



## I HAD THE STRANGEST DREAM LAST NIGHT!

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### Dream Interpretation Worksheets

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## Why Dreams are Important to You

Everyone dreams. Even if you aren't able to remember your dreams, you dream at least four or five times a night. And those dreams can give you clues to how you are living your waking life—how you feel, what obstacles you are facing—and what to do next.

Because your conscious mind is, well, **un**-conscious while you sleep, the stories your mind habitually tells you about your life are absent from your dreams. The part of you that censors unpleasant thoughts and hides your full accountability for your life is inactive. Your dreams are free to reveal basic truths about you, your relationships, and the issues in your life that hold you back. Dreams are the most direct link to your psyche, and to the deepest knowledge in your soul—your inner wisdom.

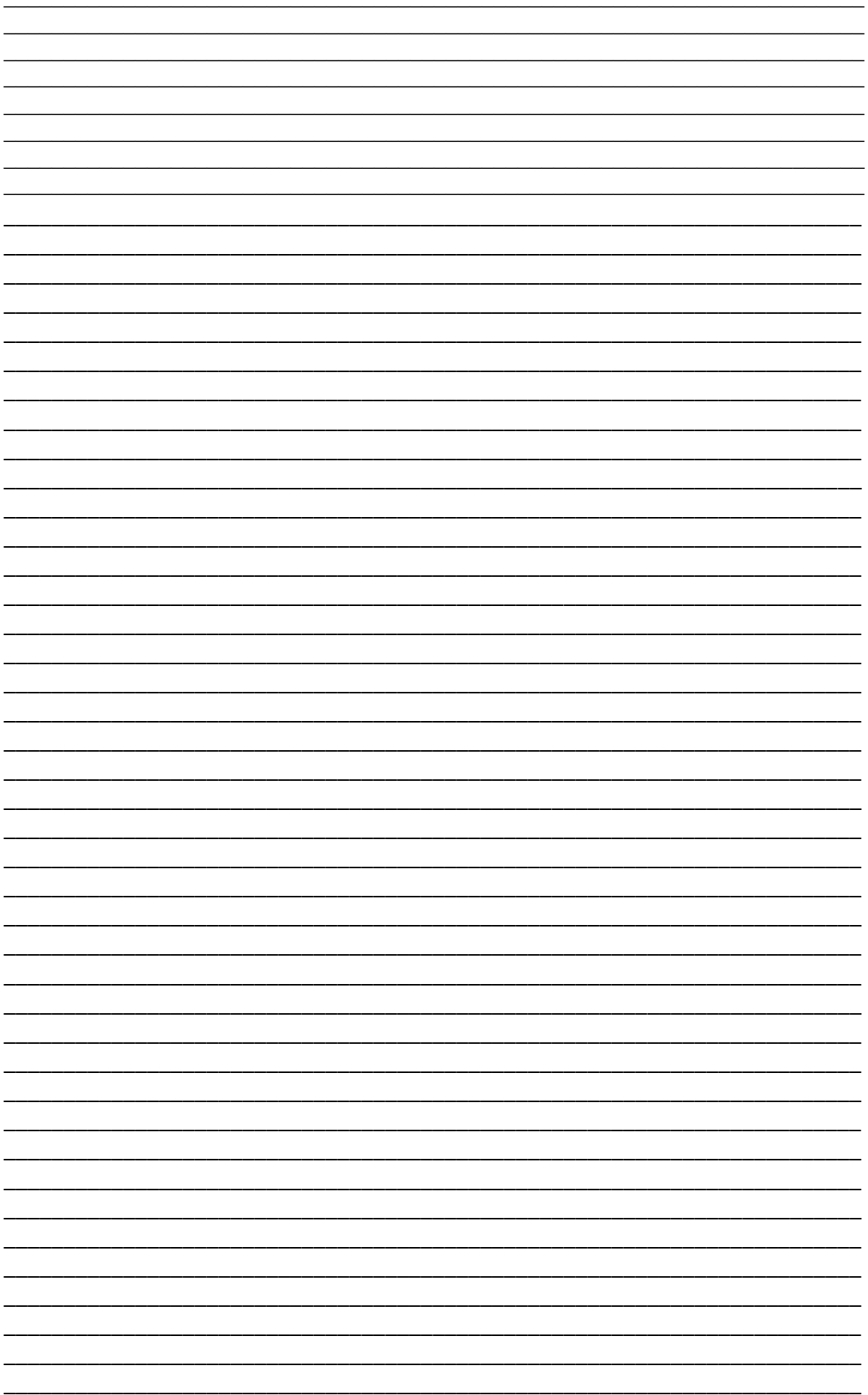
Learning to interpret them gives you a valuable tool to become more conscious of your true self, your best path, and your right life. If you are on a path of self-discovery, paying attention to your dreams can add new understanding and lend deeper meaning to your journey.

