

HOW TO START YOUR OWN DREAM GROUP

GATHER YOUR GROUP

I recommend finding at least three other people besides yourself, to start a dream group with. This way, if one person can't make it for a meeting, you still have three people (and therefore, a group!). I suggest limiting the group to no more than 10-12 people.

MAKE AGREEMENTS/COVENANTS

How often will you meet? How long will each group session be? Will you work one dream or two per meeting? What sort of confidentiality does the group want? Is it a closed group, or can anyone join at anytime? Will it be in-person, or online? If it is in-person, will you meet at the same place every week, or rotate? Do you prefer that the group is only for non-binary people? Only cat owners? Only artists?

If you are in a regular dream group, you may want to create a rotating calendar system so everyone has an opportunity to work a dream. If you are meeting for the first time or a limited time, you can ask everyone who wants to work a dream to put their names in a hat and then have someone else (whose name is NOT in the hat) choose the name of the dreamer for that meeting. One dream per meeting is usually more than enough, but some groups prefer two per meeting.

FAMILIARIZE YOURSELVES WITH THE BASIC HINTS FOR DREAMWORK

On your first meeting, I highly recommend you go over my [“Dreamwork Toolkit: The Five Basic Hints for Dreamwork” handout](#). You can also call me in to facilitate your first meeting, so everyone can learn and ask clarifying questions together. I also highly recommend taking dream classes from a variety of teachers. [Morbidity Anatomy](#) always has a nice selection.

START MEETING!

Once you have figured out all your logistics and feel that you understand the basic hints for dreamwork, start meeting. This is the format I use for every dream group meeting:

- **Check-In**
I find it is always nice to start by going around the circle and doing a check-in before beginning the dreamwork. This helps people settle in to the space and alerts the group to any personal challenges someone might be going through/bringing in to the group.
- **The Chosen Dreamer Shares Their Dream**
When sharing, it's helpful to hear when the dream was remembered, and it's wise to keep the sharing of the dream to about 15 minutes. If the dream would take longer than 15 minutes to share, I recommend to instead, share a key scene from that dream that brings up a lot of feeling/emotions.

It is also very important to use first-person, **present tense**, to keep the dream as alive in the moment as possible. For example, instead of “I dreamed a monster was chasing me,” the dreamer might say, “I am running away from a monster.” Additionally, paying close attention to the **feelings** invoked in the remembered dream is very helpful for both the dreamer and those who are listening. An example of this might be, “I am running away from a very scary monster and I am so angry about it.” If the feelings of the dream are hard to connect with, the dreamer can share how the dream feels in their body: “I am running away from a very scary monster and my legs are shaking so much that I am not sure I will be able to get away.”

- **Clarifying Questions**

Once the dreamer is finished sharing their dream, the group is opened up for asking clarifying questions. To honor our projections (see #4 of the [Basic Hints for Dreamwork](#)) use the “projective method.” For example, instead of “Do you know why the monster is chasing you?” try “Does the dreamer know why they are being chased by a monster?” or “As the dreamer, I am wondering why the monster is chasing me.” It is also very important to note that sometimes the dreamer will not have an answer to your question, and that’s okay.

- **Projective Dreamwork**

Once all the clarifying questions have been answered, or the group has reached the halfway point of the meeting, move into reflections/projections. This is when everyone in the group can start sharing what their imagined versions of the dream have brought up in them. It is **ESSENTIAL** that the projective method be used for this process. **Please use statements like “If it were my dream....” or “In my imagined version of the dream...”** For example, “In my imagined version of the dream, I am angry that the monster is chasing me because we used to be friends.” We use the projective method because it is a very different experience for the dreamer to hear “Well, clearly this dream is about your abusive father,” as opposed to “In my imagined version of the dream, this is about my childhood fears of my abusive father.” The dreamer is free to respond or not respond to these projections in the moment. Beware of being attached to the dreamer responding in some specific way to your projections. Remember, dreamwork is for **EVERYONE**, not just the dreamer. I can have just as powerful of an “aha” around someone else’s dreamwork process as I can with my own dream. That’s one of the many cool things about this work!

- **Final Remarks and the Dreamer Always Gets the Last Word**

When there is about 15 minutes of the group meeting time left, the dreamer can ask for any more reflections/projections on any aspect of the dream **that has not yet been addressed**. The dreamer then **always** has the last word. They can share more about the insights and “aha’s” that opened for them during the dreamwork, or they can simply give their thanks.

- **Pick the Dreamer for the Next Meeting**

If you haven’t already created a rotating schedule, decide who will be working their dream at your next session.

Questions? Please don’t hesitate to reach out! Happy Dreaming!