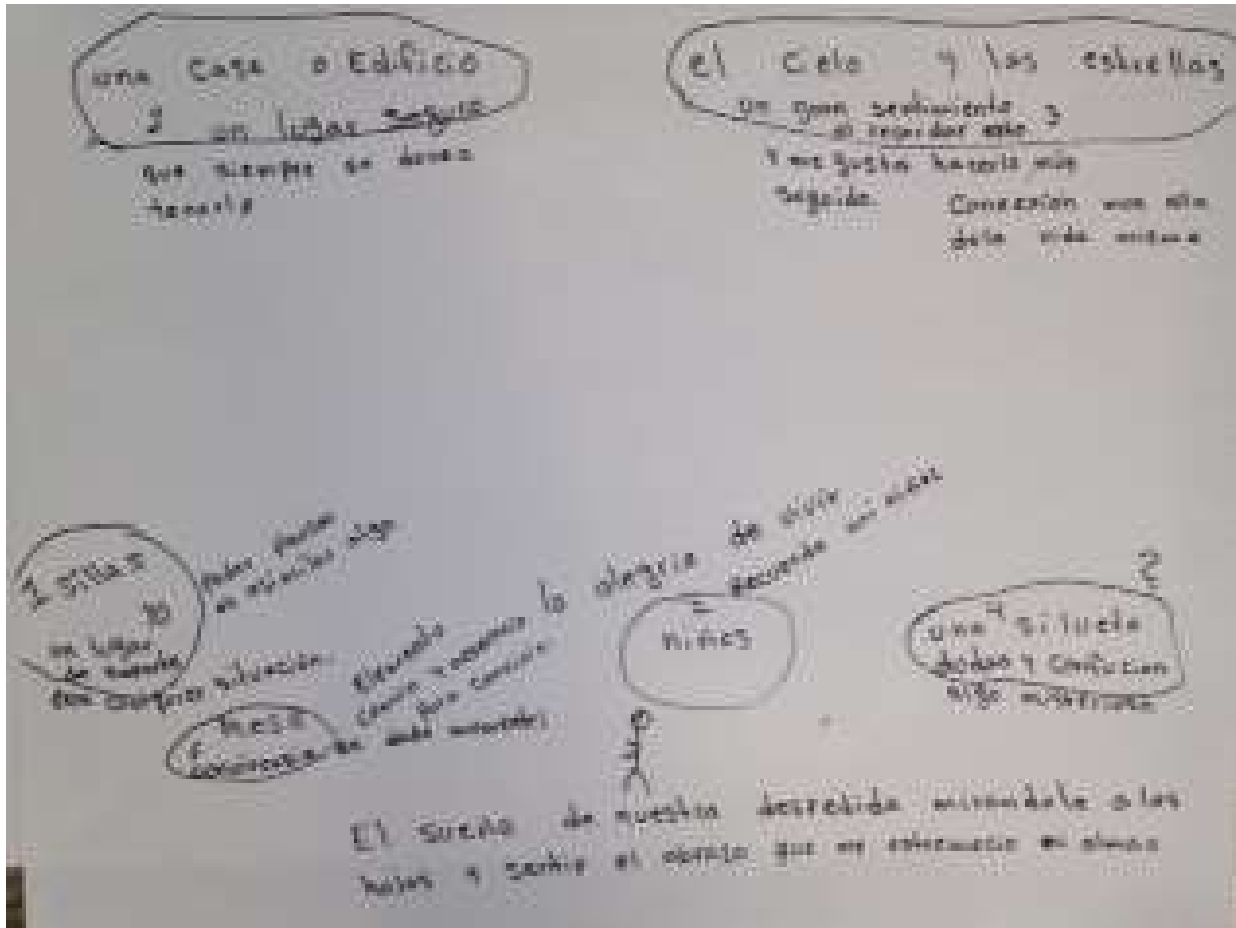


Figure C-4: Dream Images and Associations

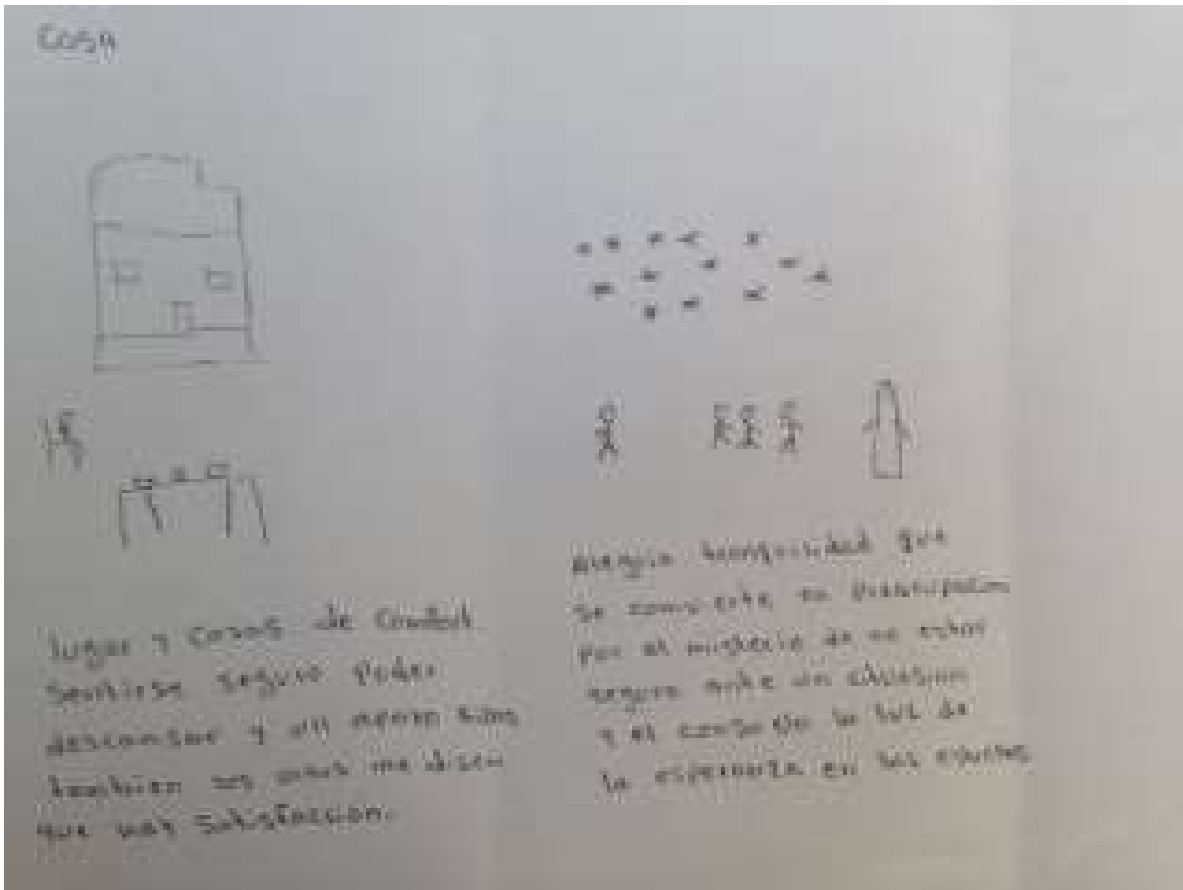


Figure C-5: Associations with Clustered Images

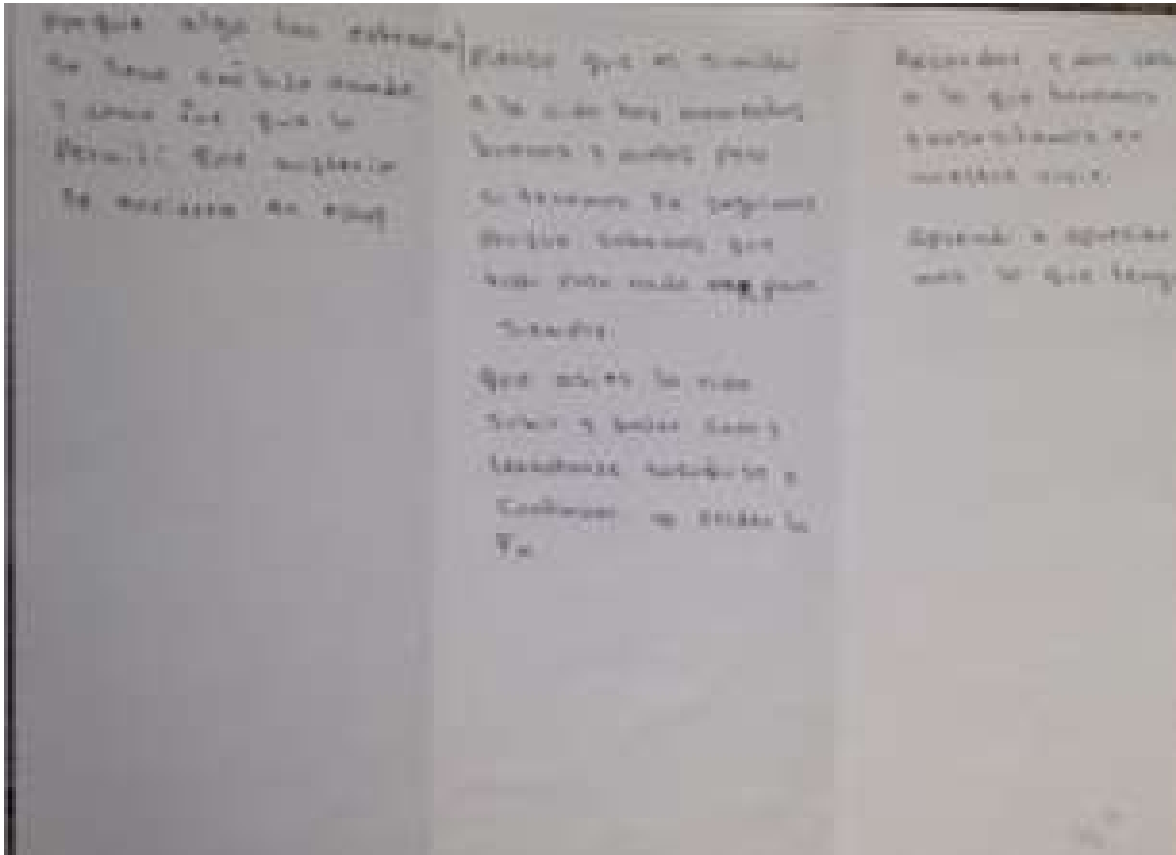


Figure C-6: Statements of Existential Concern

APPENDIX D: Closing Ritual

The client will come to the session prepared to participate in the ritual, including bringing meaningful artifacts, such as photographs or other symbols of the loved ones. The ritual is designed as a culturally appropriate intervention for processing grief with the Mexican American participant (Hipólito-Delgado & Diaz, 2013).

The art therapy intern will provide candles, music, bread or *pan de los muertos* and the art created at previous sessions as well as scripts written during previous sessions.

The participant will be invited to:

1. Create a simple altar as is the custom in *Día de los Muertos*, using flowers and images.
2. Place a candle before the image or images representative of the dream and sit listening to music for 1 or 2 minutes. This step is taken in order to honor the departed and also honor the dream image which, according to Aizenstat (2011) is dynamic and living in the here and now.
3. Offer words of memorial for those who have died, including stories and favorite memories.
4. Speak to the dream/images that are depicted.
5. Celebrate with thanks for the lives of those who have died and share bread *pan de los muertos* (Rogers, 2007).
6. The art therapy intern will close by thanking the participant for her dream work and participation in the study.

The client will be given the choice to include photos and memories.