

Introduction

Social dreaming (Lawrence 2005) is a method for learning about conscious and unconscious aspects of social systems through the sharing of dreams within a social dreaming matrix. While this method has been used in many countries (Lawrence 2005) there has been little or no formal research on the method. The research reported here is carried out in the spirit of redressing this lack, or at least beginning to do so. The research explores the experiences of people working with social dreaming and looks at those occurrences and issues that either foster or inhibit the social dreaming process.

In exploring the method, psychodynamic and spontaneity theories have been used. Combining these two quite different theoretical approaches is challenging and not always successful insofar as they do not fit together hand and glove. However, spontaneity theory gives insight into how people take up roles in the social dreaming method and this exploration aids those using and developing the method to realize its potential.

It will be argued in this thesis that the social dreaming method works through tapping the spontaneity of individuals to share dreams and associations to them with each other. The dreams, associations and connections provide the data through which learning about the broader social system emerges. Additionally, it is hypothesized in this thesis that the learning that is possible through social dreaming is affected by the relationship between (i) the spontaneity of participants and (ii) the immediate social system that develops. This relationship is significant because it consists of the roles and role relationships (Clayton 1993) within which the dreams and associations are shared.¹

It shall be argued that learning can be accessed and utilized for the building of the broader social system when spontaneity is high and roles and role relationships are progressive (a concept within role theory to be explained later). Alternatively, it is hypothesized that when anxiety is high, spontaneity is lowered and learning and

¹ Note here that roles and role relationships are defined in terms of spontaneity theory see Moreno 1946, Clayton 1993

progress becomes restricted. In such a case, functioning of the individual and the social system become oriented to coping with fear and anxieties. If these cannot be contained functioning becomes regressive. It is further hypothesized that the work of the consultant can contribute to enhancing the spontaneity of participants. This results in the opportunity for a broader and deeper range of learning to be gained about the social system, both in its immediate form of the system of participants and also in its broader form of the society from which the participants come.

Outline of chapters

There are three sections to this thesis.

Section 1 contains the introduction and literature review. It consists of three chapters.

Chapter 1 introduces the aims of the research study reported in the thesis. A rationale is given for the research and the working hypotheses are presented. Theory and my personal experience are used to illustrate the context and motivation for this particular study. The role of the researcher is discussed including conflicts that emerged in that role during the study.

Chapter 2 focuses upon the relationship between dreams and social systems. An overview is given of a long history in which groups of people have looked to dreams to assist them in day to day living. There is description of beliefs held by different peoples about how dreams can help them and the range of ways that this learning is accessed. In Chapter 3 the development of social dreaming theory and method are discussed. Applications of social dreaming are presented.

Section 2 focuses upon the research and its analysis and consists of five chapters.

Chapter 4 includes a discussion of available research methods and the advantages and disadvantages of these in relation to this study. In Chapter 5 the reader is introduced to role theory and focal conflict theory from which concepts are derived and used in the research analysis.

Chapters 6 - 8 contain the analysis of the data. In Chapter 6 case studies are presented of four participants from the same social dreaming matrix. Role theory and focal

conflict theory are used to explore their experiences of the immediate social system of a social dreaming matrix and the relationship between this and their individual spontaneity.² Chapter 7 contains the interpretation of the analysis from Chapter 6.

Chapter 8 explores the experience of eight people who have worked as consultants to social dreaming matrices. Role theory and thematic analysis are used to analyse individual face to face interviews and email interviews. There is a focus on the spontaneity of the consultant and what has been learnt through their experiences of working with the social dreaming method in a number of different contexts and countries.

Chapter 9 is a discussion of vitality as a form of spontaneity. Data from matrix participants and consultants is used to illustrate the points of this discussion which include how the presence and absence of vitality directly impact the capacity of people to participate in a social dreaming matrix.

The third section consists of one chapter. Chapter 10 consists of conclusions arising from this study, limitations of this study and implications for future applications and development of the social dreaming method.

² Matrix is the term used here for the container within which social dreaming takes place.

Chapter 1: Introductory Chapter

1.1 Context of the study

1.1.1 Introduction

This is a study of the social dreaming method. To date there has been little exploration of the method itself as most of the research and writing demonstrates how the social dreaming method supports learning about a broader social system through the sharing of dreams and associations. The area under exploration here is the relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system of a social dreaming matrix. By immediate social system I mean the social system of matrix participants.

The next section will describe social dreaming and how it works. Terms will be defined including matrix, immediate and broader social system. A definition and description of spontaneity will then be given and the relationship between social dreaming and spontaneity made explicit.

1.1.2 What is social dreaming?

Social dreaming is a method in which people share dreams and make associations to them. From these dreams and associations connections emerge and are identified that reveal learning about aspects of the broader social system. The broader social system is both the source of the dreams and the subject of learning. In 1982 Gordon Lawrence and Patricia Daniels framed the idea of having a group of people who could dream socially (Armstrong 1998, p.xviii). They developed social dreaming in its current form but acknowledge that it is not a new concept. Lawrence (1998) gives examples throughout history that demonstrate how people have previously looked to dreams to assist them in learning about and building their social systems. Further detail will be given about how dreams have been used in the development of social systems in Chapter 2.

In the 20th century dreams have been associated with Freud and his pioneering work in individual psychoanalysis where a person reports dreams and then associates freely to them. By following this process Freud (1900/1999) believed that a dream can provide meaningful learning to a person about what goes on in their waking life. In social

dreaming, dreams and associations are also used but with a focus on the dreams leading to learning about the social rather than the individual system. The focus is on the social rather than the personal elements of dreams. While the individual and the group are needed for the method, the individual ego and the group processes are kept in the background. In the foreground is the process of thinking about the connections to the social system that arises from the dreams and associations. The purpose of this current study is to explore the interactive effects between social dreaming and individual spontaneity. Prior to discussing this in relationship to the aims and outcomes of social dreaming, relevant terms will be defined in a later section of this Chapter.

Social dreaming has been used fruitfully in a wide range of settings to access learning about a particular social system such as would be found within an organisation or work team. There will be more in-depth descriptions of these in Chapter 3 when the development and applications of social dreaming is discussed. There are a range of ideas about what terms most aptly describe a person who conducts a social dreaming matrix and these will also be discussed in Chapter 3.

1.1.3 Matrix as structure

Social dreaming takes place in a matrix. The word matrix is used to describe both form and process in social dreaming (Lawrence 2005, p.14). The form consists of the pattern of seating utilised for social dreaming in which chairs are placed at angles to each other. This seating pattern creates a physical space in which eye contact with all other participants is impossible. When a person speaks they may be addressing the backs of some people. The purpose of this seating arrangement is to reduce attention to the interpersonal relationships. It allows people to have some physical and subsequent mental space to connect to their thoughts without being distracted by eye contact with other people. It has the effect of cutting across the usual social interactions that develop between people when they get together as a group. Typically the consultant of a social dreaming matrix will say at the beginning of each session that the task is to share dreams, make associations and from these identify connections to the broader social system and hence expand thinking. People are asked to work on these associations and connections to dreams, not on their relationships with each other or on the relationship of the dream to themselves personally. The configuration

of people in this matrix structure is described by Lawrence (2005, p.14) as providing the container within which the dreams can be thought about and their meaning discovered. In this thesis, the term 'matrix' will be used to refer to the process through which dreams, associations and connections come together, although in the research interviews some respondents refer to matrix solely as the structure.

1.1.4 Matrix as process

The matrix as process is the network of dreams, associations and connections that develops in social dreaming. Once the consultant to the matrix has stated the task it is up to participants as to when they speak. Often there is silence as people register this. Eventually a participant relates a dream. This often triggers a memory of a dream in another participant. They relate that dream. Dreams begin to "speak" to dreams. That is, participants report dreams that resonate to those previously reported. Participants express their associations to the dreams. Associations may include a wide range of different response such as images, ideas, music, stories, history or emotions. There is no "right" response. Each association is valid in itself. The associations are made in a random way in that there is no expectation that they have a logical connection with any association made by another participant, though at times they do, and a flow of associations emerge. Quite quickly there will be a number of dreams and associations that may appear to be unrelated as they come from each participant's response to the dream rather than their responses to each other as in normal conversation. The process is not linear as in the development of a logical argument. It is more like putting together a jigsaw puzzle where nobody knows what the actual picture is going to be and each participant starts with different pieces and from a different place. Associations are made and particular dream images or themes are brought into relief. Piece by piece, dream by dream, association by association, patterns come into being.

These patterns are then transformed into a more systematic form of thinking through the development and consideration of learning about the broader social system of the participants. This matrix of dreams, associations and connections is the basis for social dreaming as it provides the link to the broader social system.

The associations and connections lead to a greater understanding of the social system because they bring into awareness aspects of the social system that were not

previously consciously known. There are two main processes that have the potency to bring this about. The first is the dreams and the second is the associations. Neither dreams nor associations are processes controlled by the everyday waking monitoring and censoring mind. Each is a free flowing imaginative thinking process that has the capacity to bring new learning into awareness. Dreams occur naturally in human functioning and free association is used as a method to enhance learning. Dreams and associations both arise from the waking logical mind being 'at rest'. It is understood that they communicate in a way that sidesteps those individual and social system defences such as repression or denial mobilised in waking life to keep 'confronting knowledge' at bay or to maintain the reassurance associated with having some semblance of order.

The method of associating to dreams has the effect of freeing up usual thinking patterns. The emphasis is on expressing responses to the dreams that may be in the form of thoughts, feelings, and images. That is, anything that comes into a person's awareness on hearing a dream. As with the dreams, this creates an environment in which all manner of things are expressed and the immediate meaning is not necessarily clear. The dreams and associations scramble what is known and offer new images, thoughts or connections. This makes predetermined or familiar patterns of thinking or awareness more difficult to maintain and allows a space for new learning. An array of new material is expressed and patterns are identified that reveal learning about previously unknown or repressed aspects of the social system.

Lawrence (2005, p.28) sees this process of social dreaming as tapping into thinking that comes from the "infinite". The terms infinite and finite are chosen by Bion (Lawrence 1998) as alternatives to describing the unconscious and conscious. Infinite describes that which is unknown with no form or category. The finite is that which is known and defined. It is hypothesized by Lawrence (2005) that the social dreaming matrix provides the means by which the infinite can be made into the finite as that which was previously unknown about the social system is revealed through the developing connections between the dreams and associations.

1.1.5 Focus on the immediate social system in this thesis

In social dreaming the focus is on the dream and not the dreamer. This is because the dreams are seen to hold the unconscious or infinite unknown and will provide new data for the broader social system. Nevertheless, there is an immediate social system present that consists of the developing roles and role relationships between participants. While the focus in social dreaming as a method is on the developing connections between dreams and associations there is simultaneously a network of connections developing between the participants. These connections consist of the roles and role relationships that people enact as they participate in social dreaming. In this thesis I am interested in these roles and role relationships and argue that they form the immediate social system that is the 'engine' of social dreaming. Additionally, it will be argued that the development of the immediate social system can be gauged by identifying the roles and role relationships that emerge and that the character of these reveal the levels of spontaneity that are present.

Moreno (1946/1985) developed the methods of psychodrama, sociodrama and role training to enhance the spontaneity of individuals and groups. When the term spontaneity is used in reference to Moreno it is usually in the context of one of these methods. In this thesis spontaneity is used as defined by Moreno however it is applied in the context of the social dreaming method. Spontaneity is originally defined by Moreno (1946/1985 p.xii) as a 'new response to an old situation or an adequate response to a new situation.' He had a vision of human beings developing their capacity to respond to the challenges of life in original, creative and effective ways (Moreno 1946/1985). Spontaneity is assessed through the identification of roles. A role is defined by Moreno (1946/1985 p.iv) as the 'functioning form taken by a person in any given situation.' A role contains thinking, feeling and action elements. Role analysis is one of the methods of research analysis used in this study and there will be further discussion of the concepts of spontaneity, roles and role analysis in Chapter 4.

1.1.6 Spontaneity in social dreaming

It is hypothesized in this thesis that the social dreaming method creates a unique working space in which the relationship between the spontaneity of participants and consultants is a significant factor. Social dreaming is a free flowing method in that there is no specified order or structure within which dreams, associations and

connections are contributed. There is no specific number of dreams expected from the group or from individuals. Unlike some other group methods, time is not used as a means to structure responses or direct attention. There are no orienting questions or processes that are followed. Apart from specifying the beginning and the end of a matrix, the time is available to be used as each participant sees fit. The consultant does not invite individuals to speak or structure their responses in any way. Apart from stating the work of the matrix and concluding it on time, there are no set expectations as to when a consultant speaks. When a consultant comments it is usually in the context of making connections between the dreams and associations. Therefore, it can be argued that the spontaneity level of participants and consultants is a determining or strongly influential factor in the timing and content of their contributions. With no other constraints, spontaneity operates. Thus, it can be argued that spontaneity plays a significant part in how a social dreaming matrix develops.

For this reason the spontaneity levels of participants have an impact upon the outcomes of social dreaming. This is significant when considering spontaneity is at the opposite end of a continuum with anxiety. For example, when spontaneity is low anxiety is high so a participant may experience fragmenting or coping responses within a social dreaming matrix. They may become guarded and fearful and their capacity to make free associations becomes affected. When anxiety is high then the range of awareness available to a person is diminished. Their perceptual field is reduced which can affect the ability to listen to a dream and hear what is being said, to be mentally available to their own associations and to process the complex array of data produced to make links between the dreams and associations (Atkinson, Atkinson, Smith, Bem and Nolen-Hoeksema 1993, Kaplan, Sadock and Grebb 1994).

Peplau (cited by Varcarolis 2002 p.284) built upon the work of Sullivan by categorising anxiety into four levels – mild, moderate, severe and panic. As anxiety increases the ability to see connections between events or details is diminished. A person is then only able to focus on a small number of things. If spontaneity is high then a person will warm up to and take on progressive roles that are characterised by flexibility, the capacity to work with complexity and think clearly. These ideas of fragmenting, progressive and coping responses are more fully discussed in Chapter 5.

There is also a connection between the social dreaming method and spontaneity due to the complex environment that is created during social dreaming. During a matrix several dreams may be shared and many associations made to them. Social dreaming is unusual in this respect. Whereas other group methods for working with dreams would usually work with one dream at a time, social dreaming works with several dreams simultaneously. While this creates the web of connections and associations necessary for making links to the broader social system it also creates an environment where at any point in the matrix there are likely to be a number of dreams and associations that have been shared. Connections have yet to be made. This makes for a lot of “yet to be integrated” material. The experience of this complexity can contribute to how participants experience and interact with each other – the role relationships which are the interpersonal relationships – and what they experience in themselves – their own roles.

Other issues affect the effectiveness of the social dreaming method through an impact on spontaneity. There is a constant element of surprise in social dreaming. Dreams by their very nature are often apparently illogical and populated with imagery and the bizarre. This means that unlike a book or a movie where the ending may be guessed, it is difficult to know where the dream is going to end up. When a dream is presented matrix participants are thrown into the unknown. Being in the unknown is often a challenge to spontaneity. There are several alternative reactions. For instance, spontaneity can be maintained – the new situation is met with thoughtfulness, effectiveness and vitality. Or the new situation can be met with a diminished level of spontaneity and an old, overdeveloped or inadequate response. When in the unknown, anxiety can increase and attempts can be made to reduce this.

Just as the dreams are a constant source of surprise, so too can be the associations that emerge. They may appear to be bizarre and illogical. It is only as time passes and associations are made and communicated by a number of people that the connections emerge. So, in social dreaming participants are frequently being confronted with new situations. How does this affect the sharing of dreams and associations? These points are taken up in more detail in the discussion of spontaneity theory and role analysis in Chapter 5.

In social dreaming when a dream is shared the focus is on the social rather than the personal elements. However, as Freud demonstrated (1900/1999), a dream also reveals aspects of the individual unconscious. Even though the focus is not on the personal elements of the dream it is possible that as associations are shared to a dream the dreamer may suddenly become aware of something about themselves and their lives. This can include areas of difficulty or conflict and highlight feelings of exposure or vulnerability. This could also impact upon a person's participation in a matrix and their spontaneity level.

As well as aspects of the individual psyche being unwittingly triggered the connections to the broader social system may be unexpectedly confronting or exposing. Connections that emerge through social dreaming may highlight areas of difficulty for a person or group. In fact, as the aim of social dreaming is to bring into awareness previously unknown aspects of the social system this is highly probable. So what are the repercussions of this for the individual? Some critics of social dreaming have commented in personal communications to me on their concerns that social dreaming may leave the individual feeling vulnerable in a work or group setting. This may create difficulties in their relationships with work colleagues or managers further down the track.

While Lawrence (2005 p.39) makes it very clear that the individual and group dynamics do not have a place in the foreground of social dreaming, it is possible that these become focal and have an impact upon the potential for social dreaming to access learning. It is also possible that social dreaming can have effects upon individuals that may need further consideration in application of the method.

Because of all these factors, I have chosen to study the relationship between the spontaneity of the individual and the immediate social system of the social dreaming matrix. I hope in this to identify issues that foster or interfere with the presence of spontaneity and hence that foster or interfere with the potential of the social dreaming method itself.

1.1.7 Relationship between the developing social system and the matrix

In psychodrama role theory the spontaneity of a person is measured by the identification of the roles that they warm up to (Clayton 1993). Roles always exist in relationships - to either another person (role) or a situation. The role relationships that develop between people give an indication of the nature of the developing social system within a group.

While the major focus or task in social dreaming is to attend to the dreams and not to the interpersonal relationships, the roles and role relationships that develop between people contribute to the immediate social system within which the matrix develops. The relationship between the immediate social system, and the matrix of dreams and associations, contributes to connections that can be made to the broader social system. In order for the matrix of dreams and associations to emerge the social system of role relationships is kept in the background. However, some social system or culture is necessary for the dreams and associations to be made in the first place. While the matrix exists in its own right it cannot come into being without this, however broadly that is defined. As such, the development of the immediate social system is a significant influencing factor in the development of the matrix of dreams, associations and connections as well as in its expression.

1.2 Rationale for the research

To date there has been little formal research done into the actual method of social dreaming, although people have been applying and developing the method through practice. It is timely to explore some aspects of the method itself. As it is argued here that spontaneity is one of the factors that is vital to the social dreaming method, a study into the spontaneity of participants can broaden understanding of implications of using the method.

Formal research into the method of social dreaming is useful in several ways. It provides an objective space outside the practice for examining social dreaming and an opportunity to look critically at the method. To date a lot of effort has gone into establishing that learning is able to be accessed about the broader social system through the social dreaming method. Now that has been demonstrated (Eisold 1998,

Hahn 1998, Lawrence 1998, Michael 1998, Oeser 1998, Ross 1994, Tatham and Morgan 1998) it is useful to explore the method itself. This will assist in its further development, through gaining a deeper level of understanding of those factors that foster or inhibit its practice and their effect upon participants and of the work of the consultant. The identification of difficulties is useful so that these can be considered thoughtfully and refinements considered. Formal research provides a point of reference for future development of the method. Increased understanding of the method may lead to changes that can increase the range of applications.

It is useful to know how participants experience social dreaming to inform future applications of the method. It gives future practitioners a starting point in terms of being able to draw upon the wisdom already gained, rather than having to learn solely through their own efforts. Formal research can break down isolation between practitioners by providing a thoughtful basis for future discussions about their work in social dreaming. It brings new ideas and perspectives into awareness so that thinking can be expanded. The research may act as a catalyst for some people to think about including social dreaming in their work or lives.

1.3 The researcher's experiences with social dreaming

In this section I will outline experiences I have had as a participant and consultant in social dreaming. I explain these to give the reader an understanding of the genesis of my interest in this area.

My relationship with my dreams came into prominence when I began studying humanistic education at La Trobe University. Each week our lecturer would introduce us to a different aspect of humanistic psychology using experiential methods. One week the focus was on working with dreams. I offered a dream from the previous night. The method of working with the dream was that I told the dream and then each person shared with me an association to some aspect of it. One person wrote these down and at the end of the session gave the record to me. When I look at this record 17 years later I am immediately transported back to my experience of surprise and delight. I felt an expansion within myself and in relationship to my fellow students when they shared their associations with me. I particularly liked the way one image

could be seen from so many perspectives. Later I did some work with my dreams where I made associations to the images within them. I really enjoyed the freedom of this way of relating to dreams rather than through the collated direction of a dream dictionary. It never made sense to me that one dream image could mean the same thing for every person. This combination of expansion of thinking through working on dreams with colleagues and freedom to associate to dreams contributed to my feeling open to the concept of social dreaming when it was introduced to me. In retrospect this was my introduction to working with dreams socially.

1.3.1 My developing relationship with social dreaming

In 1991 I joined a weekly social dreaming matrix and this proved to be a stimulating experience. I found it really interesting to hear the dreams and all the different associations to them. I noticed that after each social dreaming session I went to my work as a lecturer feeling uplifted. The experience of expressing my dreams and associations freely and seeing them included in the bigger picture boosted my confidence in saying what I thought in other situations. Over several years this weekly matrix of dreams and associations became so closely interwoven that at times we dreamt about each others day time reality, travelled to the same place in dreams and connected to images that were present in both dreaming and waking lives. I found some of these experiences quite disturbing. It was clear to me that social dreaming was extremely potent.