## Accessing Your Dreams

In order to interpret the dreams, you've got to remember them. Even a small fragment of a dream remembered can deliver a powerful message, so here are some ideas on how to collect dreams and dream fragments.

- Keep a dream journal next to the bed (and a dim nightlight for those startling nightmares that awaken you in the middle of the night).
- Upon awakening, lie quietly, eyes closed, without moving, and allow your mind to take you back to the dream you were just inhabiting. Then write down everything you can remember, in as much detail as possible. If you can't remember a single detail, allow yourself to focus on whatever your first thoughts are this morning, and write that down.
- If you are awakened by a nightmare, hold on to those images and quietly write them down. The more unsettling the dream, the more insightful and healing the message will be, so pay particular attention to these dreams.
- If you have trouble remembering dreams, set an intention the night before. Ask your wise dreaming mind to help you remember your dreams in the morning.
- You can also ask your wise dreaming mind to help you solve a problem. As you are falling asleep, repeat the question you need answered or the problem you need solved several times, and ask for guidance through your dreams.
- Review the dream using the techniques covered in the workshop and briefly described below. It's always a good idea to run them by someone else with some dream experience, as another perspective may open up a completely new path of inquiry for you.





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**Step Two: Actually *become* the symbol.**

This requires bit of role-playing that may feel awkward at first. This method is based on Jung’s approach, where he reasoned that each symbol of the dream is really a part of your Self expressing itself, so it makes sense that you actually are the symbols (since the symbols are YOU). You’ll role play each symbol and action in the dream—thinking, behaving and speaking as the symbol.

For instance, if I dream of a doorway, I will become the doorway and describe myself: “I am the doorway. I am large, open, and inviting.” You may dream of a doorway, and your description might be: “I am the doorway. I am small, dark and forbidding.” Clearly, we’re both headed in different directions!

Once you’ve come up with three or four adjectives to describe yourself *as the symbol*, you’ll continue speaking as the symbol to describe what you (the symbol) are doing in the dreamer’s dream. It is important to continue to speak as the symbol: “I am the large, open, and inviting doorway, and I’m in the dreamer’s dream to show her that she can step out into the world with confidence.”

Actions can be interpreted in a similar way. If you dream of a dog barking, you can become the barking: “I am barking—I am urgent, loud, and insistent. I want the dreamer to pay attention to me, and to give me more treats!”

