INSIGHT FROM THE CONSIDERATION OF REM DREAMS, NON-REM DREAMS AND DAYDREAMS

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Objectives: To collect REM, non-REM stage 2 and day dream reports in the sleep lab and later discuss the reports in a dream group following the Ullman dream appreciation technique. To test the hypothesis that Exploration-Insight ratings would be higher after discussion of REM and non-REM dreams than after discussion of daydreams. To test the hypothesis that EEG frontal theta power during the sleep/daydream period would be correlated with level of Insight obtained from the discussion session (results being analysed and not presented here).

Method: Participants (15 females, 16 males; mean age = 20.42) were woken after 10 minutes of REM and 10 minutes of N2 sleep, so as to obtain dream reports. Before going to sleep, after 10 minutes of relaxed wakefulness a daydream report was obtained. The dream and daydream reports were discussed 2 – 6 days later in a dream discussion group with researchers not involved in the sleep lab dream collection. The 14 item Gains from Dream Interpretation questionnaire was completed after each session, amended to refer to (day)dreams, and scored from 1 = strongly disagree, to 9 = strongly agree.

Preliminary results: Discussion time for each report ranged from 30 – 35 minutes and did not differ significantly between the REM, N2 and daydream conditions. Length in words of reports used in the discussions did not differ between the three conditions. The Experiential subscale of the GDI showed that re-experiencing the feelings and reliving of the (day)dream experience in the discussion did not differ between REM, N2 and daydreams. REM and N2 discussions did not differ on any GDI item, and so REM and N2 scores were combined. As hypothesised, Exploration-Insight was higher for dreams (M=7.60, SD=0.88) than daydreams (M=7.13, SD=0.99) (t-test, p=.004, n=30). Subscale items include: “I learned more about what this (day)dream meant for me personally during the session”, and “I learned more about issues in my waking life from working with the (day)dream”. Explicitly stated realisations about the self were reported in approximately half of the dream and daydream discussions.

Conclusion/Discussion: Exploration-Insight scores were significantly higher for considering dreams than for considering daydreams. The similarity between dream and daydream conditions in explicitly stated personal realisations may be due to the similar levels of references to recent waking life personally significant events and major concerns in the dream and daydream reports.