Through these experiences I felt awed by the power of social dreaming to connect to deep levels of awareness. I also felt shaken by the experience of connecting with others in such a profound way. I experienced the validity of social dreaming. However, I think the method requires some thoughtful exploration because it is potent, can have adverse effects on participants and is still young in its theoretical development.

Other experiences as a matrix participant have included matrices in socio-analytic conferences, a PhD symposium and a consultant peer network. I have worked as a consultant to a weekly matrix that was advertised to the public, a weekly matrix for young people, a residential social dreaming conference and a weekend development workshop for women “Social Dreaming and Stepping into the Future”. I have run one-

off matrices at a psychodrama conference, a socio-analytic symposium and with fellow university students. These experiences have been in different locations across Australia including Melbourne, Mallacoota, Brisbane, Adelaide and Tasmania.

As a participant in social dreaming I noticed my spontaneity varied over time and from matrix to matrix. Sometimes I felt free to share my associations. Sometimes I felt conflicted about what and when to share. At other times I felt isolated and unable to present my dreams and associations. I noticed that when the emotional atmosphere was relaxed and easygoing I felt more confident in expressing associations that seemed odd and unrelated to anyone else's. I noticed that when as a group we were able to maintain our openness and sense of humour and kept on expressing our dreams and associations, connections would emerge to our broader social system. Sometimes it would be in one session, sometimes a theme would unfold slowly over several matrices. I have been in matrices where the most unusual assortment of dream images and associations has come together over some weeks. This really highlighted to me the value of the collective contributions and the potential for the process of social dreaming to bring these together in a coherent way – sometimes! Sometimes a social dreaming matrix was fragmented with many dreams and associations shared but no unifying theme. I remember a matrix where there seemed a high level of self restraint amongst all participants in an atmosphere I found tense. Not many dreams were shared and few connections were made to the broader social system. In such an emotional environment it may be that not only the reporting of dreams becomes restrictive but the dreaming itself.

As a matrix consultant I have also noticed differences in people's levels of participation. I noticed people becoming withdrawn or being silent for long periods of time and in some matrices some people took up the role of observers. From time to time a participant would describe an experience in the matrix that disturbed them. Sometimes they would leave the matrix because of this. I always felt dissatisfied with this situation. It seemed to me that if the disturbance was generated within social dreaming it was a restrictive solution for the individual to leave, thus isolating them from the social system. I also thought some responsibility belonged with the consultants and the method itself to be able to work with the effects that were generated. I was struck by the movement between isolation and intimacy that

occurred. In some matrices there were unusually high levels of intimacy that developed between participants based mainly on their matrix participation. In others there were unusually high experiences of isolation.

From these experiences it seems to me that there is a relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system of a matrix. This relationship will impact upon both the collective outcomes of social dreaming and each person's ability to participate in social dreaming. This is relevant to both matrix participants and consultants as it is their spontaneity that influences their responses.

A significant factor that influences my approach to social dreaming is my training as a psychodramatist. This has led me to be extremely interested in spontaneity and how it is mobilised by individuals within groups to both maintain and express their individual creativity in relationship to others.

The focus of the current study has been influenced by my personal motivation to participate in creative and meaningful groups. For social dreaming, this would involve sharing dreams so that learning proceeds in a constructive way and so that difficulties get worked through. My hope is that this study will contribute another perspective that can be included in the ongoing development of social dreaming.

1.3.2 Situations that restrict access to dreams and learning

I identify in the following some of my own experience and the experience of others. The latter has been sourced through personal conversations, supervision sessions and in reflection times following matrices.

Access to dreams and learning is restricted when:

A. *Anxiety and fear enter relationships.*

For example, in one matrix participants seemed to become suspicious of each other and were reluctant to express anything that might increase their sense of vulnerability. Each dream and association was carefully scrutinised and monitored resulting in a stultified atmosphere and restricted associations;

B. Matrix experience overpowers an individual.

For instance, in a matrix my dreams became so connected with daytime reality that I experienced a blurring of the boundary between waking and sleeping life. Some things that I dreamt connected with matrix participants' day time realities. I felt distressed and expressed this in a reflection session. There was a long and empty silence. I felt isolated, decided it was my problem and left the matrix and went into psychotherapy. While this was worthwhile for me, I kept thinking that what was created in the matrix – even though it had personal resonance for me – also had social resonance. I think all participants lost their nerve and in the absence of any means to include these experiences were not able to make sense of them in a way that was unifying for myself as an individual in connection to the broader social system or as a phenomena of social dreaming itself;

C. Participants don't share dreams.

For example, I sat in a matrix where most of the time people looked at their shoes. As time went by it became practically impossible to break the silence and speak. Few associations and connections could be made;

D. Participants are only observers.

For instance, several participants shared dreams and associations and a number of others became observers. In one matrix at a conference a small group of participants shared their dreams, associations and connections and the rest didn't. This created a very uncomfortable environment in which some people were spectators of the others. The learning that was being generated was representative of only the dreams and associations of a small part of the matrix participants;

E. The focus is on the dreamer and not the dream.

An example was where a dream was shared and a participant made a personal analysis of the dreamer.

F. Negativity from consultant to participant is evident.

For instance, one consultant developed a critical attitude toward a participant and their dreams and communicated in a brisk manner with them. The person was aware of this and started to withhold their dreams;

G. *Participants rely on what is most familiar to them in making associations.*
In one matrix participants structured their associations to link only with things they were very familiar with. This created a predictable and limited environment.

H. *Participants need to understand where their dream or association fits before sharing it.*

For example, in a matrix if an association occurred to a participant that seemed out of place they would not share it but waited for a dream or association to come up that they could relate it to. This meant that each association was dependent on the one before so the freedom of associations to each dream was lost. The association was not shared if it didn't seem to fit. Eventually one participant decided to change this pattern and share their association regardless of whether they understood how it fitted in. Then other participants began to do the same. Subsequently it became clear that these associations did have a place, but that could not be known in advance. These decisions were shared in a reflection time following the matrix.

I. *Some participants' dreams are valued more than others.*

In one matrix participants made associations and connections to some people's dreams but not to others. This meant that some dreams became excluded from the matrix as well as the dreamers themselves. Consequently the connections were generated from a sub-group of the social system rather than all those present.

J. *When emotional experiences are heightened.*

In one matrix, for example, a few participants had dreams that contained an intense emotional experience that was disturbing. They spoke about how difficult this was for them. In the time that this occurred other matrix participants became more fearful of being open in the matrix as if by doing so they would open themselves up to having one of these dreams;

K. *Professional trainings influence functioning as consultants or participants.*

In one matrix people from predominantly psychoanalytic backgrounds sat for long periods of silence and very few dreams and associations were shared. In another matrix people from psychodramatic backgrounds

expressed themselves with alacrity so there were many dreams and associations shared but little space left for connections. In both cases the balance of dreams, associations and connections was affected and so subsequently was the potential learning.

Noting these restrictions leads to a working hypothesis. This is reported here in three parts and is formulated to guide the research.

1.4 Working Hypotheses

1.4.1 Working Hypothesis 1

There is a relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system of the matrix.

There are two social systems connected to the social dreaming matrix. The first is the broader social system (or culture) to which the participants belong and for which learning is being sought through the matrix of dreams, associations and connections. The second social system is the immediate social system of the developing matrix itself. The immediate social system of the matrix includes the roles and role relationships that develop between matrix participants and consultants, leadership and task.

There is a two way relationship between spontaneity of the individual and the immediate social system. The relationship between the individual and the social system matters because it affects the spontaneity of each individual. This relationship is significant as the spontaneity of individuals is essentially the powerhouse for building the matrix of dreams, associations and connections from which the learning is gained about the broader social system.

The level of spontaneity of each individual in the matrix affects the development of the immediate social system, and the immediate social system affects the spontaneity of each individual in a reciprocal manner. The way that each participant functions in the task of sharing their dreams and associations contributes to the types of relationships that develop between participants. These relationships reveal the

developing immediate social system. The nature of this developing immediate social system also has an impact upon each participant that affects how they go about their task. In addition, the way that the consultant takes up leadership within the immediate social system has an impact upon the way that the participants take up their task.

These relationships all impact upon how the tasks of both participant and consultant are taken up. This then affects how the matrix of dreams, associations and connections develops.

1.4.2 Working Hypothesis 2

Social dreaming, to be effective requires that matrix participants and consultants maintain spontaneity.

In social dreaming the dreams and associations are the means by which connections are made to the broader social system. So if social dreaming is to be effective, individuals need to be able to share their dreams in the first place. They also need to be able to associate freely to the dreams. Both of these activities rely on the spontaneity of participants and consultants. According to spontaneity theory, when spontaneity is high people are able to respond to situations in a flexible and creative way (Clayton 1993, Williams 1989). The higher the level of spontaneity the more effective the responses are to situations encountered.

The nature of dreams is that they communicate in unusual ways. They bypass the orderliness, censoring and logic that are often characteristic of the waking mind. While dreaming, the waking everyday mind may be sleeping, but there is a different type of 'thinking' going on. This 'thinking' that is communicated through the dreams provides the basis for learning about the broader social system (Lawrence 2005). This concept will be discussed further in Chapter 3. Dreams can present issues or areas that are out of the awareness of a social system - perhaps through a desire to avoid them or maybe because they are just not yet known. The sharing of dreams by participants therefore is essential in providing the 'raw data' for new thought. The capacity to share dreams is related to the spontaneity level of participants. When spontaneity is high participants experience and enact a range of roles that are progressive. Their anxiety is low and they are oriented to courageous, companionable and progressive ways of relating. When participants have a high level of spontaneity

they are able to share the dreams that provide the catalyst for the making of associations.

The making of associations in social dreaming requires a state of mind in which participants notice their responses to a dream and are then able to communicate these. This requires a flexible and open attitude to self in regard to entertaining responses and to others in trusting them enough to share these responses. When spontaneity is high participants are able to think clearly and be available to the associations that arise within them. They are able to relax the monitoring processes that are employed by the 'censoring mind' and relate to dreams in a free thinking way. This is similar to the technique of free association employed by Freud (1900/1999) which will be discussed further in relationship to the development of social dreaming in Chapter 3.

Associations increase the depth and breadth of data available to the developing matrix of dreams and associations. This provides a rich source of data for connections and subsequent learning about the broader social system.

1.4.3 Working Hypothesis 3

If reactive forces predominate in the immediate social system it becomes restrictive and the spontaneity of participants is reduced.

Reactive forces arise in response to the expression of motivating forces within a group (Whitaker and Liebermann 1964). They consist of the fears that oppose the motivating force. When reactive forces are in the foreground, participants experience fears related to their achievement motives. This conflict between motivating and reactive forces generates anxiety. If the reactive forces predominate, then responses become oriented toward alleviating the fears rather than to achievement of the motivating forces. Responses that are solely oriented at alleviating fear are called restrictive solutions (Whitaker and Liebermann 1964). When reactive fears predominate and participants are trying to reduce them with restrictive solutions their responses are related to coping and survival. From a spontaneity perspective, responses of this kind are reflective of low levels of spontaneity. Low levels of spontaneity can be observed through the roles that participants enact. Coping and fragmenting roles are indicative of low levels of spontaneity.

When anxiety is high, participants' functioning is adversely affected as seen in fragmented or disorganized responses. There is difficulty in concentrating and thinking clearly. This affects a participant's ability to experience and notice a range of associations. Subsequently the range and amount of associations available to be communicated is reduced. Therefore, when reactive forces are dominating the immediate social system – the roles and role relationships - will themselves be restrictive. This in turn affects the development of the matrix itself. When the reactive forces are in the foreground the spontaneity of participants is reduced and the matrix of dreams, associations and connections becomes restricted.

1.5 Aims of the study

The overall focus of this study is the relationship between the immediate social system and individual spontaneity in social dreaming.

The aims related to this are:

- to explore how participants perceive the immediate social system of a matrix;
- to explore how participants respond to the immediate social system of a matrix;
- to explore the type of immediate social system functioning that enhances participants spontaneity;
- to explore the type of social system functioning that reduces participants spontaneity;
- to identify factors that enhance spontaneity of participants of social dreaming;
- to explore roles taken up by the consultant that will facilitate the development of a social dreaming matrix.

1.6 Summary of rationale for research

Dreams can reveal aspects of our social systems that assist us to further develop them. The matrix is a method for accessing and learning from dreams about the broader social system. Social dreaming requires that participants share dreams and associations so that connections can be made to the broader social system. The immediate social system of the matrix itself is the place where this happens. The roles and role relationships between participants and consultants, leadership and task, reveal the immediate social system. Additionally, the roles and role relationships

enacted reveal the spontaneity level of participants and consultants. The level of spontaneity of both participants and consultants is a key factor in the development of the matrix. Therefore, this study of the relationship between the immediate social system and individual spontaneity in social dreaming is of great value in the further development of the social dreaming method.

1.7 Role of the researcher

I have been a member of several matrices, including one that was held weekly over several years. I am an interviewer – with individuals, a group and via email. I was consultant to two of the matrices providing data – the individual interviews and the ‘mini matrix’. I am immersed in the creation and analysis of the data and so my subjective experiences are a part of this study. I attempt to present the analysis with clear descriptions so that the links can be seen and the reader can make up his/her own mind about their validity.

1.7.1 Going out on a limb

In social dreaming the individuals and their relationships with each other are not intended as a focus of the method, they are meant to be in the background. Indeed, the method was developed to move the participants away from the study of ‘ego’ and interpersonal connections to the study of the unconscious infinite as expressed through dreams. So, whenever I thought about exploring this area my mind was filled with negative fantasies of colleagues around the world scoffing at my work and loudly proclaiming that I have missed the whole point of social dreaming. My area of interest seemed way out of left field when I compared it to all the other writing and thinking about social dreaming. While social dreaming is not officially located in any specific psychological tradition, many people who work with it are from psychoanalytic backgrounds. As a psychodramatist I felt very much out on a limb and it took some time to develop the awareness that this study is located within spontaneity theory and as such offers a fresh perspective on social dreaming.

1.7.2 Ambivalence towards social dreaming

Another conflict emerged when I developed a strong dislike of the social dreaming method itself. When I began this thesis I was mainly positive and optimistic about the

potential of social dreaming as a source of learning and a creative venture. However, as time progressed I felt increasingly critical. I thought the wellbeing of participants was not kept in mind, that the method used people to achieve learning but didn't take into account what happened to them along the way. I thought it was poorly structured and the development of the method needed much more attention. I wished never to do social dreaming again, let alone spend hours thinking and writing about it. While I never failed to find the method interesting it was extremely difficult to front up to working on something where I had lost heart. Somewhere in the middle of the analysis of the consultants' interviews the pendulum between love and hate swung into the middle and I felt connected to both my love of the method and my desire to explore it in a meaningful way.

1.7.3 Trapped within the role relationships

It is a conflict of interest for me – and possibly was for the interviewees – that, as part of the research, I became a researcher with people from a matrix to which I had been a consultant. I wonder if the interviewees were influenced in what they said because I had been a consultant in the same matrix. This may have resulted in their not being forthright in their responses, or alternatively they may have used the interview as an opportunity to hand me some unfinished business between us or about the matrix experience itself. Conflict arose for me in the analysis of the data. I found it very difficult to analyze the interviews - one in particular in which the person expressed a lot of dissatisfaction. I spent hours and hours analyzing and re-analyzing it and felt as though I was in a labyrinth from which I would never escape. At a psychodrama conference I presented some of this interview in action. I realized that I felt an enormous sense of responsibility towards this person, so every time I worked with their interview I felt anguish. I realized I was warming up to an old situation in my life. In psychoanalytic terms, one might say I found myself in a transference relation to the interviewee. Subsequently I was able to extract myself from the emotional mire that this interview had become and was able to relate to this and other interviews in a freer way.

1.7.4 Individual and social system

As I write about these conflicts I am aware that they arise from both my internal system as an individual and the broader social systems to which I am connected. As

an individual conflicts arise that are related to my personal background and personality development. In relationship to the broader social system conflicts arise from differences between professional groups and preferences for learning about different aspects of human functioning. These sometimes exquisite and often disturbing relationships between the individual and their broader social systems are a fascinating and vital area.

1.7.5 Satisfaction encountered in the role of the researcher

As well as the relief that emerged when these conflicts were resolved there have been times when the role of the researcher was a most enjoyable activity. After I completed each of the individual interviews of matrix participants I was filled with delight. It was really good to know that people did have things to say in response to the questions that I had developed. I felt validated that my area of interest was relevant to the experiences of others. When I conducted a group interview at a symposium following a “mini” social dreaming matrix I found that people were extremely generous in letting me know what had enhanced and what had reduced their ability to be spontaneous. I felt the uplifting strength of constructive and supportive colleagues. I was quite surprised at how interested and stimulated I felt when analysing the consultant interviews.

This chapter contains personal experiences and observations arising from participation in a variety of social dreaming ventures. They have been a major catalyst for doing this research and contributed to a strong motivation to open up thoughtful exploration and subsequent discussion of the development of the social dreaming method. The chapter has put forward some basic working hypotheses about the relation of spontaneity to the social dreaming method.

Chapter 2: Literature review – Dreams and Social Systems

2.1 Introduction

Dreams have long been a source of fascination and intrigue for human beings and ideas about their nature and purpose are extensive. Dreams provide us with a unique opportunity to develop and expand our thinking, our imagination, our understanding and interpretation of ourselves and the universe.

Historically much has been thought and written about dreams in relation to what they reveal about the individual dreamer or what message the dream carries. The development and use of dream dictionaries that aim to provide the meaning of dream symbols for the dreamer has been a popular approach for many centuries. Van de Castle (1973) describes very early Babylonian and Assyrian dream interpretation books written on clay tablets dating back to 5000 BC.

A primary interest in the history of dreaming has been in the meaning of the dream to the dreamer as an individual. However, there has also been across the ages a fairly prominent interest in the relationship between the dreams of individuals and their social systems.

This chapter will explore the relationship between dreams and social systems. Literature will be presented that examines how dreams can be drawn upon to build and develop social systems. Research will be presented that shows how the study of individual dreams can lead to learning about a specific culture. Anthropological studies that have looked at how dreams and culture are interrelated also will be discussed. In addition, methods used to access and work with dreams in order to assist social system functioning will be presented.

2.2 Beliefs held about dreams

People have been strongly motivated to seek truth and wisdom from dreams. In the following literature it is evident that in times of difficulty people have looked to dreams to assist them. A common theme is that the dreams are messages from the gods or beings greater than mere mortals. The underlying premise is that these gods

will have answers to problems of living that people cannot work out themselves. This raises the question of where the wisdom in a dream originates. Does it come from the supernatural? Does it come from a person's own intelligence and creativity that continues to percolate in sleep and manifest in dreams? Does it arise from the developing relationships between people in their social systems? Such questions as these will be considered as the literature is discussed.

2.3 Drawing upon dreams to build the social system

As part of the discussion, there will be consideration of whether or not the methods developed to learn from dreams in themselves are effective in increasing spontaneity. At times it seems the methods become ritualised, ineffective responses to the problems that they are seeking to solve. They perhaps become oriented to reducing anxieties rather than effectively addressing the stressors or questions being asked.

2.3.1 Dreams to inform and guide leadership

Dreams have been seen as holding wisdom and knowledge to guide leaders in decisions that relate to their communities. One of the underlying beliefs is that dreams provide a direct pathway to the supernatural in the form of gods who can provide enlightenment for human problems. Kings in the ancient Near East had their dreams interpreted in the royal courts (Oppenheim, 1956 cited in Bulkeley 1994, p.8). Muhammad asked his followers about their dreams to discern if there were any messages from the gods (Fahd, 1959 cited in Bulkeley 1994, p.8). High ranked officials in fourteenth-century China were obliged to spend their first night in a walled city in a temple so as to receive instructions from the City God. Judges struggling over a difficult point of law also spent the night in the temple to seek enlightenment from God (Laufer, 1931 cited in Bulkeley 1994, p.11).

A probable added benefit to the leaders in doing this is that they were able to remove themselves from the pressures of their tasks and undertake a time of contemplation. This reflection is done in an environment that is designed for connecting with higher thinking. While the purpose is to connect with the higher thinking of the gods it also may have allowed a space for the person to connect with their own wisdom.

The ancient Hurons perceived the dream as their doctor, oracle, prophet and master (Relations des Jesuites dans la Nouvelle France, rel. X cited by Lincoln 1935, p.51). Dreams are described by Price and Haynes (1997) as providing, in the Hebrew tradition, a useful literary and story-telling device for convincing others about the validity of particular decisions. The social potency and authority of the dream in some cultures is well illustrated in the musical 'Fiddler on the Roof'. In the story here, the father has made a decision that he knows his wife will disagree with so he concocts a fantastic dream that convinces his wife that his decision is all for the best and subsequently saves him from her displeasure.