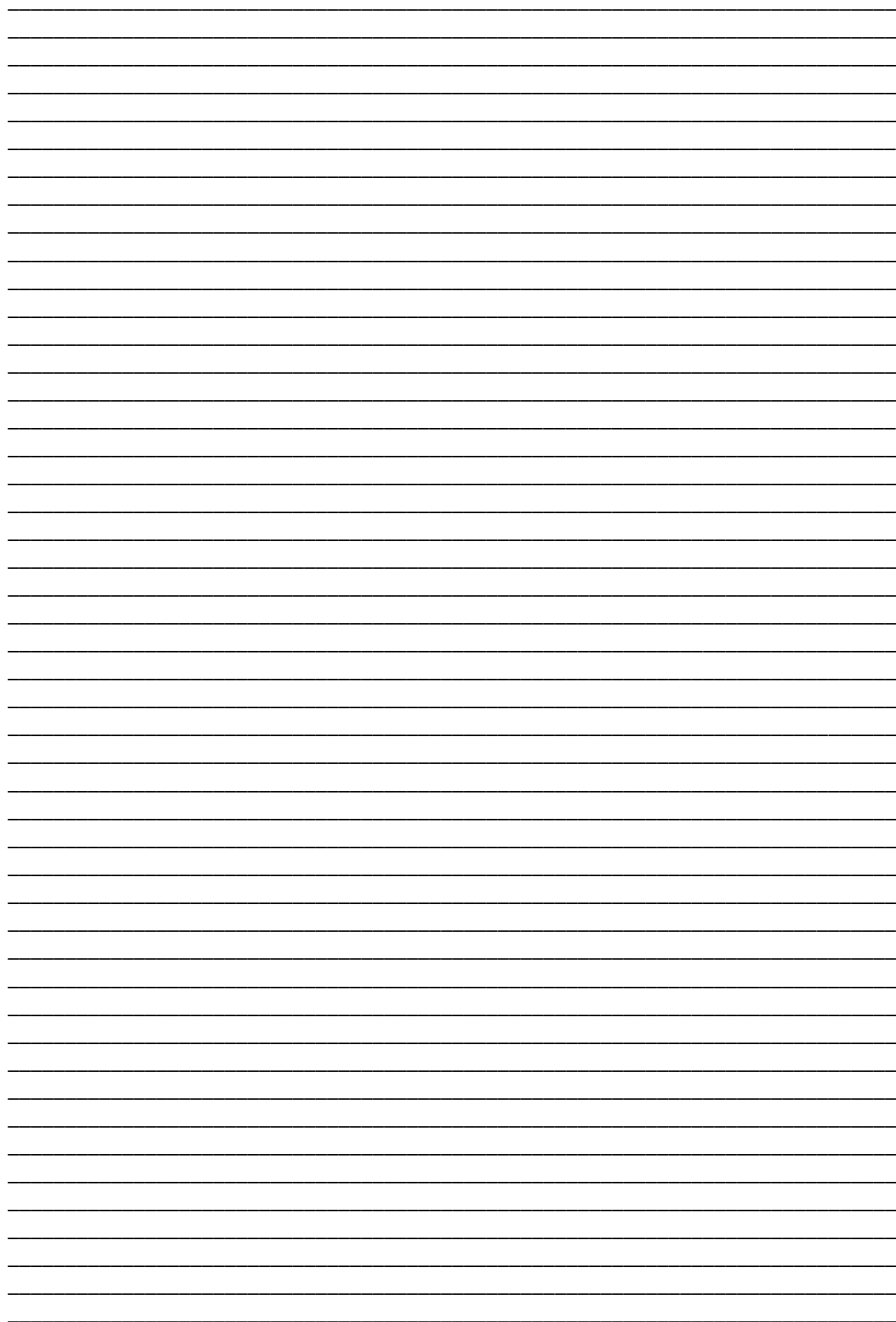
Using the word “I” as you speak for the symbol is important—you will get far more information this way, and it will help keep your conscious mind from tainting the symbol with its judgments. It takes some practice, but the effort will be well worth the rewards.

