

## DREAMWORK TOOL KIT: FIVE BASIC HINTS FOR DREAMWORK

*(Adapted from the work of [Jeremy Taylor](#))*

### **ONE**

All dreams speak a universal language and come in the service of health and wholeness. There is no such thing as a "bad dream" — only dreams that sometimes take a dramatically negative form (also known as a nightmare) in order to grab our attention.

### **TWO**

Only the dreamer can say with any certainty what their dream may mean. Through dreamwork, this certainty often comes in the form of a wordless "aha!" of recognition. This "aha!" feeling sources from a deep and authentic place in our hearts. This feeling of "aha!" can show up as positive OR negative. A "negative aha" is when the dreamer feels very strongly that their dream does NOT mean something (as opposed to having a more neutral response). This level of emotion is something to pay attention to, as it may signify a place where the dreamer is reluctant to go. These "aha!" moments (whether "positive" or "negative,") are the most reliable touchstones of dreamwork.

### **THREE**

There is no such thing as a dream with only one meaning. All dreams and dream images are multilayered and can open up new insights every time they are worked with. Along those same lines, no dream comes to tell us what we already know. This is why, when we hear, "I already know what this dream is about," there is an opportunity to go more deeply, if desired.

### **FOUR**

When talking to others about their dreams, it is very important to understand how projection works. When we listen to someone's dream, all we can do is imagine our own version of the dream, so it is both honest and polite to preface any comments or reflections in a way that honors this projection by using "first person" phrases like "if it were my dream..." or "In my imagined version of this dream..." Along these same lines, when asking clarifying questions, it is best to use phrases like, "What is the dreamer feeling when the monster is chasing them?" or "Imagining myself as the dreamer, am I afraid when the monster is chasing me?" This "projection method" honors the fact that the shared dream is a gift to everyone listening to it and allows others to have profound psycho-spiritual "ahas!" of their own, even if they did not originally dream the dream.

### **FIVE**

All dream group participants should agree at the outset to maintain anonymity in all discussions of dreamwork. In the absence of any specific request for confidentiality, group members should be free to discuss their experiences openly outside the group, provided no other dreamer is identifiable in their stories. However, whenever any group member requests complete confidentiality, all members should agree to be bound automatically by such a request.