2.3.2 Dreams produce creative works that enrich a community

There are many cited examples throughout history of people dreaming a creative work that they then realise in waking life. The Devil's Violin sonata by Tartini came from a violin played by a dream devil. Robert Louis Stevenson dreamed large parts of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, and Condorcet dreamt the final stage of a difficult calculation (Lincoln 1935, p.91).

Some early Indian tribes looked to dreams for the creation of rituals and spiritual practices. Kroeber (cited by Lincoln 1935 p.51) describes how the Yuma and Mohave Indians of the Lower Colorado Region in North America used their belief in dreams as the foundation of all religion, tradition, ritual, song and shamanistic power. The Crow Indians drew upon dreams to develop their sacred ceremonies, songs, methods of painting and war parties (Lowie, cited by Lincoln 1935 p.51).

Sometimes creative work emerged unexpectedly from the dreams. At other times, people put in tremendous amounts of effort, such as performing rituals, to have a dream that would provide a creative work that would enrich their community.

2.3.3 Dreams of prophecy

There is evidence of beliefs held by many cultures that dreams have the power to predict future events within a community (D'Andrade 1973, Von Grunebaum and Caillois 1962, Paci 1962). Van de Castle (1973) describes references to dreams and visions in approximately 70 passages of the Bible. In the Bible there are described examples of dreams of prophecy that directly affect the actions and subsequent

wellbeing of a community. When Joseph made meaning of the Pharaoh's dream he enabled a community to plan for years of famine through storing the harvests taken from years of plenty (O'Connor 1992). There are examples of God communicating directly with Abram regarding the plight of the Israelites (Bulkeley 1994, p.8).

Some peoples even used the phase of sleep in which the dream occurred as a predictor for the timing of events. As described in the Atharva Veda, Indians believed that dreams from the first part of sleep would come true in a year and those from the second part of sleep in eight months (Van de Castle 1973).

Paci (1962, p.183) thinks all civilizations have two characteristics in their orientation to dreams. One is a search for connection with the divine creation and the other is expectations and hopes for the future.

2.3.4 Dreams to facilitate interpersonal relationships

For some peoples beliefs about dreams are less ethereal and related to the present, rather than the past or the future. They believe that dreams are informing them about their interpersonal relationships. The symbols and people that appear in dreams are taken very seriously. When a Navajo is emotionally affected by a dream, the culture is mobilised to explore it and see whether the person has erred against himself, his family or his culture (Lincoln 1935, p.194).

In the old Navajo culture there was quite a literal approach taken to the events that transpired in a dream. The dreamer was given consequences for what they had dreamt as if it had occurred in their waking world. If the interpretation of the dream resulted in identification of some wrong that had been done by the dreamer to another in their community, they were expected to make reparation. Lincoln (1935 p.52) describes how this could take the form of ceremony or social communion as carried out by the Navajo or a financial obligation such as an adultery fine imposed by the Ashanti on anyone who dreamt of adultery. That anyone would report such dreams in these circumstances is testimony to the strength of belief in the importance of the dream. Among the Didinga of S.E. Sudan if one dreamt that one killed a certain man for witchcraft, one must call the next day on that man and perform various actions to avert the consequences (Driberg cited by Lincoln 1935, p.53).

Other peoples also look to dreams for assistance in the welfare of their community. Price and Haynes (1997) describe the interpretation of a dream in the ancient Hebrew tradition as being rejected if it did not lead to a life-enhancing result for all – the individual and the community. Dreams of the Hebrew people in ancient times were interpreted with a focus upon the wellbeing, direction and wholeness of the community (Price and Haynes 1997, p.22).

More recently, a Pentecostal church in western Uganda uses their gatherings to relate their dreams and consider how they are related to the welfare of the congregation as a whole. This church, which merges Christian with traditional African spiritual beliefs, engages in group dream-telling as a regular part of worship so as to address the concerns, problems and welfare of the church itself (Charsley 1973, 1987 cited in Bulkeley 1994, p.17).

2.3.5 Dreams as connections between the living and the dead

Many people believe that there is a connection between dreams and the supernatural. Some people believe that the dreamer leaves their body and goes visiting with the spirits. Some Chinese believe the dreamer's soul temporarily leaves the body, communicates with the souls of the dead and returns with impressions of the visit (Van De Castle 1973 p.18). Greeks in the fifth century also believed this. In their earlier views they thought that the dreamer was visited by a God who came and left by the keyhole after leaving a message for them at the head of the bed (Van de Castle 1973, p.19).

Bourguignon (1954, p.268) finds that the reality of the dream world is placed on the same plane as waking experience by Haitian peasants with dreams functioning as a means of communication between the gods, the dead and the living.

2.3.6 Dreams for survival

Some groups look to dreams to assist them with basic survival such as how to grow crops or avoid attack from other tribes.

Among the Mantia of the Malay peninsular a man would not choose a locality for plantation unless he had a favourable dream about it giving supernatural sanction. (Skeat and Blagden cited by Lincoln 1935, p.51).

A whole Australian tribe decamped because one man dreamt of a certain owl which the wise men interpreted as foreboding an attack from certain other tribes (Tylor cited by Lincoln 1935, p.52).

The Iriquois people believed that anyone's dreams could be relevant to the tribe's welfare; significant dreams were reported to the community's leaders, and often the whole tribe was moved to action by the demands of one person's dream (Wallace 1958, cited by Bulkeley 1994, p.9).

2.3.7 Seeking guidance and assigning social roles

In a cross-cultural study D'Andrade (1973) describes his findings as supporting the idea that anxiety about being isolated and pressure to be self-reliant may create an impetus to be involved with a type of fantasy about magical helpers appearing in dreams.

The type of economy and the degree of isolation of the married son from his parents have been found to affect this complex strongly, with hunting and fishing societies, and societies in which the son moves far away from his parents being more likely to use dreams to seek and control supernatural powers (D'Andrade 1973, p.215).

D'Andrade (1973) describes the use of dreams to select and reject people for various roles within the social system.

The dreamer may either be obligated to assume a particular role because he has a certain type of dream, as for example, among the Sioux, where he dreams of the moon, or a hermaphrodite buffalo; require the individual to become a berdache (dress like a woman, marry another man, and undertake woman's work); or the dreamer may be required to dream a particular culture pattern dream before he is allowed to assume a certain role, as among the Pukapuka, where qualifications for priesthood require that a man have dream contact with supernatural powers during the initiation period (D'Andrade 1973, p.205).

2.4 Anthropological methods that explored the relationship between dreams and social systems

This section will discuss the relationship between dreams and social systems as it has emerged over the ages, including studies that have investigated this. In 1949 Eggan identifies a lack of systematically collected and annotated dream materials in anthropological literature that could be used to investigate how personality and culture interact with each other. She suggests that a significant contributing factor to this is that Freudian psychology was almost exclusively linked with the study of dreams (Eggan 1949, p.177) and that this creates a focus on the individual. Eggan (1949) suggests broadening the use of dream material from individual psychological interpretation to a larger cultural context. This is done by utilizing dreams and dream sequences of different peoples to investigate the interrelations between personality and culture.

Early anthropologists set out to explore the nature of the mutual or reciprocal relationship between the individual's dream and their social system.

2.5 The influence of the social system on dreams

2.5.1 Inducing dreams to connect with cultural patterns

Lincoln was an early anthropologist who wrote a doctoral thesis in 1935 on the dream in primitive cultures. In a comparative study of the literature and through his field notes of the dreams of five different American Indian cultures, he found particular religious and cultural views associated with the dreams. Lincoln (1935) describes the dreams of the peoples of these cultures as falling into two groups: those occurring spontaneously in sleep, which he called "individual" dreams, and those sought or induced which had special tribal significance he called "culture pattern" dreams.

Cultural pattern dreams are:

Stereotyped dreams conceptually (to the Indian) indistinguishable from visions, which reflect the Indian's relation to the supernatural, and both as to form and manifest content are determined by the culture pattern (The Crow vision, the Ottawa puberty fasting dreams, Yuma myth dreaming). Their contents reflect only the respective beliefs of the different areas in the supernatural, and they occur only where the culture requires a prior period of fasting, isolation, or self-torture, or some form of training or instruction (Lincoln 1935, p.192).

Lincoln (1935, p.22) cites the division between sought and unsought dreams as occurring in Australia, Melanesia, Polynesia, Africa and in North America with North American Indians having a particularly high development of induced culture pattern dreams. The induction or incubation of dreams has a long history. Van de Castle (1973) gives examples of efforts to incubate dreams including the practices of Egyptians sleeping in temples and participating in spiritual rituals, the Greeks devoting temples for this purpose from around the fifth century and the development of incubation centres growing to around three hundred in numbers throughout Greece and the Roman Empire.

Similarly Lee (1958, p.265) describes beliefs held by the Zulu that dreams were a direct connection to their ancestors and had diagnostic and prognostic significance in their tribal medical system.

2.5.2 Social pressure to dream

The accuracy of reporting the culture pattern dream was questioned by D'Andrade (1973), who suggests that where individuals are supposed to dream a certain dream, the retelling of these is probably influenced by some later elaboration due to the pressure involved and conflicts in motivation.

The emotional reaction to dreams may be affected by the cultural definition of what is likely to take place in dreams, and in turn the cultural definition of the self may be affected by the kind of events which occur in dreams (D'Andrade 1973, p.217).

2.5.3 Dreams shaped by culture

Other studies discovered that cultural beliefs and tradition had a powerful effect on dreams that were not induced through ritual or special preparation. Eggan (1949) began collecting dreams in 1939 among the Hopi Indians in North-Eastern Arizona in connection with a study on social and cultural change. She gathered approximately 600 dreams and dreamers' associations to these, together with information on the "meaning" of dreams and symbols from five villages on two mesas (Eggan, 1949, p.177). Eggan wrote up descriptions of Hopi dreams and then demonstrated how attention to the manifest content brought about awareness of broader cultural dynamics, conflicts, roles and role relationships within the Hopi society.

Their dreams, regardless of the degree to which any one dream is susceptible of analysis, frequently provide the only thread which can unravel the cultural cocoon in which the process of socialization binds all human beings, throwing into relief the unsocialized residue of the personality, as well as those areas where a culture has succeeded in applying the most effective control and support (Eggan 1949, p.197).

The idea that the dream expresses unfiltered material, or as is described here as the unsocialized, is similar to the idea of the social dream as described by Lawrence (1998). The hypothesis is that the dream will reveal a truth unaffected by the dynamics of waking life where information is filtered and censored.

Lee (1958) interviewed around 600 Zulu people over a period of two years in the Nqutu district of Zululand and finds that:

Dream content, for the particular sex, is derived almost exclusively from areas of social experience permitted by the culture in the indigenous system of sanctions, of some 50-100 years ago. Thus women, acting under a traditionally very strong cultural imperative, dreamt of babies and children, while cattle, the acquisition of which is their chief economic goal and source of prestige appeared in the dreams of men (Lee 1958, p.479).

The Zulu have been, for centuries, concerned with the content of dreams...findings show how the dreams of ordinary men and women are themselves, in their turn, circumscribed and influenced by the social pressures and sanctions of the culture (Lee 1958, p.266).

Similarly, dream phenomena are described by Bourguignon (1954) as playing a significant role in the validation of the culturally patterned world view of the Haiti peasants.

The powerful impact of tradition upon the dreamer was shown in a further study by Eggan (1952) who found that when attempts were made to convert the Hopi to Christianity only a superficial form appeared. Dreams showed old faiths were adhered to more permanently.

A survey may show that 30% of a village is Christian in that they attend a missionary church; but their dreams indicate that the majority of the old Hopi who list themselves as Christian

have as much respect for maau'u, and many other Hopi deities, as they ever had (Eggan 1952, p.479).

In a study of the Zulu, Lee (1958) finds that traditional social sanctions continued to be represented in the dreams of the women despite modern changes to the roles of men and women. Despite women taking up traditional work of men in caring for the cattle the dreams of women continued to be populated with babies and children and the men of fighting and cattle. The women were unable to dream of symbols that were traditionally the prerogative of the men. It might be argued that they were so entrenched in their waking thinking to this traditional orientation that they were not able to describe or remember dreams that were counter to this. Feelings of guilt about not doing what was expected of them may have been at play.

These studies indicate a time lag between cultural patterns and their appearance in dreams. It seems the dreams adhere to older established patterns and are not easily changed by surface structures and new daily habits.

2.5.4 Manifest content at odds with cultural patterns

Contrary to the idea that dreams reflect current cultural practices, some studies indicate there is no such simple relationship evident. A study investigating the relationship between dreams and culture was carried out by Schneider as cited by D'Andrade (1973, p.200). The manifest content of 149 dreams from 51 Yir-Yoront people was analysed in reference to sex, aggression, death, and contact with the white culture. The discoveries were different to the expectations of the researcher who began with the assumption that culture, as a system of norms, would be reflected in the dreams. The expression of aggression in the dreams was quite different from the actual cultural norms, and in most of the dreams of death the dreamer was resurrected whereas there was actually no cultural belief in resurrection. This led to the conclusion that there was no simple relationship between culture and the manifest content of dreams. D'Andrade (1973) questions the impact of wish fulfilment, anxiety about sexual activity and the defence mechanism of projection on the individual's dreaming experience.

2.5.5 Evolving research methodologies to explore dreams and social systems

From a research perspective early anthropological studies were among the first to explore the relationship between dreams and the social system in a systematic way. While the early anthropologists did expand on the relationship between dreams and society there are criticisms about the adequacy of their methodology. The main approach to the research was gathering dream reports and doing content analysis of the manifest content. Lincoln thought that while his data was not complete enough to form a comprehensive theory of the relationship of individuals and cultures based on dreams, it was adequate to make general conclusions. His work is criticised by Tedlock (1987, p.21) who indicates Lincoln's failure to address the important issue of indigenous dream classification and dream theories. Tedlock also criticises Lincoln's focus as being mainly on dream reports and extractable contents while ignoring the significance of the communicative context within the cultures.

Examples of this included the Hopi tribe reluctance to share "good" dreams and willingness to share "bad" dreams which would have had a direct impact upon the type of dreams they chose to tell the researchers. The communication style of the particular culture also impacts upon what is said as in the case of the Zulu.

Zulu dreams were found to be very limited in content, and stereotyped in terms of central imagery (Lee 1958, p.281).

This may be more an indication of their preferences in communicating than the nature of the dreams. Lee mentions at the beginning of the article that the use of free association is impractical as Zulu people see no sense in it. Their valuing of brevity of speech could also have contributed to their dreams being communicated in an abbreviated form.

In several anthropological studies (Eggan 1952, Lee 1958) dreams are collected from individuals and then analysed collectively to see what they reveal about the culture. There are no relations between the dreams studied in this method. This is different from a process in which the dreams emerge in relationship to each other with the members of tribes present together. Eggan (1952, p.483) creates a summary of

element frequencies on a chart from 254 dreams of one Hopi male. She demonstrates how cultural stressors as well as cultural supports can easily be identified through this process. Comparing a number of individual charts can then indicate individual and social attitudes toward cultural patterns. From her study of Hopi dreams, Eggan (1949, p.197) concludes that it is possible to use the manifest content of dreams to gain insight into culture and problems of interpersonal relations.

The work of Stewart (1969) investigating the ways that the Senoi tribes used their dreams has proved to be both inspirational and controversial. Stewart (1969) finds that for the Senoi people in the Malay Peninsula dreams played a significant part in informing them about their relationships and daily living. Dream interpretation and dream expression in cooperative reverie are built into the community activities. The main emphasis in the Senoi approach to dreams is the use of the content to contribute to the development of the community in a socially meaningful way. Children are taught to report their dreams. These are then discussed and analysed resulting in the child making constructive actions to others based on how their dream is interpreted.

A child dreams that he is attacked by a friend and, on awakening, is advised by his father to inform his friend of this fact. The friend's father tells his child that it is possible that he has offended the dreamer without wishing to do so, and allowed a malignant character to use his image as a disguise in the dream. Therefore he should give a present to the dreamer and go out of his way to be friendly to him, to prevent such an occurrence in the future (Stewart 1969, p.168).

Stewart (1969) describes how, when anxiety was experienced in a dream, the dreamer was encouraged to reframe their approach to the dream situation so their anxiety lessened and they were able to enter into the free play of imaginative thinking and make creative activity possible. Dreams were drawn upon for a variety of reasons including solving a daytime problem, preventing an accident occurring to someone or a source of creative expression such as the production of songs, dances or poems.

Negative personal behaviour in dreams was seen as needing to be compensated for in the outer life by positive interactions with those images that had appeared negatively in the dream. So immediate and outer world were not divided by the Senoi and dreams were seen as the internalised expression of external forces. Thus by harmonising these internal forces and figures the Senoi believed that their outer world would also be harmonised (O'Connor 1992 p.14).

Stewart's findings were taken up with some enthusiasm in America where the "Senoï dream movement" developed with people attempting to apply the principles derived from Stewart's study. However the validity of his work was strongly criticised by Domhoff (1985).

Domhoff (1985, 1988) discusses the controversial work of Stewart (1969) and especially the enthusiastic adoption of it in American society in the 1960s. Domhoff (1985, p.116) criticises Stewart's data gathering and theoretical abilities and believes that Stewart misunderstood Senoi dream theory and practices. While Domhoff appreciates the proposal of the ideas by Stewart, whatever their source, he thinks that the usefulness of dreams to groups of people in general is yet to be validated. Domhoff links the appeal of Stewart's ideas in the 1960's to those of utopian idealism expressed through the human potential movement. His book caused a reaction from Senoi dream enthusiasts who say that the theory "works whatever its origins".

2.5.6 Dream specialists needed to work effectively with the dreams

A common theme throughout the literature is that working with the dream requires some special knowledge or training. Instances of special knowledge and training include:

Religious experts (priests, shamans) expected to use their own dreams in performance of their role (e.g. curing, divination) D'Andrade 1973 p.211).

Greeks...the role of the oracles, or interpreters, became more pronounced, and they would indicate on the basis of the dream recounted to them what the appropriate treatment should be (Van de Castle 1973 p.19).

Dream interpretation in a Senoi tribe belonged to everyone, although it is also true that there were specialists in dreams who were called the Halaks. 'Breakfast in the Senoi house' Stewart wrote 'is like a dream clinic.' People listened to and discussed the dreams of children, husbands, wives, and friends (O'Connor, 1992 p.19).

In research, there has been a shift from the early days of content analysis of recorded dreams in an approach that Tedlock (1991) describes as treatment of the "other", to current approaches of participant observation in which the researcher considers

themselves and their responses as part of the data that is being gathered. The trend now is to see dreams as psychodynamic intercultural social processes (Tedlock, 1991). There has been a shift in research strategy from directly eliciting dozens of fixed dream objects to studying naturally occurring situations - dream sharing, representation and interpretation (Tedlock, 1991 p.3). Tedlock describes how, in order to explain both the individual and cultural use of dreams in society, it is necessary for the researcher to become immersed in the culture over time.

In time, perhaps, cultural anthropologists will develop the necessary skill and training to listen to emotional dream communication of others as well as to their own feelings (Kracke 1978 cited by Tedlock, 1991 p.12).

In the West the thinking we do while asleep usually remains on a muddled, childish or psychotic level because we do not respond to dreams as socially important and include dreaming in the educative process (Stewart 1969 p.170).

2.6 Summary

A theme throughout the ages is the belief or hope that dreams are able to assist people in working through problems of living within their social system. The range of problems addressed represents major areas of human existence from survival through to communing with the gods. Dreams have been regarded as a direct line to supernatural powers that will provide answers to some of the difficult questions of living. Such questions include basic survival, such as where the next meal is coming from or knowing what physical illnesses are present and how to treat them. Other questions are more esoteric such as those addressing the building of spiritual practices and understanding something of the spiritual nature of existence. In some situations enormous effort is put into ritual to invoke a desired outcome. For instance, better health or confirmation of a successful rite of passage. While some of these hopes may appear primitive to us in the 21st century, the ongoing theme of looking to dreams to guide communities in more effective living appears across the ages.

There are a range of ideas about the origins of dreams. For some, dreams were and are messages about the future, messages from the souls of the dead, messages from their daily lives or revelations about their communities. There is evidence of the dream being used as a catalyst for change in culture as well as culture influencing the content

of an individual's dreams. Lincoln's work demonstrates the powerful effect that ritual and planned efforts have in the genesis of dreams and he hypothesizes there is a direct relationship between culture and dreams.

Although the evidence is that culture can be revealed in dreams, culture can dictate the content of dreams and the contents of dreams can be used to build a culture or social system, this evidence indicates a complex process. Surface cultural change seems to leave dream life relatively undisturbed, indicating a more deeply rooted nature to the culture/ dream relation.

