“Spontaneity in Social Dreaming”

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Abstract

Spontaneity in Social Dreaming

Social dreaming is a modern day method in which people share dreams and associations from which learning can be gained about the broader social system. Research to date has established the validity of this goal however there has been little exploration of the method itself. This study is an effort to extend understanding of the social dreaming method. It is argued in this thesis that spontaneity is a crucial factor in the effectiveness of the social dreaming method. Three hypotheses are explored:

Hypothesis 1: There is a relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system of the matrix.
Hypothesis 2: Social dreaming, to be effective requires that matrix participants and consultants maintain spontaneity.
Hypothesis 3: If reactive forces predominate in the immediate social system it becomes restrictive and the spontaneity of participants is reduced.

This is a field study which uses qualitative research methods. Case studies of four participants of an ongoing social dreaming matrix are presented and analysed using role, thematic and focal conflict analysis. The data from eight consultants to social dreaming matrices are also analysed using role and thematic analysis.

Results from this study support the three hypotheses stated above. Spontaneity is shown to be a significant factor for participants in sharing dreams and associations to a social dreaming matrix. When both participants and consultants maintain spontaneity they are able to contribute to the developing matrix of dreams, associations and connections. Vitality, as a form of spontaneity, is found to be present as energy, reflection, immediacy, a warm up to maximum spontaneity and as a dimension of leadership within the social dreaming method. The absence or reduction of vitality limits the development of the matrix of dreams, associations and connections.

The primary finding from this study is that the developing role relationships that make up the immediate social system of the social dreaming matrix have an impact upon participants' capacity to contribute to the matrix of dreams, associations and connections. In addition there has been the discovery of secondary tasks that assist the consultant to work with the primary task of making connections between the dreams, associations and the wider social system.

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Tamara Irish has consistently modeled maintaining resilience and vitality in the face of difficulty. I have learnt much from you.

Declaration

I certify that:

a) except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone;
b) the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or part, to qualify for any other academic award;
c) the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program;
d) any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged;
e) ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed

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