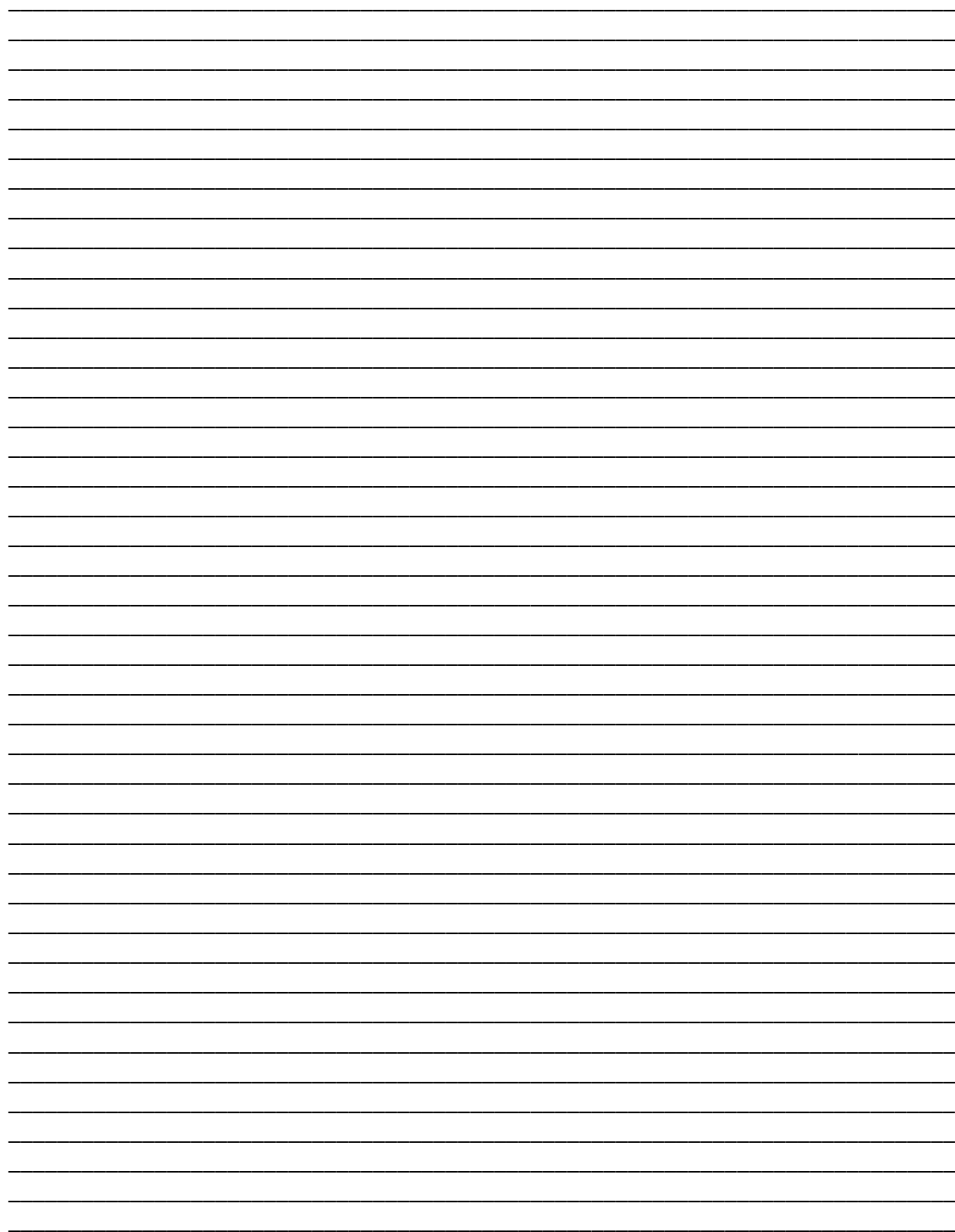












## 2. Dream Interviewing

Another method of understanding dreams has been taught by Dr. Gayle Delaney, the Founding President of the Association for the Study of Dreams and a director of the the Delaney & Flowers Center for the Study of Dreams. She focuses on the use of dreams as a problem-solving tool, and wrote a groundbreaking book, Breakthrough Dreaming, on techniques of dream interviewing that get past our 'daytime defenses' and help us translate the visions and insights that come to us in dreams into helpful strategies for waking life.

The core of the interviewing technique is for the dreamer to work with an interviewer, and to treat the interviewer as if s/he comes from another planet, with no preconceived notions or knowledge about the actors or actions in the dream. During the course of explaining to a "Martian" what a dog is, what kinds of people have dogs and why, and how the qualities of the dog relate to the dreamers daytime experience, the deeper meaning of "dog" to the dreamer is revealed.

The interview questions are categorized for convenience, but may be used in whatever order makes the most sense. Remember to always describe the dream images, symbols and actions as if the interviewer has never heard of them before.

- I. Feelings
  - a. What are the feelings you're most aware of in the dream?
  - b. Have you felt this [feeling] in your past or current life?
  - c. When did you first feel it? When have you most recently felt it?
  
- II. Setting
  - a. Describe the opening scene of the dream. [Use the following line of inquiry for subsequent scenes as well.]
  - b. What is this place like in waking life? What kinds of things or people are there?
  - c. What is this place like in your dream?
  - d. How does it feel to be in this setting? How do you feel as you [stand/sit, etc] there?
  - e. Does this [description] remind you of anything in your waking life?
  
- III. People/Animals
  - a. Who is [the person in the dream]?
  - b. What are they like in waking life?
  - c. What are they like in your dream? What is [this person] doing in your dream?
  - d. Does [this person], whom you describe as [description], remind you of any THING in your waking life?
  - e. Does [this person], who is [description], remind you of anyone else, or is any part of you like [this person]? How so?

- IV. Objects
  - a. What is a [dream object]? Do you like [dream object]? What kinds of people own/use [dream object]?
  - b. What is the [object] in your dream like? What do people do with them?
  - c. Does the [object] in your dream, which you describe as [description], remind you of anything, anyone, or any part of yourself? How so?
  
- V. Feelings, continued
  - a. How do you feel at this moment in the dream?
  - b. Tell me about a time/the last time you felt this way. Is the feeling familiar in any way?
  - c. Does this feeling of [description of feeling] remind you of anything in your current life?
  
- VI. Action
  - a. Describe the major action/event in this dream scene.
  - b. Does this action bring to mind any situation in your life? How so?
  - c. Describe the central plot of this dream. Does it remind you of anything or anyone in your current life?
  
- VII. Summary
  - a. [Event] happened, which you described as [description], which reminded you of [connection]. Does anything else come to mind?
  - b. How do you understand the dream? What remains unclear?

I hope you've enjoyed this brief introduction to dream interpretation, and will be inspired to continue your journey of self-discovery through your dreams. Feel free to contact me with questions or comments by emailing me at [amy@insightoutlife.com](mailto:amy@insightoutlife.com).

Sweet dreams!

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<sup>i</sup> Stephen Segaller and Merrill Berger, The Wisdom of the Dream, 1989, Shambhala Press