This review of the literature has demonstrated the many ways that people have thought about their dreams in relation to building their social systems. Dreams have been seen as a source of assistance in building these social systems. Activities have been developed to stimulate the production of dreams at particular times of need. The studies in this literature review explore dreams in relationship to the culture but not dreams in relationship to each other and the social system. Research on the latter, to my knowledge, is not available thus the value of the research of this thesis is underscored.

Chapter 3: Development & applications of social dreaming

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 provided the evidence that over the ages people have used dreams to learn about and develop their social systems. Social dreaming is a 20th Century method that has similar aims. This chapter will discuss the development and applications of the social dreaming method.

There are three sections. The first presents a brief overview of the work of two of the most significant contributors to thinking about dreams from a psychological perspective in the 20th Century - Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung. There is an introduction to aspects of their work that is related to the development and practice of the social dreaming method. This includes their perspectives on the learning that is available through dreams and the methods that they developed to access this learning. The second section of the chapter presents the development of social dreaming. The third section discusses the applications and learning gained through social dreaming. In this section I begin espousing my own views of the fundamentals of social dreaming.

3.2 Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung

3.2.1 Dreams and Learning about the Individual Unconscious – Freud

Sigmund Freud is the forerunner in the development of psychoanalysis with dreams. While others may have postulated that there was a link between dreams and the individual's psyche (Hildebrandt 1875; Emerson 1883 and Sully 1893 as cited in Van de Castle 1973) Freud was the first to demonstrate this.

Freud (1900/1999) identifies two main streams of thought in his time about the relationship of dreams to waking life. The first was that dreams are an extension of waking life. It was argued that they provide an opportunity for the dreamer to continue processing or connecting with experiences of the day (Haffner, 1884 p.19; Weygandt, 1893 p.6 cited by Freud 1900/1999 p.10). It was also argued that they are dictated by personality and the whole of life experience (Jessen, 1855, p.530 cited by Freud

1900/1999) and arise from the things about which we feel most passionately (Maess as cited by Winterstein 1912 cited by Freud, 1900/1999).

This is summed up in the words of the poet Lucretius:

And those pursuits which most we love to follow
The things in which just now we have been engaged
The mind being thus the more intent upon them
These are most oft the substance of our dreams
Lawyers argue their cases and make laws
Generals fight battles, leading troops to war...

(Lucretius cited in Freud, 1900/1999 p.418)

The second stream of thinking about dreams identified by Freud is the idea that dreams are a means of freeing people from the trappings of daily waking life. This occurs through the process of the mind being cut-off from the ordinary contents of waking life and provides the opportunity for self-healing (Hildebrandt cited by Freud 1900/1999 p.12).

These views are each reflected in the way that Freud conceptualizes dreams. The idea that dreams emerge from the whole of one's life can be seen in Freud's belief that dreams arise from earlier life experiences. The opportunity for self-healing can be seen in Freud's focus on resolving conflicts in the individual's psyche through working with their dreams. The idea that in dreaming the mind is cut-off from the ordinary contents of waking life is reflected in Freud's thinking about the dream as providing an uncensored truthfulness that is defended against or resisted in daily living. The idea that dreams are dictated by personality can be seen in Freud's belief that a dream reveals a person's desires or impulses.

Freud (1900/1999) believed that dreams are disguised messages to the dreamer about repressed desires and impulses. Freud sees dreams as holding both manifest and latent content. The manifest content is the consciously apprehended dream content. It is seen to hold a secret passage to a dreamer's unconscious wishes or impulses. Freud (1900/1999) hypothesized that through exploration of the manifest content of dreams the latent, and real, meaning can be discovered.

If a dream continues the work of the day and completes it, and even has valuable ideas and brings them to light, all we have to do is simply divest it of its dream disguise as being the achievement of the dream-work and a sign of assistance from the dark powers in the depths of our soul (Freud 1900/1999, p.405).

The tool that Freud and later psychoanalysts use for deciphering the dream is free association. This is a method in which a person attempts to relax and capture the thoughts that come unbidden into their mind in response to the dream contents. In describing how this is done Freud says:

I want him to do two things: to pay attention to his psychical perceptions more intently and to switch off the critical faculty he normally uses to sift the thoughts arising in him...not allowing himself to be tempted, for instance, to suppress one idea occurring to him because it appears to him unimportant or irrelevant to the subject, another because it appears nonsensical (Freud 1900/1999, p.81).

A person enters this process and allows a stream of uncensored thoughts to emerge that provide the data from which analysis of the dream is made. The process of free association aims to side-step the resistances and defences unconsciously mobilized by analysands to prevent their real desires being made known.

Freud (1900/1999) acknowledges that the culture of a dreamer is a source of certain universal symbols that can be used as resources in dream work however he conceptualizes dreams as primarily originating from and being able to reveal learning of the individual's hidden wishes.

3.2.2 Dreams and Learning about the Collective Unconscious – Jung

Jung had a different perspective on dreams to that held by Freud. Where Freud understands dreams as disguised messages, Jung saw dreams as a form of open communication.

To me dreams are a part of nature, which harbours no intention to deceive, but expresses something as best it can. These forms of life, too, have no wish to deceive our eyes, but we may deceive ourselves because our eyes are short sighted. Or we hear amiss because our ears are rather deaf – but it is not our ears that wish to deceive us (Jung 1961/1989, p.185).

Jung (1964) perceived dreams as originating from a collective as well as an individual unconscious. He described the contents of the collective unconscious as universal and of regular occurrence, common to all men and perhaps even to all animals, and the true basis of the individual psyche.

According to Segaller and Berger (1989) the collective unconscious is a level of unconscious functioning in our psyche, which expresses the essential shared experience of what it is to be a human being, irrespective of culture or location.

Jung explored every conceivable religious, mythological and artistic source and the repetition of themes, of narrative stories, of symbols and patterns of behaviour, which he called the 'archetypes' convinced him that the collective unconscious was real (Segaller and Berger 1989, p.4).

The collective unconscious consists of instincts and archetypes that have emerged throughout the evolution of the human species. Jung (1961/1989, p.411) described the concept of the archetype:

The myths and fairy tales of world literature contain definite motifs which crop up everywhere. We meet these motifs in the fantasies, dreams, deliria, and delusions of individuals living today. These typical images and associations are what I call archetypal ideas. The more vivid they are, the more they will be coloured by particularly strong feeling-tones... they have their origins in the archetype, which in itself is an irrepresentable, unconscious, pre-existent form that seems to be part of the inherited structure of the psyche and can therefore manifest itself spontaneously anywhere, at any time. Because of its instinctual nature, the archetype underlies the feeling-toned complexes and shares their autonomy.

As can be seen in the above quote, the actual definition of an archetype is rather difficult to grasp in a concrete way. In everyday language it is used to describe particular patterns of behaviour such as the archetypal 'queen' or the archetypal 'wise woman'. However this is not really what Jung intended. Aniela Jaffe, a long-term colleague of Jung, describes the archetype as a spiritual instinct (Segaller and Berger, 1989 p.72). Jung (1964) said that the archetype is essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious and perceived and that it takes its colour from the individual consciousness in which it happens to appear.

Jung (1964) differentiated between dreams that are connected with the personal life of the dreamer and those dreams that come from the collective unconscious. Jung (1964) conceptualised the “big dream” which is highly impressive and numinous with its imagery frequently making use of motifs linked with those of mythology. The imagery and motifs of these dreams are archetypes. Jung described how they could be found in the folklore of primitive races - in Greek, Egyptian, and ancient Mexican myths, as well as in the dreams, visions, and delusions of modern individuals entirely ignorant of all such tradition. These dreams differ from ordinary individual dreams.

The methods Jung used in dream analysis are ‘amplification’ and ‘directed association’. Jung (1961/1989, p.410) describes amplification as the elaboration and clarification of a dream-image by means of directed association and of parallels from the human science - symbology, mythology, mysticism, folklore, history of religion, ethnology. He preferred the use of amplification to free association as he thought this keeps the dreamer in closer contact with the dream.

3.2.3 Summary of the dream perspective

There are some similarities and some marked differences between the perspectives held by Freud and Jung. Both believe that dreams are a rich source of learning for individuals. While Freud saw dreams as originating solely from the individual unconscious Jung believed that they also originate from the evolution of mankind in the form of the collective unconscious. Freud saw culture as providing universal symbols that assist in the analysis of individuals’ dreams, while Jung saw the whole of world cultures as providing a source of living wisdom that people connect to in their dreams. Jung calls these dreams that link with the collective unconscious “big dreams”.

Both Freud and Jung developed methods to analyse dreams. They both used the technique of association but in different forms. Where Freud used free association, Jung used amplification and directed association. The work of both of these pioneers with dreams is represented in social dreaming method. Lawrence (2005) names both free association and amplification as elements of social dreaming. These will be discussed in further detail in the development of social dreaming in this chapter.

3.2.4 Free association and spontaneity in social dreaming

As mentioned earlier, free association is a technique that facilitates the exploration of a dream in some depth (Freud, 1900/1999). Free association involves by-passing the usual processes of judgment and censorship used by most people before speaking. Free association draws upon a person's capacity to observe whatever comes up in their minds without judgement. A rich source of thoughts, feelings, memories and images becomes available through free association. These enable different perspectives on dreams. In social dreaming it is hypothesized that the use of free association will lead to learning about the broader social system rather than just the individual.

The social dreaming method is based on the premise that dreams have a connection to the social system. For this reason there will be some discussion here on the background of thinking about different types of dreams. In the literature, two schools of thought emerge about how dreams can be perceived. One school of thought claims that the same dream can be viewed from many different perspectives e.g. individual, social, or spiritual. The other view claims that there are different types of dreams that arise from different origins e.g. the 'big dream', the social dream, or the individual dream. Each of these views will now be discussed.

3.2.5 One dream, different origin

Wilber (1982, p.284) suggests that dreams can originate from a range of levels of human needs. These levels are shadow, ego, biosocial, existential and transpersonal. These levels move from the individual through higher levels of human organisation and existence and range from superficial to deeper aspects of human existence. For example, dreams from the ego band are hangovers from the day. They meet basic needs related to self-image. Dreams from the transpersonal band include archetypal and phylogenetic (evolution of race or tribe) that satisfy meta-needs and archetypal elaboration at a broader societal level (Wilber, 1982 p.284).

In Wilber's scheme (1982, p.292) it is important to identify the type of dream so that the most suitable approach is used for its examination otherwise the dream can be "reduced to ego or inflated to archetype". As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Jung (1964) believes there are big dreams that differ from those that are drawn from the

psyche of the individual. Lawrence (2005) describes his growing conviction that it is possible for people to have social dreams that speak to the life of a social system.

3.2.6 One dream, different perspectives

Alternatively, some people believe that the one dream can be viewed from many perspectives. Ross (1994) concludes from her experiences of social dreaming that the same dream can be taken to the analyst's office as well as to a social dreaming matrix. Freud's idea of multiple determinism indicates that he regarded the dream as being derived from many different sources, each of which might be explored.

In 1959, Montague Ullman read a paper entitled "The Social Roots of the Dream" at the mid-winter meeting of the Academy of Psychoanalysis in New York. A major focus of this paper is exploration of the relationship between dream and social myth.

These socially sanctioned foci of belief (myths) come to life in the dream as sources of support or as sources of anxiety, depending on the underlying nature of the immediate conflict (Ullman 1960, p.184).

Over 30 years he has come increasingly to value the significance of including the social elements in his work with people in dream groups.

The personal referents to the dream image are unique...the social referent, the component of what I have referred to as the social metaphor, is what is shared in common with others...in a sense all dream imagery is social in origin...we speak of the image as a social metaphor when it seems to tell us something about the unsolved problems of society while, at the same time, relating it to an unresolved issue in the life of the dreamer. Dream imagery makes the relationship of the social to the personal more explicit (Ullman 2001, p.4).

Similarly, Dombeck (1991, p.xv) describes dream telling as engaging 'imaginal' and thematic aspect of human communication.

Social rules and personal responses are intertwined in every dream that is told (Dombeck 1991, p.xvii).

O'Connor also thinks dreams can be viewed from different perspectives.

A dream can be explored archetypically - as messages from the Gods - and psychologically as messages from one's own conscious mind (O'Connor 1992, p.24).

3.3 The Development of Social Dreaming

This section describes the development of the social dreaming method. There will be an outline of the influences that have been significant in developing the method. A rationale is given for the choice of the term 'matrix'. The purpose, task and process of social dreaming and the roles of members and consultants are described. The use of associations and connections to dreams in order to learn about the broader social system will be discussed. Examples will be given of applications of social dreaming that demonstrate how this occurs.

3.3.1 Significant influences contributing to the development of social dreaming

Gordon Lawrence uses the term 'rediscovery of social dreaming' to describe his work with Patricia Daniel in the development of the social dreaming method, as it is apparent to him that dreams have been used within a social context in other times and other places in history.

There are four significant factors that influenced Lawrence (1991) in the development of the social dreaming method. One was the way that dreams are used by tribes from different cultures to assist them in their day to day community activities. Another was when working as a consultant in group relations work - Lawrence noticed that some dreams presented seemed to speak to the emergent life of the group (1991).

I called these group dreams and sometimes, in my mind, 'social' dreams (Lawrence 1991, p.263).

A third factor that impacted upon Lawrence was reading Carl Jung's experience of visions about future political events. The fourth influencing factor was the work of Charlotte Beradt (1966, *Third Reich of Dreams*). This work forms a compilation of dreams collected during the Nazi regime in Germany from 1933-1939. Beradt asked people she encountered in her daily life about their dreams, without revealing her purpose so as to ensure the most open responses possible. A number of her friends also helped her to gather records of dreams, including a doctor with a large practice

who made a significant contribution. The dreams from more than 300 people were gathered and their records camouflaged and hidden in book bindings and later posted overseas as letters.

Beradt (1966) describes her set of highly varied dreams as clearly springing from 1933-1939 and the events of those times. She notes the consistency of the dream contents in revealing similar themes from a variety of people.

Regardless of whether it was a young girl or an old man, plain workingmen or the highly educated, regardless of how expressive or retentive these persons were, their dreams brought out hitherto unformulated aspects of the relationship between the individual and the totalitarian regime (Beradt 1966, p.10).

Connections emerged between the themes of the dreams and the effect of the developing forces of the totalitarian rule on the dreamers. It became clear through the dreams that the instruments of propaganda used were having exactly the effect they were intended, as people dreamt about being under surveillance and being unable to express their thoughts except in obscure or unintelligible ways.

The dreams we were concerned with were not produced by conflicts arising in their authors' private realm, and certainly not by some past conflict that had left a psychological wound. Instead they arose from the conflicts into which these people had been driven by a public realm in which half-truths, vague notions, and a combination of fact, rumor, and conjecture had produced a general feeling of uncertainty and unrest. These dreams may deal with disturbed human relations, but it was the environment that had disturbed them (Beradt 1966, p.15).

The increasing powerlessness experienced by people during the day becomes expressed in night dreams through themes such as loss of privacy, enjoyment of life and identity. Beradt (1966) discovered that dreams also become a means for people to express thoughts that they are not able to have or discuss in daytime living. Some of the dreams appeared to take on a prophetic quality as they contained elements of the regime which were yet to be enacted (Beradt, 1966 p.137). Beradt's work had a significant impact upon Lawrence.

Having read Beradt's book I was stunned by the potential of what she had achieved. What would happen if we had some mass observation-like study of dreams in the UK at different points in history?...After reading Beradt, I was content to play with the idea of having a group of people who would dream socially, in the sense that I was using that adverb (Lawrence 1998, p.17).

After some time of contemplation, these four influences came together in Lawrence's mind in the form of the social dreaming method. The first social dreaming experience was held in 1982 by Gordon Lawrence and Patricia Daniel at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations in London. It was an eight week program called a "Project in Social Dreaming and Creativity" and was sponsored by the Group Relations Training Program of the Tavistock Institute, of which Gordon Lawrence was then joint director. The venture was regarded as experimental and at the end of it Lawrence (1998) felt confident that the validity of a social dimension in dreams had been established.

In 1998 Gordon Lawrence offered a description of social dreaming as a method of working with dreams which was in the making. In his discovery of the dimensions of the conceptual space in which to locate social dreaming Lawrence writes:

It has been necessary, first, to blind oneself to conventional and received opinions about the ways to understand or interpret dreams; to experience dreams as phenomena in their own right; to rid oneself of a priori frameworks for limiting the nature of dreams (1998, p.12).

Lawrence (1998) relates how his thinking about dreams has changed since the early days of social dreaming. He originally approached dreams with the same view as Freud – that dreams are a puzzle to be solved. With further experiences, Lawrence (1998, p.30) began to resonate more with the view held by Jung that dreams are to be taken in their own right and their symbolism unravelled and decoded. He describes the work of social dreaming as associative rather than interpretative and restated the primary task:

To discover the social meanings of available dreams in the matrix (Lawrence 1998, p.30).

Even later he talks of making associations and connections in order to be available for new thinking (Lawrence, 2005).

3.3.2 Developing the concept of matrix

The concept of a social dreaming matrix rather than a social dreaming group is described by Lawrence (1998) as an idea initiated by Patricia Daniel. In their early discussions they became clear that they did not want to use the term ‘group’ as this would place the focus on group processes and transferences and they did not want this. ‘Matrix’ is defined by the Macquarie dictionary as “that which gives origin or form to a thing, or which serves to enclose it.” In Late Latin it meant womb or source Lawrence (1998). A social dreaming matrix, then, is a place within which something is grown; the focus is on what emerges not on the process by which this happens.

3.3.3 How social dreaming works

The purpose of social dreaming is to access learning about the broader social system through the sharing of dreams, associations and connections, and to aid members to think new thoughts. There are five concepts identified by Lawrence (2005) that are fundamental to the social dreaming method. These have the following meanings in social dreaming method:

- working hypothesis; a sketch of reality...on further testing of reality a hypothesis will be confirmed or made redundant;
 - matrix; the name of the space in which social dreaming takes place...the space that mirrors, while awake, the space of dreaming while asleep, giving rise to images, metaphors, analogues, and symbols;
 - free association; as discovered by Freud – in social dreaming aims to discover truth by freeing up the mind from rational thought processes;
 - amplification; as discovered by Jung – each person listens to a dream and looks for resemblances in the culture that produced the dream;
 - systemic thinking; looking for the pattern that connects the dreams by identifying the system elements in the dreams, grouping the similar elements and identifying common themes
- (Lawrence 2005, p.35-43)

3.4 Applications of social dreaming

In this section two published case studies of social dreaming are discussed: Hahn (1998) and Michael (1998). Specific issues are identified as they arise from each application and there is discussion of potential implications for the future.

3.4.1 A social dreaming matrix emerges

In one case study Hahn (1998) writes of an application of social dreaming in a workshop with a group of students in their final year of a course in one of the helping professions. The aim negotiated with the students was to learn experientially about group dynamics. A social dreaming matrix had not been planned by Hahn as part of the workshop but on the second day a dream-sharing session was proposed when it emerged that most students had dreamt the previous night.

The session took the form of a social dreaming matrix with the seating arranged in a snowflake pattern, dreams shared and associations made to them by participants. Hahn (1998, p.46) observes the group process followed no obvious logic or cohesion, yet somehow had an inspiring sense of wholeness and rhythm – as when musicians become engrossed in a session of improvisation. From the collage of dreams and associations recurrent themes emerged of a journey and a building structure. An unexpected outcome of the matrix was a major shift in the quality of the communication between the students. Hahn (1998) notes that communication flowed more easily and the group addressed unfinished business relating to its own history, specifically about previous group responses to significant personal events.

An interesting aspect to consider in this application of social dreaming is the way that the matrix evolves. Unlike other case studies where the matrix is part of a predetermined structure (Eisold 1998, Oeser 1998, Tatham and Morgan 1998) this matrix emerges in a naturalistic way with the presence of the dreams acting as the catalyst. When participants reveal that they have dreamt the previous night, Hahn responds to the presence of these dreams by introducing the structure of the matrix within which they can be placed. Participants then indicate their willingness to proceed.

There are some advantages that become apparent in the matrix being negotiated in this way. First, all those present know that there are a number of recent dreams available to which associations and connections can be made. The interest in working with the dreams originates directly from the participants themselves rather than being introduced by an external authority such as a planning committee or organisational consultant.

Second, there is the added potency of the dreams emerging within the actual time and context of the training workshop. This is unlike the situation experienced by Michael (1998) where people new to social dreaming bring recurring dreams. In this case study an intrigue is created about what may be communicated and learnt via the previous nights' dreams. It is possible to make a strong link between the purpose of the training workshop and the social dreaming matrix.

There is a learning focus already established and the matrix evolves within this so there is a clear boundary around the social dreaming experience for participants. It is an advantage to this social dreaming matrix that dreams and dreamers are "ready to go" and that this occurs within a working context – in this case a workshop on group dynamics.

While the move toward more frank communication between participants is not usually a desired outcome from a social dreaming matrix, Hahn observes that this does occur in this instance. Similarly, the writer has observed this phenomenon in a weekly matrix where unusually high levels of intimacy developed between participants who had limited personal relationships outside of the matrix itself. It is interesting to consider what it is about the social dreaming process that contributes to heightened experiences for participants of inclusion within the immediate social system of the matrix itself. This area is of particular interest in this study and there will be in-depth exploration of the relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system.

