Dreamwork Canada

Dream Group Process

There are many ways to work with dreams, individually and in groups. Below is the dream group method adapted from The Haden Institute that is used by facilitators in Dreamwork Canada.

1. The facilitator asks for a volunteer to share their dream for group work.
2. The dream presenter shares the dream twice, with any pertinent information to give a clear picture of the dream. They tell the dream slowly in the present tense e.g. “I am driving a car…” Group members are free to take notes. We remember that everything in the dream belongs to the dream presenter.
3. Once the dream is presented, the group members ask questions of clarification to help them envision the dream. This is not about things that happened in the dreamer’s life, which might influence the dream. If there are people in the dream that the dream presenter knows, the group can ask for 3 adjectives that describe that person.
4. The facilitator asks the dream presenter if they are willing to give the dream to the group. The dreamer presenter moves outside the group (or turns off their camera on Zoom) so no one is checking to see the dreamer’s reactions to their comments.
5. The group members talk with each other by staying with the dream, not considering any experience of the dreamer outside of the dream. The dreamer listens to the comments by group members who make associations and observations, as if they had this dream. Group members preface their comments and associations with “In my dream.…” or “if this was my dream…”

*For example, if the dream is about a cat, a participant might say, “in my dream the cat is threatening me and I usually have a good relationship with cats, so this is unexpected.”*

In order to share the talking time, comments and associations are kept brief. No one is required to comment. When the dream feels big or astounding, silence is a valid response.

1. After sufficient exploration of the dream, the dream presenter is invited back to the group and is given back the dream and the opportunity to respond to what was heard and anything else they wish to share. There is no requirement to give feedback, although some words and ideas often resonate with the dreamer.
2. The group members are given an opportunity to comment on the experience of working with dreams. Nothing specific is said about the dream, which has been returned to the dreamer.
3. The facilitator thanks the dream presenter for sharing their dream. Everyone is invited to track their dreams the next few days, because future dreams may be a continuation of the work done here. Remember dreamwork is a continuing process.

adapted from The Haden Institute