Some of the factors identified in the discussion of Hahn's case study that could contribute to the deepening of relationships include the commonality in most participants dreaming the previous night, the united focus and interest in working with the dreams and the boundary and subsequent containment created by the clearly established learning environment of the workshop. The potential for the social dreaming method to impact upon relationships between participants is a significant factor when considering application of the method within teams, organisations or communities. If either intimacy or isolation is heightened by participation in a social dreaming matrix, this could have unwanted effects upon participants that affect the

way they work or live together. This area will be discussed in further detail in the analysis of the data in Chapter 6.

3.4.2 The idea of the social dream

The application of social dreaming in facilitating organisational change is discussed by Michael (1998). He suggests that one factor in bringing about change in an organisational culture is the in-depth exploration of the shared experiences of members. He hypothesizes that the social dreaming method can be a useful tool in accessing the hidden dimensions of these shared experiences within an organisation. Michael (1998) uses the term social dream to describe the dreams offered in a social dreaming matrix. He suggests they function as parables in that the social dreams express a critique of the world and offer the reverse of what the hearer expects to hear (Michael 1998). The social dream therefore offers a critique of an organisation and in doing so can access 'hidden' dimensions of the organisational culture. The critique provided by the social dream can make thinking available to inform and facilitate change. In an application of social dreaming within a church forum Michael (1998) uses the term social dream to describe the dreams that are shared.

As previously mentioned in this chapter, Lawrence (2005) observed that certain dreams appear to speak to the life of a particular group and he coined the term 'social dream' to describe these.

While this term has not yet been taken up as a part of everyday social dreaming language it is interesting to consider whether there is any merit to embracing the concept of the "social dream". One advantage is that using the term makes a clear focus on the social rather than the personal. This may enable participants to differentiate between the social dreaming method and other methods of working with dreams in groups where dreams are collectively analysed for personal learning. The term social dream also challenges the view that dreams are a personal possession – when viewed from the social perspective dreams emerge within the complex interrelationships of a social system rather than being the personal possession of any one person. The dreamer then is more of a messenger or conduit for the dream, rather than a person who gave birth to it. The matrix itself is the place where incubation occurs and the dream is brought to life through the associations that are generated.

When considering adopting the concept of a social dream several questions arise. How is a social dream identified? What are the criteria that need to be met for a dream to be a 'social dream'? Who would decide whether the criteria had been met? How would one know in advance whether a dream belonged in a social dreaming matrix when associations have yet to be made and subsequent connections emerge?

Given the constant interplay between the personal and the social in dreams, a difficulty is posed in deciding what constitutes a social rather than a personal dream. The matter becomes even more complicated when considering a range of belief systems about dreams originating from a variety of other sources such as the past, the future, intergenerational or spiritual. I find it difficult to imagine how a dream can be definitively classified as originating from one source rather than another.

If the view was taken that a social dream could be identified the question of who would do this needs to be considered. If the dreamer maintains their freedom in choosing the dreams that they share, what happens if other participants do not agree with their choice? This raises the potential for dreams to be accepted or rejected. It could be argued that this happens anyway in the usual course of a social dreaming matrix as participants make choices about what associations they choose to share.

A further difficulty with identifying a dream as social is the idea that the learning to be gleaned from a dream in social dreaming cannot be known in advance. It is only when the dream has been offered and participants engage with it, through the social process of making associations and connections and the sharing of other dreams, that the meaning and learning it brings to the matrix can be known. Thus the rejection of a dream as purely individual a priori does not allow for the testing of its social content.

In summary I take the view that a dream can be viewed from personal, social as well as a myriad of other perspectives, and that any dream can be legitimately brought to a social dreaming matrix. Whether it is the right time and place for the dreamer to share that dream is an important factor. For example, a person in a matrix in a work setting would not necessarily share dreams that appear to have a high level content about their personal life.

My view of social dreaming is that the associations to the dream are as important as the dream itself. My impression is that there are different views around the dream, the value of the dream (i.e. a social dream) and the relationships between the dream and the participants of social dreaming.

A limitation on categorizing and assigning dreams to a social dreaming matrix is that a level of restrictiveness can occur. If certain types of dreams are sought or valued over others, there is a risk that some may be discarded due to unconscious rejection of elements that are unpalatable to individuals or a social system – the very elements that need to be explored in order to aid social development. So, for example, a social dreaming matrix in an organization may reject dreams that have the potential to confront their work practices or values, thus reducing the learning available. If this occurs the effectiveness of social dreaming is likely to be reduced. A factor in the effectiveness of social dreaming is the sharing of dreams and being able to freely associate to them and this area will be explored in detail in this study.

The selection of certain dreams can create a skew towards certain areas – perhaps already known and familiar. As discussed by both Freud and Jung, the learning from a dream – whether purposely disguised or not – is not immediately apparent but emerges from a commitment to a particular set of processes and a trust that through the application of certain methods something fruitful will emerge. This cannot be known in advance so the choice of the social dream over the ‘garden variety’ may preclude learning. In the social dreaming method the elements are the sharing of dreams, the associations made in response to these within a group, amplification and the identification of connections that emerge from these.

This further highlights the importance and significance of the spontaneity of participants and consultants within a social dreaming matrix to express associations that relate to the dream so that learning can emerge with originality rather than being made to fit into predetermined categories or patterns.

This is not to say that there are dreams that are more fitting in the analyst’s office and the dreamer will recognize these. However, rather than there being certain types of

dreams that belong to social dreaming, I think that all dreams have the potential to belong as they are dreamed by the individual in relationship to a wider social system.

I take the view expressed by Ullman that all dreams are social in origin and so therefore can be viewed from the perspective of the social element. What does vary is the balance between the social and personal elements of a dream and it is this balance that requires attention.

What are the personal or individual elements of a dream? What are the social? There is not a clear cut distinction. However, a dream in which a person relates primarily to their mother may well be more fruitfully taken to their analyst or dream therapy group than to a social dreaming matrix. Alternatively the dream may serve as a catalyst for exploration of what can be learnt about mothers and daughters within a particular social system. As each social system is representative of a particular social aspect some dreams will be taken up in one matrix but not in another.

Jung's thoughts about dreams linking across generations and different peoples around the world resonate strongly with me in relation to the social dreaming method. Both approaches to dreams aim to access different layers of meaning. In my experience of social dreaming dreams cross time boundaries - the past, the present and the future - and this makes the potential for learning from the method enormous.

3.5 Summary

This chapter has provided a context for the development of the social dreaming method. An overview is given of the development of significant ways of thinking and working with dreams through the work of Freud on dreams and the individual unconscious and Jung with dreams and the collective unconscious. The technique of free association is presented as an introduction to the development of the social dreaming method. Factors identified by Lawrence that contributed to the development of the social dreaming method have been described. Details of how the method works have been provided. Examples of applications of social dreaming method have been discussed. There is description given of the use of social dreaming to assist in the facilitation of organisational change as explored by Michael. He suggests that the

social dream functions as a parable in that it offers a critique which can bring hidden dimensions of an organisational culture into awareness. Through this social dreaming process thinking can then be made available to inform organisational change.

Chapter 4: Research methodology – research design and data gathering methods

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design and data collection methods used in the current study. There are two sections. The first presents the research design. The second section discusses the methods of data creation and collection. Advantages and disadvantages of using each method are discussed. Rationales for decisions about data collection methods are discussed. Specific details are then given of the context of social dreaming experiences from which the data for this study is drawn. The methods of data analysis and interpretation are then presented in Chapter 5.

4.2 Section 1: Research design

When thinking about the research methodology to be used it quickly became apparent that this study is best located within the field of qualitative research methodology.

Qualitative research has a long association with the study of groups of human beings. It has been used in a range of disciplines including sociology, anthropology, education and social work. Denzin and Lincoln (1998 p.3) describe the work of qualitative researchers as studying things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. In this respect the social dreaming method is a qualitative research method in itself. Dreams emerge as a natural part of human experience living in the world. In social dreaming the dreams and associations that are shared between people provide the data through which learning and thinking emerges in connection to the broader social system.

Qualitative research is a multi-method approach to research that is emergent rather than tightly prefigured (Rossman and Rallis, cited in Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005 p.4).

The social dreaming method is difficult to study because of its uniqueness and dependency on a variety of factors such as the context, size and make-up of the matrix. Dreams, associations and connections are not easily quantified. Alternatively, qualitative research is well suited to study social dreaming because it takes account of

the wide ranging associations and resultant narratives created in the process by noting qualitative aspects. Qualitative methodologies provide a framework within which the method can be explored from a variety of perspectives. A wide range of interconnected methods are available with the aim of achieving a deeper level of understanding than can be provided through a quantitative description (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). The flexibility of qualitative research makes it useful because it enables the exploration of the different elements of social dreaming method using a range of research methods. This acknowledges and respects the complexity of social dreaming and allows it to be explored through the combination of research methods that are most suited to each element.

4.2.1 Case Study

A major research design that has been used in the study of social dreaming is that of case study, also known as case-oriented analysis (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). Case study is a research design based on the analysis of either one or several cases (Stone and Gilbertson, 1985). Published writings on the social dreaming method to date have been in the form of case studies that describe one or more social dreaming ventures. These have reported the dreams and associations made and the learning that has been gained about the broader social system of the participants in a variety of different settings (Eisold 1998; Maltz and Walker 1998; Michael 1998; Oeser 1998; Tatham and Morgan 1998; Ross 1994; Lawrence 1998). An advantage of the case study is that it allows for in-depth exploration of the specific case phenomena under study.

Case study is particularly useful with social dreaming as there is little experience worldwide with the method, thus gaining in-depth detail can assist in building understanding of the method as well as contributing to its further development. Case study can also demonstrate to practitioners how the social dreaming method works. From the detailed descriptions given in case studies readers are able to see how the process unfolds and judge the validity of the method. Case studies offer the prospective researcher the opportunity to obtain rich data with high validity (Connell, Lynch and Waring, 2001 p.3).

Frequent criticism of the case study method is that the findings are unable to be generalized to a broader population as the numbers used are small (Tellis, 1997). But

as the building of social dreaming theory is in relatively early days this issue can be held aside until greater numbers of cases are established and some commonalities described. There is value in detailed and systematic exploration of social dreaming ventures through the case study method. Through the use of this method the experiences of a diverse range of people using social dreaming in a variety of contexts can be offered for thoughtful consideration in the development of the method.

As previously stated, this is a qualitative study that aims to gather information about peoples' experiences of social dreaming. This is a multi-method study. The research design is a series of case studies of different matrices together with a qualitative field study where consultants from different matrices are interviewed.

4.3 Section 2: Data gathering methods

4.3.1 Interviews

Interviews are a data gathering method used in this study. Interviews take a variety of forms ranging from structured to focused or semi-structured through to unstructured (Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell and Alexander, 1995). A key difference between these interviews lies in the types of questions used. Structured interviews tend to use closed-ended questions. These are questions that limit or pre-determine the range of responses that are given (Gillham 2000; Minichellio et al 1995). An advantage to closed-ended questions is that specific information is collected and analysis is straightforward due to the previously defined categories, thus reducing research costs (Gillham, 2000). A disadvantage of closed-ended questions is they do not allow respondents to express non pre-determined views or say individually what is relevant to them about the research subject (Minichellio et al, 1995). For this reason structured interviews using closed questions are not well suited to this study, as it is aiming to open up exploration rather than to validate predetermined hypotheses.

Interviews that are semi-structured use open-ended questions and a range of other listening techniques that aim to give the respondent the opportunity to describe their experiences or views in their own words. An open-ended question indicates what the interviewer wants to know but does not predetermine the answer (Gillham, 2000). Open ended questions are phrased to elicit the interviewee's perspectives without

offering ideas and provide a greater scope for variety in response (Keats, 1988). The use of open-ended questions conveys to the interviewee an interest in what they have to say and creates an environment where their experience is in the foreground. Open-ended questions generate a deeper level of individual description than that gained by closed questions. This also generates a broader range of data that is complex and time-consuming to analyse. Therefore the research costs are higher (Gillham, 2000).

The semi-structured interview technique builds flexibility into the questioning to capture insights that may otherwise be lost to the imposition of the next 'structured' question (Connell et al, 2001). Nonverbal communications are observable to the interviewer and nuances of tone, facial expressions and emotions can be further explored (Keats, 1988). In the semi-structured interview method the same base of open-ended questions is used with all respondents but the directions that the questions take is likely to be different due to the individual experiences. This is of benefit in this study as each persons experience can be explored in some depth and a range of perspectives on social dreaming can be gathered from which the method can be explored.

Open questions are often used in conjunction with probes (Egan 1985; Keats 1988). A probe is a statement or question that asks a person to discuss an issue more fully (Egan, 1985 p.35). The stimulus for using a probe may be the nonverbal cues of the respondent, their emphasis on particular words or speaking of an area that intrigues the interviewer.

Interviews can be conducted with individuals or with groups. An advantage of individual interviews is that the person may feel able to express their views, minimising the restraint of peer pressure or social conformity. Developing rapport with a person or group by the interviewer is a key factor in obtaining in-depth responses (Keats, 1988). Good rapport and empathy also minimize the respondent's use of social conformity through fear of embarrassment or appearing 'different' to others.

Another factor that interferes with the veracity of interview data is the disempowerment of interviewees such that they are less able to report their views than

they would otherwise be able. The balance of power in the relationship between the interviewer and respondent has attracted much debate and controversy. One view is that the interviewer holds the power as they control the flow of the conversation and questions to which the respondent is subordinate (Minichiello et al, 1995 p.64). Mishler (1991 p.118) expresses the view that interviews be directed toward the empowerment of respondents so that they are able to find and speak in their own “voices”. He gives the example of action research where the analysis of an interview is reported back to and discussed with the respondent as part of the research process.

In-depth interviews are a form of interview that can be used with a study of social dreaming. In-depth interviews are single or repeated face-to-face encounters between researcher and informants, directed toward understanding informants’ perspectives on their lives, experiences or situations as expressed in their own words (Taylor and Bogdan cited in Minichiello et al, 1995 p.68). In-depth interviews are generally used as theory building where the researcher is attempting to gain understanding of the field of study (Minichielli et al, 1995 p.75). This would be an appropriate way to study social dreaming as the interviews could be held periodically over the life of a social dreaming matrix so a longitudinal perspective might be gained and the history of each person’s participation could be explored. Repeated in-depth interviews throughout the history of the matrix have not been used in this study as the weekly social dreaming matrix was finished before the study was started. However, single in-depth interviews that last one and a half hours can be used to study a person’s views “in-depth” in this study. These are used with matrix participants and consultants.

4.3.2 Group Interviews

Group interviews are those in which an interviewer works with a group of people to engage them in conversation focused upon the research area (Gibbs 1997; Minichellio et al 1995). In group interviews people are stimulated by each other’s responses (Gillham, 2000) and areas of common concern or difference can emerge. A disadvantage of asking questions in a group is that people who are shy may be unlikely to speak up. Similarly, a person who is self-critical may withhold their response because they think it doesn’t measure up to what they are hearing from others. Another disadvantage of the group interview is that the evolving discussion and views expressed may come to be directed by a dominant group member

(Minichiello et al, 1995). The group interview requires careful management of these dynamics and requires a skilled group interviewer for this purpose.

There are different kinds of group interviews. Focus groups are a form of group interview and they rely on interaction within the group based on topics provided by the researcher (Morgan 1997 cited in Gibbs, 1997). They can be used at any stage of the research process as a method in their own right or as a complement to other methods especially for triangulation (Morgan 1988 cited in Gibbs, 1997) and checking of validity. The purpose of focus group research is to draw upon respondents attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions in a way which would not be feasible using other methods, for example, observation, one-to-one interviewing, or questionnaire surveys (Gibbs, 1997 p.2). For this reason, focus groups are suitable as a research method for social dreaming. The lack of research and subsequent understanding of people's experiences of the method means that a focus on social dreaming might stimulate members to think about their reactions. Focus groups could be done with members of the same social dreaming matrix or a group of people from different matrices. There would be value in having an in-depth exploration of one specific matrix as well as having a breadth of experiences represented. The group interview of participants of the "mini" matrix in Tasmania in the research explored here has one significant element of a focus group. That is, the experience under exploration is the same for all (Keats, 1988).

Individual interviews and group interviews are suited for use in this study. Interviewing a group of people from the same social dreaming matrix enables a range of perspectives to be gained. One disadvantage of using individual interviews is that in this study the interviewer had been a consultant to the social dreaming matrix in which the interviewees participated. It is possible that due to these shared experiences there may have been mutual understandings of the social dreaming matrix that were not articulated by the interviewee or explored by the interviewer due to common assumptions.

A further advantage of the interview is that clarification or elaboration can be gained immediately on an area is brought up by a respondent. It can be useful to be able to interview a group of people immediately after a social dreaming experience as is done

with the “mini” matrix in Tasmania when memory of the event is clear in people’s minds.

4.3.3 Recording of interviews

Interviews can be recorded so that the interviewer is able to focus mainly on the questions and responses and not be distracted by having to make notes. The interviewer can concentrate fully on listening during the interview (Keats, 1988) and the tapes are transcribed resulting in verbatim records. From these, the analysis can be done thoughtfully and with a higher degree of accuracy than when relying upon the interviewer’s memory or field notes alone. In this study the whole of each interview has been transcribed, although this is not the case in all of recorded interviews. Strauss and Corbin (1990, p.30) recommend the very first interviews be entirely transcribed, and in later interviews only those sentences or paragraphs that relate to the evolving theory from analysis of the first set of interviews. In a larger study of social dreaming method this would be a useful method. When the interview is recorded the whole of the data from the interview is available to the researcher.

4.3.4 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are another method of gathering data for this study. An advantage of questionnaires is that they can be sent to people who are not able to be interviewed because of geographical distance, such as people from a range of countries. Respondents can complete the questionnaire when it suits which can be easier than organising a mutually convenient time for an interview (Gillham, 2000). A further benefit is that with the use of email questionnaires can be distributed and returned relatively quickly across large distances. A disadvantage of questionnaires is that responses are limited by the amount a person feels like writing so the answers can be briefer than those that are gained in a face to face interview. A further disadvantage of questionnaires is that the opportunity to explore areas of significance to the respondent as revealed through their nonverbal communication is lost. Gillham (2000, p.11) suggests that a major disadvantage of questionnaires is that they only ask questions and this isn’t the only, or even the best, way of getting people to tell you what they know. He identifies interested silences, appreciative comments and reflecting back to the respondent as techniques that a skilled interviewer can effectively use. Questionnaires can also be problematic as they involve putting

personal things into writing. This is akin to letting a personal part of you go, which can be anxiety provoking or upsetting (Gillham, 2000 p.84).

The questions used in a questionnaire can be open or closed depending on the type of information that is being sought. Open questions can lead to a greater level of discovery as they are aimed at garnering description (Gillham, 2000). However, the information gained from open questions is more difficult to analyse than that gained by closed questions. One way to analyse the content from open questions is to identify the categories that emerge from the responses (Gillham, 2000), although this is a more complex process than analyzing closed questions in which the categories have already been determined (Minichiello et al 1995). The extra work involved can be fruitful and lead to a greater level of discovery because the respondents have been able to include their perspectives in response to the interviewer's focus for exploration.

Even though there are a number of limitations to questionnaires there is one major benefit to using them in this study. They have enabled a larger number of people's experiences to be explored. There are a limited amount of people with experiences of social dreaming in Australia, particularly as consultants, so it was necessary to go further abroad. Email questionnaires have been used in this study as interviews are not practical in this situation due to time differences, costs involved and the technical challenges of recording a telephone interview. Email questionnaires have provided the extra benefit of getting a range of views and experiences from people working with social dreaming in a range of contexts in a variety of countries.

Data gathering methods that focus on the individual and groups have been discussed. The rationale for their use in this study has been presented. As outlined above there are benefits, for example, in interviewing an individual just as there are also in interviewing a group. There are specific advantages for this research in using both. The exploration of participant experiences of the same social dreaming matrix through individual in-depth interviews enables a focused exploration to be made of their spontaneity without undue influence from others as can be experienced in a group interview. Each person has the time and space to reflect on their own experience without the distraction that can arise from other viewpoints being expressed. The skilled interviewer uses active listening skills that allow each person

to go in greater depth into their own experiences and describe what is meaningful to them. The interviewer is free to follow each person's responses - verbal and non verbal - to achieve a depth that the person themselves may not have gone to in their own private reflections, or have been able to achieve in a group.

Another advantage of using the individual interview in this research is the freedom for each person to speak about the impact that other participants had on their spontaneity. This study is exploring factors that affect a person's capacity to share dreams and associations and these could be related to other matrix members. A person has more freedom in an individual interview to describe experiences in which they felt dissatisfied or uncomfortable with other participants. Fear of being critical or upsetting another person may get in the way. There is also the danger that in a group interview of people who participated in same social dreaming matrix social system dynamics may become operative in a way that participants respond unconsciously to resulting in them not able to express themselves freely.

An exploration of individual spontaneity in relationship to the social system entails finding out about how each person experiences the relationships within the system itself, so privacy and anonymity are useful in providing the right environment for this to occur. For this reason having an in-depth exploration of each individual's experience will result in a range of individualized personal experiences. These will reveal perhaps some themes but also individual factors that can help to expand understanding of what increases or restricts spontaneity within the matrix.

Alternatively, it is useful to interview several individuals from the same social dreaming venture at the same time, as a group interview can be very stimulating with each person motivated by another to add to their thoughts on a particular theme. This can give a spectrum of different experiences from different people in the one area.

The next section will present the specific details of the data gathering methods that are used for each research cohort in this study. Demographic data of the research participants will be presented. Detailed description will be given of how the data was gained from the participants in this research. The content of interviews and questionnaires will be presented. There are three research cohorts. The first is

participants of a weekly social dreaming matrix, the second is consultants of social dreaming matrices and the third is a group of Symposium attendees.

4.4 Details of research methods used

4.4.1 Participants of social dreaming matrices

There are four people interviewed. Two are men aged 44 and 50 and two are women aged 42 and 59. Occupations of interviewees include an Organizational Consultant, Chartered Accountant, Training and Development consultant and an Executive Director of a Human Service organisation.

The four interviewees were participants in the same social dreaming matrix that was held in 2000. This social dreaming matrix was conducted over a three month period. In this social dreaming matrix there was a one day introductory workshop, 10 early morning sessions and a half day workshop to conclude. It was a publicly advertised program but as it turned out all participants had some relationship with AISA (Australian Institute of Socio-Analysis), the sponsoring body for the program. The social dreaming matrix was held in the building of the office of AISA in Melbourne, Australia. Participants did not all know each other prior to the social dreaming experience, although some had worked with one of the consultants in other group relations programs. There were five people in the matrix and two consultants. One member chose not to take up the invitation to be involved in this research. I was one of the consultants to this matrix. The second consultant to the same matrix is interviewed about their experiences of being a matrix consultant. Each interviewee gives written informed consent for their participation in this study.

Individual semi-structured interviews are the method of data collection used with this group. The four participants this social dreaming matrix are interviewed individually. Each interview takes on average 1.5 hours. Open ended questions are used as well as probes for elaboration of responses. Each interview is tape recorded and then transcribed.

4.4.2 Spontaneity in Social Dreaming - semi-structured interview questions

The format for each of these social dreaming participant interviews is as follows:

Question 1: Demographics

- a) Age
- b) Professional background
- c) Current role

Question 2: Matrix logistics

- a) How many matrices have you participated in?
- b) What context were they in?
- c) What was the purpose of each matrix?
- d) What sort of people were in the matrices?
- e) What motivated you to participate in the matrix?

Question 3: Presenting dreams

- a) What was your experience in bringing dreams and presenting them in the matrix?
- b) What obstacles, if any, did you experience to being able to present your own dreams?
- c) What assisted you to present your dreams?

Question 4: Making associations

- a) What was your experience of making associations and connections to dreams presented in the matrix?
- b) What difficulties did you experience in associating to dreams in the matrix?
- c) What assisted you to freely associate to dreams presented in the matrix?
- d) What state of mind are you attempting to achieve when in a matrix?

Question 5: Matrix experiences

- a) What was different in your experience of being a group member to a matrix member?
- b) What is your experience of other matrix members during the matrix?
- c) Tell me about a good matrix experience and then a terrible one.

- d) What did you gain from being in the matrix? What were the three most important things for you?
- e) What learning have you gained from the matrix?
- f) How have you applied that learning?
- g) How has being a matrix member affected your creativity? e.g. writing, art, management

Question 6: Problems & recommendations

- a) What problems do you see in social dreaming?
- b) What do you think social dreaming needs to develop further?
- c) If you let your imagination go where do you think social dreaming could be used?
- d) Where do you think I should go from here?
- e) What do you think would be a good outcome from this research?

These open ended questions are used as the basis for the interview. During the interviews people give descriptions of their experiences of participating in a matrix. They describe thoughts, feelings and actions that occur as they get involved in the work of the matrix of presenting dreams and making associations and connections to these. Interviewees also describe their perceptions and experiences of other matrix members as they involve themselves in this work.

4.4.3 Disadvantages

One criticism that can be made of the analysis of the interviews is that it is not known at which point in the matrix process each person is describing their experience, so it is not possible to comment on or consider how the social system of the matrix at any one point is experienced by all members. It is not possible to compare and contrast their experiences of the same moment. Interviews are not set up to do this. However, this study is not aiming to demonstrate such phenomena but rather to explore whether and how each person's participation was affected by the social system of the same matrix.

4.4.4 Research methods used with consultants of social dreaming matrices

People who have been consultants to a number of different social dreaming matrices in different countries were identified through knowledge of their writing, conference

attendances and their professional relationships with the researcher and the research supervisor.

Three consultants were interviewed individually – two men and one woman. These face to face interviews used the same interview structure as that detailed earlier in this chapter for use with matrix participants. Three people were available in Melbourne for individual interviews about their consulting experiences with social dreaming. Each interview took about 1.5 hours and they were held in the interviewee's workplace. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. Professional backgrounds of interviewees are Director of AISA, a Corporate Mentor, Coach and Advisor and Social Scientist.

A number of people in different countries were sent email messages inviting them to participate in the study. Five people agreed to participate in the study and were sent email questionnaires. There are four men and one woman. The same questionnaire format was used as for individual interviews and written consent was also gained from participants.

The consultants are all from professional backgrounds related to the social sciences or psychologically oriented helping professions. These include clinical psychologist, organizational consultant, occupational therapist in children's mental health, social worker in physical rehabilitation; public health and administration of capacity building grants. All the email questionnaires were from consultants in countries outside of Australia including America and Europe.

4.4.5 Matrix logistics

The number of matrices that the eight people had worked with ranged from one to ten. The contexts within which the matrices were held are:

- Australian Institute of Socio-analysis (AISA) international group relations conferences
- AISA weekly matrix
- AISA socio-analytic fellowship program
- Public and private organisational consultancies
- Weekly seminar for managers/ doctoral students in a university

- “In-house” workshop for people working for the Social Democrats
- 3 day workshop for managers of a hospital and related services
- Weekly sessions in a university seminar
- William Alanson White Institute, New York
- Northern New York sponsored by the New York Centre of A.K. Rice
- Philadelphia sponsored by the Philadelphia Centre of A.K. Rice
- A group of French managers

One consultant describes how she decides intuitively to run a social dreaming matrix in the 3 day workshop she is consulting to after it has begun. She negotiates it by inviting people to participate in the matrix as a voluntary activity.

The countries within which the matrices are run include Australia, America, Germany, France, England and Austria. Matrix members consist of professionals, clinicians, conference delegates, university students and graduates, socioanalytic students and managers of private and public organisations, faculty of a psychoanalytic institute; others self selected from a wide variety of backgrounds.

4.4.6 Research methods used with Symposium attendees

The third research cohort consists of self selected participants at a socio-analytic symposium held in Tasmania. It was thought that this was a good opportunity to present an overview of social dreaming to a group of interested professional colleagues, invite them to experience one aspect of social dreaming and then share their reflections within the group. The purpose of the whole exercise and group interview is to identify factors that either enhanced or reduced participant’s spontaneity in making associations and connections to a dream. The group interview and the exercise itself are, of necessity, shortened versions due to program timetabling limitations. Nonetheless, it was thought the opportunity to explore this area with colleagues was too good to miss.

An overview of some of the different thoughts over the ages about dreams was presented with an image shown to represent each one. There was an outline given of the development of social dreaming. This was followed by a 10 minute experiential activity in which part of a dream was presented and people were invited to make

associations and connections. Then there was a 10 minute group interview during which participants were asked to respond to the following questions:

What enhanced your spontaneity in making associations and connections?

What reduced your spontaneity to making associations and connection?

The interviewer made notes during this interview and wrote up the experience immediately afterwards.

One limitation is that the dream presented did not come from the group itself. Due to time limitations the group interview commenced through the presentation of a dream that had been reported in one of the interviews of matrix members, also part of this study. As this person was motivated to offer the dream in the process of this research and was also an active member of the organization it was felt that this provided a link between the two methods of data collection. In retrospect it was probably not necessary to bring this dream as the people were highly motivated and willing to participate so that atmosphere of generosity would most likely have produced a dream fairly quickly.

Another limitation is that the group interview did not follow a full social dreaming matrix but rather a truncated version of one as the time was limited. However, it did provide the opportunity for participants to focus upon their spontaneity and communicate their reflections upon this.

An advantage of this group interview is that it is done straight after the experience under exploration. This means participants are able to describe their experience with it fresh in their minds. Having the group interview also means it is possible to get an overview of the range of experiences of people in the same matrix. A benefit of a group interview is that people can act as catalysts to each other through what is said. One response can generate a connection or memory in another person that may not have been triggered in a one to one interview. One point introduced by a person can elicit from others a range of different related experiences.

4.5 Summary

This chapter has given details of the research design and methods that are used in this study. The research design of this study is a series of different case studies (different matrices) together with a qualitative field study – where consultants from different matrices are interviewed.

The data gathering methods used in this study have been presented. These are individual and group interviews, email questionnaires, observations and work in the matrices. There is discussion of the advantages and limitations for the use of these methods in this study.

Details are presented of the interview and questionnaire formats used. The processes of data gathering are specified. Demographics are given of the three research cohorts used in this study.

The research data is gathered and then interpreted in relationship to the three hypotheses stated in Chapter 1. This research is not testing these hypotheses but rather describing, elaborating and extending them. The methods of data analysis and interpretation will be presented and discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Methodology - Methods of Data Analysis and Interpretation

5.1 Introduction

The primary task of social dreaming is for participants to share dreams and associations with each other. The effectiveness of social dreaming will be affected firstly by whether this is happening, and secondly how it is happening.

Social dreaming research that demonstrates the link between dreams and broader social systems has been done (Beradt, 1966; Eisold, 1998; Lawrence, 1998; Maltz and Walker, 1998; Oeser, 1998). In this study the aim is to explore the process of the social dreaming method rather than to validate it.

This chapter will present the methods of data analysis and interpretation that are used in this study. These include content and thematic analysis, focal conflict analysis (Whitaker and Lieberman, 1964) and role analysis (Clayton, 1994).

5.2 Data analysis methods

5.2.1 Content analysis

Content analysis is a method that has previously been used to study social dreaming. In this method documents or transcripts are reviewed so that themes, issues and recurring motifs within them can be isolated, counted and interpreted (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998, p.43). Content analysis is the method used by Charlotte Beradt (1966) in analyzing the dreams she collected. As mentioned in Chapter 3 Beradt's work was one of the catalysts for Gordon Lawrence in conceptualizing social dreaming in its modern day form. Beradt collected the dreams of individuals and then identified themes and recurring motifs that appear within them. She linked these themes and motifs to what they revealed about the experiences of people living in the fascist regime of Nazi Germany.

A disadvantage of this particular method is that the dreams are separated from the dreamers. This means while the study does demonstrate the link between the dreams and the broader system, neither the process of associations to the dreams and subsequent connections nor the identification of connections as they emerge from the

matrix of dreams and associations is considered. In this study content analysis will be used as one of the methods of data analysis of the consultants' and the group interviews. Themes and issues that arise will be identified and discussed.

In reading about qualitative research methods one message that comes across strongly is that there is no single right way to analyse qualitative data. Rather, it is essential to find ways of using the data for further thinking (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996; Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005; Mason, 1997).

As discussed previously in Chapter 3, the way that people choose dreams to offer is up to them. Similarly the timing of the sharing of a dream is up to each participant. Theoretically social dreaming is a democratic process in which each person is free to participate as and when they feel motivated. In these circumstances the spontaneity level of each person is a significant factor.

Two theoretical models are used to analyse and interpret the data. These are spontaneity theory, which includes role analysis (Clayton, 1994), and the focal conflict model (Whitaker and Lieberman 1964). They are used to analyse the interviews and observations. I am using spontaneity theory because it encapsulates the spirit of this study. I want to explore the relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system of a social dreaming matrix. Role analysis is a method of exploring spontaneity through analyzing the roles and role relationships of individuals. The use of this method enables systematic exploration of the relationship between individuals' spontaneity and the immediate social system. Once this is done I will discuss the findings in relationship to the development of the matrix of dreams and associations.

What experiences within social dreaming facilitate the expression of dreams and associations? What gets in the way? What is the nature of the social system that is functioning when people are motivated to present their dreams and associations? What social system is to the fore when people have difficulties in sharing their dreams and associations? In the data analysis these questions will be explored with the aim of discovering the roles and role relationships participants develop that enable them to present their dreams and associations as well as those that obstruct this process.

5.3 Spontaneity theory and role analysis

5.3.1 Spontaneity theory

Spontaneity theory was developed by J.L. Moreno, a Rumanian psychiatrist, who graduated from the University of Vienna in 1917. He conceptualizes spontaneity as an unlimited capacity within all human beings that is drawn upon to respond to life situations. He describes spontaneity as the means by which intelligence, insight and emotional enlightenment are mobilized by a person so that they can adequately meet the life situations they encounter (Moreno, 1946/1985, p.10). Spontaneity is defined by Moreno (1946/1985, p.X11) as a new response to an old situation or an adequate response to a new situation.

Moreno committed himself to exploring and extending the capacity of human beings to be spontaneous, and subsequently creative. He had a vision of a theatre in which the self of the actor and his/her spontaneous creativity had the first call and he consolidated this vision by building the Theatre of Spontaneity (Moreno, 1947/1983). Here he was able to do experimental research on spontaneity using inter-action diagrams and spontaneity scales. Moreno studied the ‘warming up’ process of actors and audiences and their ways of communicating in enactments that emerged from the concerns of those present rather than prewritten scripts. Originally he had hoped to develop this theatre to replace the traditional theatre but this did not eventuate, so he turned the focus of his work to the development of a therapeutic theatre where people enacted their life conflicts and difficulties to find new solutions.

Through testing hundreds of people Moreno (1946/1985) concluded that spontaneity in unknown situations was unpredictable. He noticed that the capacity for spontaneity varied from person to person and that this was not related to their level of intelligence. Furthermore while some people could be highly spontaneous within a specific area this did not mean that they were also highly spontaneous in other areas of their life.

Karp (1994) describes the core of Moreno’s work as ‘the release of spontaneity’ which she sees as the mulch or mixing ground of creative growth. Spontaneity is further described by Clayton (1989) as operating in the here and now as a catalyzer, therefore possessing no stable volume or quantity – it cannot be stored up. Daniel (1992)

stresses that in order for spontaneous forces to accomplish an adequate response to new situations handicaps and barriers must be overcome.

After more than 25 years of working with spontaneity theory Considine (2004) describes spontaneity as follows:

For me spontaneity is the urge to live – the spark inside which prompts us to move forward unconflicted and non-anxious. The prompt which urges us beyond the known!

Carter (1994) also aimed to build a working definition of spontaneity and chose to combine the elements of readiness and adequacy while also conveying a sense of vitality and freedom. He proposes the following definition of spontaneity:

Spontaneity is a readiness for a free and vital response to the emerging moment (Carter 1994, p.40).

5.3.2 Forms of Spontaneity

A common misperception held of spontaneity is that it involves a person running around mindlessly doing whatever they feel like doing in any given moment. This view is unfortunate and has probably given spontaneity theory a bad name. A spontaneous response is not mindless; in fact spontaneity is measured through the adequacy of response to the situation, which immediately rules out most of the eccentric, obscure responses wrongly attributed to spontaneity. Other forms of spontaneity identified by Moreno (1946/1985) include creativity, dramatic quality and originality. Creativity refers to the production of something new such as a new work of art or a new social environment and dramatic quality is the quality of response including newness in feelings, actions and in speaking (Karp, 1994). Dramatic quality and originality are similar to vitality described by Clayton (1989, p.67). He views vitality as the form of spontaneity that revitalizes cultural conserves and social stereotypes by giving newness and vivacity to feelings, actions and verbal content.

Spontaneity is described by Moreno (1946/1985, p.68) as the factor which enables mastery over both reality and fantasy and for a rapid shifting between the two.

Inability to access this form of spontaneity results in a person being trapped either in the mundane world or a fantasy world.

The term 'warm up' is used to describe the process that a person goes through within themselves in preparation for enactment of a role. An example of this is in sport where a person goes through specific activities, both mental and physical, to be fully prepared to perform at their best. Warm up ranges from low, through to high and overheated. When warm up is low a person does not mobilize the range of thoughts, feelings and actions that are most effective in a situation. Clayton (1989) describes a spontaneity state as when a person is able to warm up fully to a particular moment in a particular situation. An increase in warm up and subsequent spontaneity can contribute to new ways of seeing things and solving problems (Mapel, 2000, p.5). If a warm up is overheated there may be an overemphasis on one aspect of functioning at the expense of others. For example, the emotional aspect of functioning may be overemphasized in which case thinking may be low and action precipitous.

Warm up is affected by a number of things. The current social system will influence the range of roles that a person is able to warm up to. A person's family of origin may contribute significantly to their warm up to a present situation. Past experiences may influence them to warm up in a particular way. An example of this is the repeated experience of failure or criticism when confronting difficulties. This may cause a person to warm up to thinking, feeling and acting ineffectually when an obstacle appears in a new situation. Sprague (1994, p.18) describes warm-up as:

The 'operational' expression of spontaneity. Cultural conserve is the end result of the creative act, including of course ourselves, or it can be a book, a painting, a loaf of good bread. All, given time, becomes worn, outdated or stale. Conversely, each also has the possibility of being the stimulus for new creativity.

As mentioned previously there is a direct correlation between levels of spontaneity and levels of anxiety. When anxiety is high then spontaneity is low. When spontaneity is high then anxiety is low (Franklin, 1999; Goldman and Morrison, 1984; Karp, 1994; Williams, 1989).

Lack of spontaneity in adults generates anxiety; as spontaneity increases anxiety diminishes; the person not only adapts to new situations but responds constructively to them. He or she not only meets new situations but creates them (Williams 1989, p.12).

Spontaneity is seen to have direct effects in the body (Karp, 1994; Knottenbelt, 2001). Karp (1994) notes that the life energy that is created during the force of the spontaneous act can alter the mind/body state. When thinking about spontaneity in terms of the body Knottenbelt (2001) suggests that we might conceive of it as the ability to free ourselves from the domination of fixed habits such as conserved ways of moving and using our bodies.

5.3.3 Role Theory

Role theory is central to the concept of spontaneity. Here the term 'role theory' refers to the body of knowledge associated with the interactive functioning of human beings (Clayton, 1994, p.122). A role is defined by Moreno (1946/1985, p.iv) as the functioning form taken by a person in the specific moment they respond to a specific situation in which other persons or objects are involved. A role consists of three elements – thinking, feeling and action. Roles can be in various stages of development in a person. They may be overdeveloped, absent, embryonic or developed.

Role theory is an optimistic and growthful approach to human development. At any point in their lives human beings are perceived as being capable of developing new roles that can assist them in leading more satisfying lives. It is possible to create new responses to overcome old problems.

The term role has a different meaning than that used in everyday conversations where role is commonly used to describe a particular job or set of specific tasks taken up by a person, e.g. nurse, magistrate, team leader. These are social roles. Moreno (1946/1985) nominated 3 types of roles – psychosomatic, social and psychodramatic. Psychosomatic roles are the first roles that develop when a baby is born such as 'the Eater' and 'the Sleeper'. Such roles are physiologically based and essential for life. Social roles are those that represent ways of being within a particular culture that develop according to family and institutional expectations e.g. mother, nurse, fireman.

Psychodramatic roles are the personal roles in which life is breathed into a more formal role from the unique expression of each person.

A clear differentiation between social and psychodramatic roles is given as follows:

Where social roles tend to be permanent or stable for some time, a psychodramatic role will belong to a specific situation, a moment, a particular set of circumstances...the more developed one's capacity for spontaneity the broader will be the repertoire of psychodramatic role...the social roles are on the whole, externally determined...the psychodramatic roles are on the whole internally determined (Hastings 1998, p.11).

An example of a psychodramatic role is the 'Lone Warrior' which McVea (1997, p.8) identified from her one-to-one work with a person who had been sexually and emotionally abused. This role describes a focus on self-sufficiency, a disregard for emotional pain and the avoidance of intimate relationships as a way of coping with a hostile world. As can be seen in the role of the Lone Warrior the way that a role is lived out by a person is influenced by a particular vision of how life works (Clayton, 1994, p.124).

Other examples of psychodramatic roles are identified by Keam (2003) in her analysis of a 12-year-old boy with whom she was working. These are 'Responsible Problem Solver', 'Creative Poet', 'Self-healing Pilgrim' and 'Insolent Slouch'. By focusing upon the psychodramatic roles brought to the classroom by students in a mental health course Cowan (2000) experienced increased understanding of their functioning as students and mental health workers. She found that this greater appreciation of their experiences and abilities increased a sense of working effectively with them.

5.4 Role analysis

At any point in a person's life they have a range of roles in various stages of development. These includes absent, embryonic, developing, developed and overdeveloped. The analysis of roles leads to understanding of a person's level of spontaneity. Making a role description such as the Lone Warrior is the first step in making a role analysis. Once role descriptions are made they are analysed into one of three categories. These are progressive, coping and fragmenting (Clayton, 1993).

5.4.1 Progressive roles

Human beings consistently demonstrate a desire to improve, modify or renew their existence within the world. There is an inner drive that is shown through the products of all areas of human creativity – technology where communication occurs through the touch of a keypad; artistic endeavours through which incredible works of beauty in art, music or building have been created. This desire to move forward is encapsulated in the concept of progressive roles. A progressive role is one in which a person warms up to an activity or area of development that takes them forward in their lives. They experience a sense of achievement as they extend their abilities and competency in the world and build or complete a vision. Turner (2002, p.32) suggests that progressive role development occurs when a person's life conditions have been 'favourable enough'. She identifies adequate parenting as significant in this. If an existential crisis occurs before the progressive role system has been consolidated, the person will experience difficulty in responding to any situation that threatens their sense of self because they will warm up to coping and fragmenting roles (Turner 2002).

Progressive roles represent a motivating force that propels a person forward. A motivating force may be something such as wanting to be happy or to contribute in a meaningful way to the building of a community. A role such as 'Joyful Lover of Life' would assist a person in achieving this desire. When a person warms up to a progressive role they have a view of the world and how life works that is consistent with a motivating force. For example, a person approaches a group of students with the vision that there can be respectful, co-operative relationships in the group and meaningful learning may occur. When they are able to maintain a connection with this vision their warm up to managing the challenges effectively will be enhanced. They will be motivated to work with the challenges of creating this perspective with focused objectives and thoughtful aims. As inevitable difficulties arise the motivation connected to this orienting vision or world view is significant. When it is able to be maintained by the person they are more likely to sustain a connection with their flexibility, humour and intelligence. This strengthens warm up to progressive roles. When a person warms up to progressive roles they are more likely to use all their abilities effectively. The experience of a progressive motivating element is described by Clayton (1989 p.59) as also being accompanied by a reactive, fragmenting element

at work. When these fragmenting forces emerge a person experiences a range of fears and anxieties. These forces can then contribute towards warming up to coping and fragmenting roles.

5.4.2 Coping roles

When a person is warmed up to coping roles they are often attempting to deal with anxiety-provoking situations. When experiencing threat or attack within an interpersonal situation, a person may be warming up to coping roles. Examples of this include physical threats such as physical assault or psychological attacks such as being verbally undermined or criticized. Threats to self-esteem can also catapult a person into the world of coping. Responses become oriented toward reducing the threat and anxiety. Coping roles are described by Turner (2002, p.33) as being primary in re-establishing equilibrium and creating some degree of personal organization and self-management.

Clayton (1975) outlines the work of Horney, who conceptualizes disturbed human relations as causing people to activate 'safety operations' that she calls neurotic trends. Three neurotic trends are identified by Horney - moving towards, moving against and moving away (Horney 1945, cited by Clayton, 1975, p.12). Each of these trends overemphasizes one of the basic elements in anxiety – moving towards (helplessness), moving against (hostility) and moving away (isolation). These responses emerge initially when the child feels anxious in relation to their parent's indifference, inconsistency and interference (Horney 1950 cited by McVea, 1997, p.7). These coping responses are linked with a particular view of the world. This is that the world is a dangerous place in which the following three solutions work best:

- i) to be compliant, if you love me you will not hurt me;
- ii) if I am powerful you can't hurt me so I'll be aggressive;
- iii) if I withdraw nothing can reach me to hurt me so I will withdraw.

(Horney 1950 cited by McVea, 1997, p.8)

Everyone, to some degree, uses one of more of these 'neurotic trends' in response to the anxieties of everyday living. Some people overuse them resulting in rigidity within their personality. Neurotic trends have subsequently been adopted for use in role

theory to describe the three types of coping roles that a person can mobilize in response to anxiety-provoking situations.

In coping, the thoughts, feelings and actions of a person are oriented to protect themselves. However, coping roles can lead, in turn, to the enactment of either progressive or fragmenting roles. For example after experiencing and reflecting on a conflict situation, a person may warm up to an effective new response. Or they may warm up to a fragmenting role, as after withdrawing they become filled with even higher levels of anxiety. This then causes panic and subsequent inner disorganization as seen in the enactment of fragmenting roles.

5.4.3 Fragmenting roles

When a person is unable to mobilize coping roles and experiences extreme feelings of isolation, disintegration and helplessness, they are warming up to fragmenting roles (Turner, 2002, p.33). The sense of being out of touch with oneself and with others is given as an example by Clayton (1993, p.30) of evidence of fragmenting roles that are old, familiar and repetitive. While coping roles assist a person to maintain the status quo, fragmenting roles cause a person to regress. Reactive, fragmenting elements are described by Clayton (1992, p.59) as a normal reaction to the motivating, progressive elements that propel a person to move forward. It is when these reactive forces are predominating that a person warms up to fragmenting roles.

Some of the major mental disorders can cause people to warm up to fragmenting roles. For example, a person with severe depression sits alone at home in the middle of winter with the heater off because they believe they cannot afford to pay the bill. They do not contact their family or friends or go out. When a family member visits and wants to take them to a doctor they refuse to go as they do not think they are worthy of receiving help and have no money to pay for treatment (despite bank statements to the contrary). Their world view will probably be diagnosed as being delusional (having fixed, false beliefs that cannot be changed by rational argument) and it clearly has a regressive effect upon the person's day to day functioning.

A person with an anxiety disorder who is experiencing dissociation is out of touch with their body and their own experience. Extreme levels of anxiety have a

fragmenting effect upon this person's functioning. They are unable to organize themselves effectively to complete activities of daily living. A person with a psychotic illness who is out of touch with reality becomes distracted by such phenomena as hearing voices. The consequence is that they are unable to speak or act in an organized or coherent way.

Turner (2002, p.33) suggests that when a person warms up to a fragmenting role system they are oriented to the roles of the 'Distressed Child' and the pathological counter roles of the adult. An example of this is given by Porter (2001, p.8) in her work as Deputy Principal of an intermediate school in New Zealand. She identifies the psychodramatic role of 'Despairing, Paralysed Learner' in a boy who is acutely aware of his inability to do the work others could do easily. This role forms part of a fragmenting system that the boy warms up to when he is at school.

The level of spontaneity of a person is revealed by the type of role that they warm up to in a situation. The relationship between the type of role and the nature of the situation in which it is enacted also gives an indication of a person's level of spontaneity. In this study the spontaneity level of both consultants and participants is explored through identifying the roles that they warm up to in a social dreaming matrix.

The roles and role relationships that a person warms up to in the social dreaming process illuminate the developing social system. Role analysis is a way of identifying the roles and role relationships and thereby exploring the social system within a matrix. The immediate social system of a matrix is both part of a broader social system and in itself a functioning social system.

Roles are identified through the development of a role description. These roles are interpreted from what the participants in this research say in their interviews and questionnaires. The three elements of a role are thoughts, feelings and actions. For example, when a participant describes their motivation to attend the social dreaming matrix a particular set of thoughts, feelings and actions are evident. A role description is created from these. The 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' is an example of this. The person describes being strongly motivated to contribute their dreams and

associations as fully as they can and they expect this will occur in the social dreaming matrix.

When a new or different response is described a new role description is made. For example, the participant mentioned above describes changes in feelings, thoughts and actions as the matrix proceeds. They no longer enact the role of 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' but instead describe another set of thoughts, feelings and actions. These are that they do not want to share their dreams and do not feel connected to other participants. From the description of this new experience the role description of 'Withholding Isolate' is made. It is acknowledged that there is a strong level of subjectivity on my part in creating these roles from the data. However the roles that are 'created' from the data and given names to are strong interpretations of the data because you see them repeated in patterns throughout the data.

In the data analysis, quotes from the interviews will be included alongside the role descriptions to indicate to the reader how they were arrived at. This provides face value and gives the reader the opportunity to make their own assessment of the validity of the role description provided.

The spontaneity of a person is not defined by one particular expected response in any given situation, but through identifying the role that the person actually warms up to and assessing the degree of adequacy or novelty in relationship to the situation. Adequacy implies that there is some level of effectiveness in the response.

5.4.4 Discussion on adequacy

In the literature reviewed here many people use the term 'adequate' within the context of defining and assessing spontaneity. It figures largely in Moreno's original definition of spontaneity as stated earlier – a new response to an old situation or an adequate response to a new situation (Moreno, 1946/1985). Moreno and others have included a number of other forms that spontaneity takes as well as adequacy and these have been mentioned earlier in this chapter. Very little has been written about how the conclusion is reached that a response is adequate. I found this quite interesting as adequate could be considered a fairly subjective term. The term is used as though the meaning is self evident. However, it isn't to me and may be a point of question for

others also. In response to this I have decided to explore the term in the context of spontaneity theory. What is adequate? What I would consider an adequate response may be different to what another person may consider adequate. The other person in a situation with me may find a response I make inadequate, while I feel pretty good about it. This section will discuss the term adequate and some of the factors that can be considered when arriving at the conclusion that a response is adequate. This will lead in to a discussion of adequate responses and spontaneity in the context of social dreaming.

The term adequate is defined by the Concise Oxford Dictionary as proportionate to the requirements, sufficient, satisfactory (1978, p.13). In relation to spontaneity, Clayton (1989, p.67) describes adequacy as adaptive, mobile and flexible ability of the self. He emphasizes the importance of adequacy in assisting in the building up of a working and creative society.

An adequate response then can be seen as one that is sufficient in meeting the requirements of the situation. The context of the situation itself then becomes one of the factors in determining whether the response is adequate. What are the requirements of a particular situation? How can it be assessed that responses are adequate thus indicating spontaneity is being activated? I believe this can be answered by exploring the range of situations experienced by participants and identifying the roles they warm up to. Spontaneity can then be assessed.

When working with role play Corsini (1966, p.14) indicates that the level of satisfaction experienced by the person, who enacts a situation, and the observers, is evidence of responding appropriately. With regard to running a supervision group Considine (2001, p.47) emphasizes that conducting a role analysis in a group provides opportunities for a person to reflect on the dynamics in which they are involved, to become more conscious and to develop a more adequate warm up.

Nonetheless, the assessment of adequacy leaves some flexibility and in research an element of subjectivity enters. This is unavoidable.

5.5 Role descriptions

Role descriptions are a way of identifying a person's functioning at a particular time in relationship to other people with whom they are interacting. When making a role description, attempts are made to include all aspects of a role – thoughts, feelings and actions.

When a role description is made there is an attempt to capture the essence of a person's response through using accurate descriptors. When working with an individual or a group, a role analysis can be made after experience or enactment of a situation and discussed with the person or people as to whether it fits for them. The role descriptions can be modified until there is agreement that they do portray the person's experience accurately. In this research, analysis quotes have been included alongside the role description so the reader can see for themselves how the role descriptions were made and then be able to make up their own minds as to the fit. The assessment is made at face value.

The transcripts of the interviews of matrix members have been reviewed with the aim of creating role descriptions that reveal the person's experience of the social dreaming matrix. These roles have then been categorised into central roles and roles clusters. These role clusters are then categorised into progressive, coping and fragmenting role systems. Making role descriptions and analysing these gives an overview of the responses that participants have to each other.

A benefit of describing the roles and role relationships is that they assist in revealing the nature of the social system that is developing or has developed. The spontaneity of an individual can have an impact upon other people's spontaneity which will affect the roles and role relationships that develop. These can then influence the nature of the social system in a matrix. For example, on the one hand if a person is highly motivated to present their dreams and they do so with vitality and enthusiasm this can then assist other people to warm up to their own vitality and enthusiasm in making associations to the dreams. On the other hand, the social system itself can impact on the individual's level of spontaneity and this will then affect their level of participation. For example, if initial role relationships are strained and there is an

absence of trust between people they may warm up to coping and fragmenting roles that cause them to be constrained in their sharing of dreams and associations.

5.6 Spontaneity and social dreaming

In this section there will be a discussion of the forms of spontaneity in relationship to social dreaming. The first area of focus is adequacy.

5.6.1 Requirements of participants in social dreaming

What are the requirements of participants in social dreaming? The work is stated as being that people share their dreams and associations with each other. This is the basic requirement of the situation. If people do not do share dreams and associations there is no basis for connections to be made. Then, the way people go about sharing their dreams and associations has an impact on what is made available for the drawing of connections. For example, if a person edits their dream through embarrassment, they are meeting their personal requirements for safety. If a person withholds associations because they feel negative toward the person relating a dream, then they are responding to the interpersonal dynamics rather than the primary task of social dreaming.

5.6.2 Challenges to spontaneity in social dreaming

What does the literature say about the effect of experiences within a matrix on participants and their participation? It says very little. This will be explored and discussed in relationship to spontaneity.

Ross (1994) writes of her experiences of a weekly social dreaming matrix in Australia in which she and Alistair Bain are the consultants. Her observations and reflections are based on a period of three years including around 70 sessions plus five single days of social dreaming and related experiential activities. Ross identifies three themes that impact upon participation in social dreaming. These are dream ownership, dream cast and role.

Dream ownership includes viewing dreams as personal property, fears that dreams are not socially important enough and that one's individual unconscious is being talked about when associations were made. There is debate about whether a dream belongs

in social dreaming or in personal therapy as is discussed in Chapter 4. Dream cast and role refers to how people feel about dreaming about each other. In the early stages of the matrix people rarely dream about each other. As time passes, participants dream about each other, the consultants and the matrix itself.

Ross (1994) identifies phenomena that are disturbing to matrix participants. These are twin dreams, double dose and telepathic dreams. In twin dreams, two people dream about travelling to the same place. Double dose is when one matrix participant has a dream that is characterized by an intense emotion. The emotion is of such intensity that it is assumed that it is a double dose experienced by one participant on behalf of all. Telepathic dreams include dreaming about people or situations before they are encountered by participants. One example of this is where a new person is going to join the matrix and a participant dreams about her exact physical appearance before meeting her. Another example is where a matrix participant dreams about a situation that a consultant encountered the previous day. Ross thinks this is evidence of Freud's statement that 'sleep creates favourable conditions for telepathy'. Of course, these experiences have not been subjected to rigorous scientific research and there is no evidence in her account as to whether or not such 'telepathic dreams' are responses to cues picked up by the dreamers in their waking lives. Nonetheless, we can agree with Ross when she observes that matrix participation involves unusual, exciting and sometimes frightening experiences for people and expresses the belief that consultant and participants relationships are worked out at the dream level (1994, p.11). She also wonders if a bigger container is needed when the phenomena in the matrix seem overwhelming to participants.

These observations by Ross indicate that the experiences of the social dreaming matrix impact upon the spontaneity of participants. When there is anxiety about having one's 'personal' unconscious interpreted by others, people warm up to a limited range of roles characterized by rigidity, fear and a safety orientation. The need to control one's own and others contributions is high. When people view each other with suspicion they warm up to coping roles of moving away and moving against. When they warm up to fears of intrusion into their individual unconscious they are reluctant to share dreams.

This is reflected in the nature of the social system that developed. As participants developed a broader range of role relationships and the immediate social system of the matrix became less restrictive, then a wide range of dreams, associations and connections emerged. This was evident when connections such as dream telepathy, twin dreams and double doses emerged. Levels of anxiety rose and fell during these times. Levels of intimacy increased.

The idea of a progressive social system enhancing spontaneity can also be seen in an observation by Osborne (1993) that there is a correlation between frequency, richness and recall of dreams when the matrix is effective compared with when it is not. This supports the idea that the matrix is sometimes ineffective and when it is people do not share their dreams. This area will be discussed in some detail in the analysis of the consultants' interviews where they are asked specifically about how they know when a matrix is working and when it isn't.

There could be many reasons for this. One that Osborne (1993) suggests is presence. He chose the notion of presence to describe his experience of surprise, wonder and awe at dream images in the time while waiting for connections to emerge. Osborne finds that when he is able to maintain a sense of presence he experiences a state of mind that appears in tune with other participants who are also present at that moment. He identifies anxiety as a distraction from presence.

This study enters into exploration of the relationship between the immediate social system and the developing matrix of dreams and associations. It is hypothesized that there is a two way relationship in which both the immediate social system and the sharing of dreams and associations that contribute to the developing matrix can have a progressive or restrictive effect upon each other. This then impacts upon the learning made available through the social dreaming matrix on the broader social system.

Learning that is revealed about the social system is directly related to the people who are part of it. They make up the social system, whether it is the immediate social system of the matrix or the broader social system. The dreams are a form of communication but they are about people and life. Dreams may be active in the sense that they tune in with knowledge at many levels but they are passive when it comes to doing anything about it. They do not actively change relationships between people.

Some action is necessary by the people to make the learning meaningful and applicable to living in the social system.

5.6.3 Link between themes from literature review and research into social dreaming

There is some correlation between the themes that emerged in Chapter 2 in the discussion of how dreams can assist people in building their communities over time and the themes that have emerged in experiences of social dreaming.

These include:

- building better relationships within the community;
- creating workable visions for the future;
- predicting the future;
- connecting with evolution of human beings and generations past (collective unconscious);
- learning about aspects of the social system that were out of awareness;
- desire to connect with each other in a deep way that bypasses social conserves (intimacy).

5.6.4 Advantages of using role analysis

There are several noted advantages in using role analysis:

- the range of different responses described by the interviewee can be identified through role descriptions;
- role descriptions are made from each person's experience as they describe it rather than getting their experience to fit a predetermined framework;
- the identification of the roles and role relationships provide a means through which to explore the social system of a matrix;
- through analyzing the roles into progressive, fragmenting and coping it is possible to draw some conclusions about levels of spontaneity within the matrix.

5.6.5 Disadvantages of using role analysis

There are also noted disadvantages in using role analysis:

- as the role descriptions in this research are derived from the interview transcripts rather than a living situation some aspects of the quality of the role may not have been captured;
- the transcripts from the interviews used for role analysis are made after the experience so peoples memory of events may be limited in terms of accuracy;
- there is a level of subjectivity in the researcher who develops the role analysis and resonance is not checked out with the interviewees.

5.6.6 Social system

The roles and role relationships that people enact within a social dreaming matrix contribute to a developing social system. **The hypothesis is that the relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system of a matrix has an impact upon the effectiveness of social dreaming method.** How this will be done is to explore the roles and role relationships that develop within a matrix as a means to analyse the resulting social system. The work of this thesis is to explore in some depth the social system development within a social dreaming matrix, including the roles and role relationships, and to discuss the impact this has upon the effectiveness of the social dreaming method. The theoretical models used for analysis are spontaneity theory and role analysis.

In a social dreaming session the sharing of each dream provides a new situation or stimulus for participants thereby presenting an immediate challenge to – or opportunity for the expression of spontaneity. Social dreaming has the potential to always surprise because of the nature of dreams being often unusual and unexpected. For the dreamer the associations also have the potential to surprise or threaten their spontaneity. From the myriad of responses that each dream provokes, connections are made. Without an adequate level of spontaneity, it is hypothesized that people will draw upon roles that may have served them well in the past in other situations but do not really meet the demands of this new situation.

5.7 Focal conflict model

The focal conflict model was developed by Whitaker and Lieberman (1964, p.vii) as a way of looking at groups that aims to take into account their diversity, complexity and

fluidity. Their purpose was to develop an in-depth means to attend to both the overt events and behaviours of group members and the covert aspects and motivations underlying these. They aim to include a focus on the cognitive processes as well as the intense affect generated within group situations.

5.7.1 Work contributing to development of the focal conflict model

Whitaker and Lieberman (1964, p.ix) were influenced in their development of the focal conflict model by the work of W.R. Bion and Thomas French.

Bion's series of papers, "Experiences of Groups", suggested ways of conceptualizing group events in terms of shared covert needs and motivations and emphasized the importance of both cognitive and emotional aspects of group functioning. French's concept of the "focal conflict", developed for application to individual psychoanalytic sessions and dreams, suggested a theoretical approach to groups which could do justice to the varied aspects of the situation and yet organize and conceptualize group events in concise terms. The approach originally inspired by French has been extended and developed in some detail and now forms the core of our view of the group psychological process (Whitaker and Lieberman, 1964, p.ix).

The focal conflict model focuses upon the group-level processes where interactions are studied for what they reveal about the group as a whole. Whitaker and Lieberman (1964) explain how this differs from theories of groups which focus on the individual patient as adapted from models of the psychoanalytic process (Slavson, Locke, Wolf and Schwartz) and interpersonal relationships in the group (Berne, Leary and Frank). Whitaker and Lieberman (1964, p.242) align their work with theorists including Bion, Foulkes and Ezriel who emphasize characteristics of a group as a whole.

5.7.2 Overview of the focal conflict model

The focal conflict model is conceptualized by Whitaker and Liebermann (1964, p.19) as follows. Two forces are present in group situations. These forces are in opposition to each other. One force is the disturbing motive and consists of an impulse or wish that is experienced by the members of a group. A second force emerges in reaction to this disturbing motive and is in opposition to it. This force is called the reactive motive and consists of the fears that arise in reaction to the disturbing motive. The focal conflict is the tensions between these two forces.

Group members direct their energy towards addressing this conflict. There are two ways in which this is done. One is to try and reduce anxieties and fears experienced in reaction to the disturbing motive. Responses that are mainly oriented toward achieving this are called restrictive solutions. Restrictive solutions do not enable expression of the disturbing motive and do not succeed in reducing the conflict. The other kinds of responses are those in which efforts are directed towards expression and achieving the disturbing motive. At the same time there is some effort to take into account the reactive forces. These are called enabling solutions. In any group situation both enabling and restrictive solutions are used at various times in response to the focal conflict.

Some examples of focal conflicts and solutions enacted are given by Cooke (2002, p.7-8) from her work with a group of people at a community mental health centre.

- Session One – Disturbing motive – the desire to live fully
Reactive fear – fear of continuous struggle and deprivation
Solution – restrictive – the group was divided and one member scapegoated
- Session Two – Disturbing motive – desire for connection with others
Reactive fear – fear that life will always be lived in isolation
Solution – restrictive – evident in withdrawal, frustration and judgment of others

As can be seen from this analysis there may be a series of focal conflicts that arise around a similar theme. Whitaker and Lieberman (1964) note that when one theme is addressed with the enactment of enabling solutions then the group moves on to another theme. This is shown in the next 2 sessions that were analysed by Cooke (2002, p.8):

- Session Three – Disturbing motive – desire to connect with others
Reactive Fear – fear of revealing the self, looking stupid
Solution – enabling – group members risked experimentation
- Session Four – Disturbing motive – desire to confront life's difficulties in the group
Reactive fear – fear of being stuck, looking stupid
Solution – enabling – differences tolerated, links made

When a solution is enacted and accepted within a group it becomes part of a group norm until such time as it is replaced or challenged. For example, if a group is motivated to learn about their broader social system by sharing their dreams and a reactive fear of being shamed predominates then people may censor dreams of the bits that they feel embarrassed about. If the whole group accepts this solution and everybody then proceeds to censor their dreams a restrictive solution has become a part of the social system. If a person connects with their desire to learn and they share their dream with the group without censoring it they are enacting an enabling solution. If other group members then build up their confidence to share dreams as they were dreamt then the disturbing motive is being expressed.

When Whitaker and Liebermann developed the focal conflict model they saw the disturbing and reactive forces as being largely unconscious within a group. They perceived the group situation to be constantly shifting, yet they believed that the continuous movement that could be observed did not occur haphazardly. The focal conflict model is an attempt to map this movement in a meaningful way (Whitaker and Lieberman, 1964).

5.7.3 Rationale for using the focal conflict model in this study

The focal conflict model values the experience and behaviour of individuals and views them as emerging in response to the different forces that are emerging within the group. The focus is on the individual in relationship to the system of the group and not on the individual in terms of what their experience and behaviour says about their particular intra-psychic makeup. The focal conflict model emphasizes the relationship between the individual and the group. It has a systems view of people. All of these things make the focal conflict model relevant for a study of social dreaming.

In social dreaming method it is argued here that the matrix emerges from the roles and role relationships that are enacted by participants of social dreaming. These emerge from the broader social system within which the dreams are dreamt. In order to study the immediate social system of the matrix a method is needed that acknowledges and values the experiences of the individual but does so in relationship to other parts of the social dreaming system - other social dreaming participants as in the immediate social system of the matrix, the matrix of dreams, associations and connections and the

broader social system itself. The experiences of the individual are not the focus. This is similar to the process of social dreaming in which the individual and their dreams are crucial but as the means to access learning about the social system rather than learning about the individual themselves.

5.7.4 Focal conflict model and spontaneity theory

The focal conflict model and spontaneity theory are complementary. Both offer a means to explore the experiences and responses of an individual in relationship to the system of the group. The individual is not viewed in isolation from the group. The focal conflict model conceptualizes individual responses in relationship to the whole group and spontaneity theory measures responses as roles and role relationships. The study of roles reveals the spontaneity of an individual and the study of role relationships reveals the developing social system of a group such as whether it is progressive or restrictive. These concepts link in closely to those of the focal conflict model. Enabling solutions would be expressed through the enactment of progressive roles. Restrictive solutions which aim to reduce fears can be seen in the enactment of coping roles that are oriented to coping with anxiety. Fragmenting roles are enacted when a person is overwhelmed by the fears and therefore unable to address the motivating forces or to alleviate their anxieties.

There are similarities between the focal conflict model and spontaneity theory. In the focal conflict model the two forces within a group are conceptualized as the disturbing and reactive motives. In spontaneity theory Clayton conceptualizes the forces experienced within an individual that influence spontaneity as motivating and reactive forces.

So a study of the system of a group through identifying the roles and role relationships is one way of assessing the social system. It is necessary to identify the roles of the individual, but the focus is not on the individual. The focus is upon their spontaneity in relationship to the immediate social system that develops within a social dreaming matrix. This is similar to the concept of social dreaming where the person needs to have and share their dream, but they are not the focus. This methodology has been developed to try and maintain congruence with the method itself. The focal conflict values the responses of the individual group members but does not focus exclusively

upon them. It is not a method aimed at gaining learning about the individual but rather at gaining learning about people in relationship to each other. Both the focal conflict model and spontaneity theory do this.

Whitaker and Lieberman developed the focal conflict model initially from their work with therapy groups and then with their later work with task and training groups. They suggest that this model also has relevance for other types of groups. Whatever is said in the group is seen as being elicited not only by the strictly internal concerns of the individual, but by the interpersonal situation in which he finds himself (Clayton, 1992).

5.7.5 Disadvantages of this methodology

A drawback of the way that the data has been collected in this research is that it is not possible to explore the focal conflicts and solutions generated over a number of consecutive sessions to see the relationship between them. Rather, the interview method explores the interviewees' reflections on such processes. The idea of disturbing motives fits with the desire of people to work with their dreams to build their communities. The idea of reactive forces fits with the difficulties that emerge whenever a group of people are entering into the unknown.

5.7.6 Focal conflict model and social dreaming

Both the focal conflict model and role theory aim to capture a holistic view of human functioning by including what is said, done and felt. In role theory the aim is to identify the thinking, feeling and actions of a person's functioning through the identification of particular roles and role relationships that are enacted. A role does not occur in isolation but in response to an interpersonal situation. Similarly Whitaker and Lieberman aim to include the affect as well as the cognitive aspects of interpersonal functioning of people in a group situation. Whitaker and Lieberman highlight exploration of the covert as well as the overt aspects of peoples functioning in groups.

The focal conflict model also aims to attend to the individual in the group and to the group as the context for personal experience and change (Whitaker and Lieberman, 1964, p.vii) i.e. not the individual or the group in isolation.

There are some similarities to the process of a focal conflict unfolding and that of social dreaming method. Clayton (1989) describes the development of a focal conflict as follows. In a group setting a person makes a comment that is elicited by the character of the particular situation. This comment has a number of elements to which other group members respond selectively. Some aspects will be ignored and some taken up. The things that are taken up are built upon and gradually become an emerging shared concern.

In social dreaming a dream is shared that has a number of elements. People make associations to these that pick up some aspects of a dream and ignore others. As more dreams and associations are made these are built into connections.

5.7.7 Summary of the focal conflict model and spontaneity theory

Both theories are developed from a systems perspective. Both identify a motivating force that is met by an opposing force. In focal conflict theory the disturbing motive is met by the reactive motives. In spontaneity theory the motivation to create and progress is reduced by the emergence of anxiety. The focal conflict model was developed within the field of psychoanalysis and spontaneity theory within the humanistic tradition. Both methods value the emotional aspects of a person's experience.

The responses to the opposing forces are categorized differently. Restrictive and enabling solutions are generated in response to the focal conflict. In spontaneity theory people warm up to progressive, coping and fragmenting roles. Progressive roles are most closely aligned with enabling solutions and coping roles with restrictive solutions. Fragmenting roles indicate an inability to deal with either the motivating or reactive forces.

Both focal conflict and spontaneity theory conceptualize the individual in relationship to the group. Focal conflict focuses on the group processes and sees the individuals as responding to those. Solutions are generated in response to the group focal conflict although they may trigger nuclear conflicts for an individual. Spontaneity theory focuses on the roles and role relationships that depict the developing social system.

This can be progressive or restrictive depending on the types of roles and role relationships that people warm up to.

Both models conceptualize groups as being in a constant state of flux with some forces in the foreground at some times and some in the background. In focal conflict this may be when enabling solutions are in the foreground and restrictive solutions in the background. In spontaneity theory coping roles may be in the foreground and progressive roles in the background. There is recognition that there will be movement between the different forces at different times

5.8 Summary

In this chapter the methods of data analysis and interpretation are presented. Data analysis methods used in this study are qualitative and include thematic analysis, role analysis and interpretive analysis. The interpretive analysis uses spontaneity and role theory. There is detailed description given of these theories and how they will be used to interpret the data. The data analysis and interpretation is now presented in the next two chapters.

Chapter 6: Data Analysis and Interpretation of Participants' Interviews

6.1 Introduction

The hypotheses that are being tested in this study are derived from the writer's experiences of social dreaming and the literature. This chapter will present the data analysis and interpretation from the interview transcripts of four participants of the same social dreaming matrix. The interview questionnaire used is in Appendix A.

The data is analysed in three sections. These are 1) organization of the data 2) analysis and 3) interpretation.

The three hypotheses are:

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 (and consultants have secondary tasks that require a range of progressive roles);

Hypothesis 3: If reactive forces predominate in the immediate social system it becomes restrictive and the spontaneity of participants is reduced (and work on the task is affected).

There are three central roles that emerge from the participants' data analysis. These are 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life', 'Withholding Isolate' and 'Astute Systems Analyst'. Each of these central roles has a number of other roles that cluster around them and these are identified as they unfold from the story from each participant's interview. These role clusters are summarised at the end of each participants' tale.

6.1.1 Organization of the data

This section will focus upon how the data has been organized and is the first part of the data analysis. Description will be given of the ways in which the data was created and how it has been put into a form that can be used.

6.1.2 Data creation

Data was gathered in a range of ways. These included:

- Interview transcripts from semi-structured face to face individual interviews with matrix participants and consultants;
- Email questionnaires with matrix consultants;
- Observations from the researcher's own experiences as matrix consultant and participant;
- Diary/process notes following interviews;
- Diary/process notes of matrix participation;
- Focus group interview notes;
- Notes from supervision sessions for matrix consulting work.

6.1.3 Review of the data

The first set of data is the interview of four participants of the same social dreaming matrix. Each of the four participants' interview transcripts has been reviewed with the aim of presenting the person's experience of the social dreaming matrix. A summary has been made of each semi-structured interview with the person's experiences presented in a narrative form. This begins with the way each person approaches the matrix and follows their experiences of the sessions. Descriptions are given of how their experience is played out. Each person's responses to the situations that they encounter in the social dreaming matrix are presented as role descriptions. While role descriptions are made from the participant's experiences, the aim is not to make an analysis of the individual themselves but to consider how their 'warm up' evolves in the context of the developing role relationships i.e. within the immediate social system of the matrix and in relationship to the task of social dreaming.

Interview transcripts were reviewed and role descriptions were made to capture the nature of a person's response as it emerged across the range of situations that they

encountered in their social dreaming experiences. The role descriptions are not necessarily aimed at being representative of common or shared experiences of interviewees although sometimes they are. The aim is to identify a range of responses from which in-depth analysis and interpretations can be made in relation to the hypotheses of this study. The major area of interest is the spontaneity of each person and this is explored through analysing how the roles interact with each other and how they affect the task of social dreaming.

6.1.4 How the role descriptions are made

Role descriptions are made that a) represent a response to a new situation or b) shift in each participant's experience as described by them. Role descriptions are presented within a circle and these are placed in the left hand column. They are placed alongside quotes from the transcript so as to demonstrate to the reader the basis upon which the role description was made. Role descriptions in the right hand column are responses made by other participants as perceived by the interviewee.

By organizing the data this way the role development of each participant can be presented within the context of their interpersonal experience. This is being done in detail so the reader is able to see the range of roles that are enacted by each participant and the context within which they emerge. These role descriptions will provide the basis for analysis of the role relationships in the next section.

The data is organized in this way from four participants' interviews of the same social dreaming matrix.

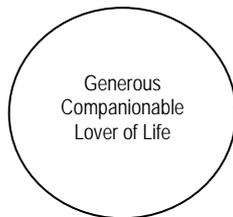
6.1.5 Case studies resulting from participant interviews

The four case studies presented in this research are of four participants of an ongoing weekly social dreaming matrix. Most matrices are short term and held over consecutive days within the context of a conference or organisational development workshop. This means that the matrix experience is of a short duration with often a changing membership. Participation in an ongoing matrix is a rare thing so the data from these participants is very interesting for this study. It provides a unique opportunity to explore the relationship between individual spontaneity and the

immediate social system of a matrix that has developed over a period of time. This social dreaming matrix was advertised by the Australian Institute of Socio-Analysis (AISA) for the public and it was attended by five people. All these participants had previous connections with AISA but not necessarily with each other. One person did not respond to the invitation to participate in this study. The other four participants did. They have been called Mark, Erika, Heath and Caitlin. Each of their experiences of this social dreaming matrix will now be presented in the form of a tale.

6.2 Mark's tale

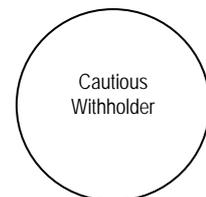
Mark approaches the matrix with high hopes. He is warmed up to being actively involved and expressing himself fully and immediately:



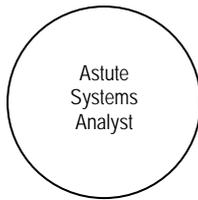
I feel that the more I share of myself the more beneficial it is to myself and to others as well. And so I just applied that there, you know, trying to share whatever came up in my mind. If somebody else, if somebody else's dream was coming, was talking about their dream, if anything would come up which related to it I was willing to share that.

Mark is highly warmed up to the role of Generous Companionable Lover of Life and anticipates other participants will also be warmed up in this way. However this does not turn out to be the case:

There were obviously people who were dreaming stuff but they were withholding it. And when some people that sort of shared it, maybe 3 sessions down the track, and say 'oh look, I already had this dream and I had it already a couple of weeks ago but I didn't want to talk about it'.



He becomes conflicted when he realizes that others are not as open as he hoped. Feeling disappointed and critical he considers how to respond:



And I sort of found that a bit odd as to why they would want to do that. But that that was fine, everybody's got their own fears and reasons. I was just a little bit disappointed that's all. There was some element of fear or secrecy seemed to be there. I sort of thought look, it's easy for me to be critical of others, but if I'm critical of them they might just close up even further.

He attempts to solve the conflict by putting more effort into his original motivation of Generous Companionable Lover of Life:

So I thought rather than doing that I'll just try to share as much of myself

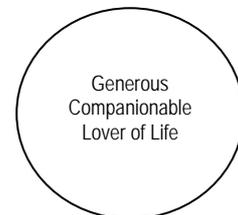
However this solution does not improve the situation and as time passes Mark feels increasingly frustrated:



Later on when I got a little bit cheesed off with it and I thought well look you know, do I really want to continue? Because as far as I'm concerned the whole matrix, that's what it's all about, is to be open and to share everything.

Mark is bewildered by extremes in participation from session to session:

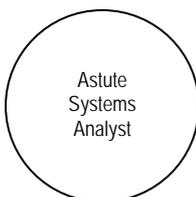
One session they'd be really talkative and really quite OK



...and then the next they would hardly say anything. There'd hardly be any acknowledgment; I found that strange

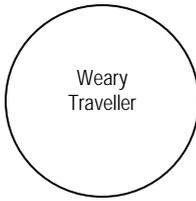


He observes these differences occur before and after the sessions:



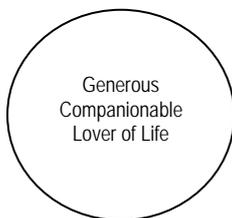
During the matrix there was not much talk and it was all pretty rigid, people seemed to be very tense. And then afterwards or before people were a lot more relaxed, like the matrix would finish and everybody would just go and chatter on about this and that and the other. So what's going on? We're all in the same room, the same people, OK the chairs were arranged in a

different way but that I don't know, I found that weird...it was just about every session.



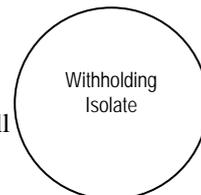
It felt in the matrix during that time that there was just no energy there. I just felt very tired, exhausted almost...during the matrix even coming in sitting down. And as soon as the session started I didn't really feel there was much energy in the room.

And he notices changes in the energy levels within him and others when a dream is shared:



As soon as somebody shared a dream and all of a sudden there was this energy there you know. And I think everybody felt it, everybody knew that we were on to something here and everybody started to, get active in the chair and smile and wave arms around and you know and talk.

And then all of a sudden it'd just die again, it'd go woof, total silence, everybody just sitting there, looking in front of themselves rather than looking at each other all this sort of stuff. It was really weird.



The quality of the silence was distracting:

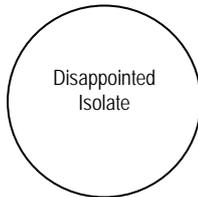


It was actually difficult at times because of the silence. If nobody said anything there was quite a lot of periods of silence, to actually stay I find it difficult to stay with it to actually think, OK well what's going on what's happening? Was there something else I actually did dream? Is there something else I could possibly share? Just to fill the silence, break the silence. But then at times I'd drift off and look out the window and see the cars driving past. You know I was just wasting that moment. I was just wasting time because I wasn't really, I wasn't working on the task like it wasn't really, I wasn't present.

And the roller coaster ride unrelenting:

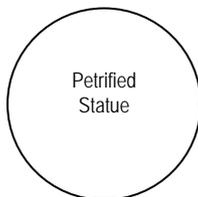
I think there might have been one session where I thought it looks like we've broken the ice here, you know. It was quite a jovial sort of session, it was quite good. But then the following week it was back we were just going back 2 steps, that's how it felt.

Subsequently Mark feels that he is starting anew in his relationships each time the matrix meets:



It felt like starting from zero every time, so that we're not actually building anything...and you know initially because you don't know anybody and everybody is a bit quiet and you talk a little bit about this and you find out you have things in common and everybody becomes more relaxed. Well I didn't feel that didn't happen in the matrix. It was all lost, every time that we come there, we'd start again at zero, and I found that weird because that's not what I wanted.

He begins to get anxious in the matrix sessions:



If I come in without any anxiety I would get anxious, say within half an hour or so, I feel some anxiety coming up...I think it was just bouncing around the people in the matrix, there was anxiety there and that just sort of rubbed off...It's that sort of feeling which is sort of very tense, rigid...and I feel like bodily sensation wise I suppose it'd feel like being really tight. Like you know, like the muscles, everything would be rigid, feel like a statue almost, I wouldn't want to move.

Mark is unable to concentrate upon the task



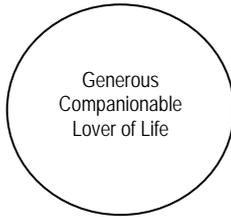
I could feel myself tensing up and say, well, what's going on? Think about it, and just thinking about it in the matrix would throw me off what we were there for. It was distracting...because I'd think about that rather than maybe what somebody was saying, you know. I might not listen properly or get half the story or wasn't actually being able to fully give my attention to that, tune in and it becomes sort of felt disjointed then...my concentration would move in and out...I'd walk away some of the sessions, well I thought I waste my time you know because I felt I didn't get anything out of it.

Mark attempts to reduce his tension:



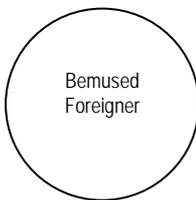
As soon as I realized and I felt it, I thought, oh hang on just relax, and relax...so that helped me in the situation, so the way I can sort of relax myself.

When dreams are shared Mark feels stimulated and enlivened:



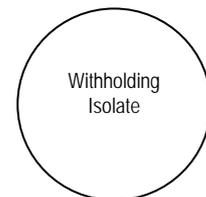
Somebody would have a dream and talk about this dream and somebody would say 'I had this or this is happening'. And then somebody else would say yeah and everybody really got excited, all of a sudden there'd be a lot of energy there.

The sharing of dreams is also challenging:



There was times when I really had problems tuning in what others had dreamt. It didn't, it was just so different or foreign to me that I really had trouble to associate with what they dreamt, and vice versa. I had the feeling that some of the stuff I dreamt people find had problems with as well and that maybe caused a bit of friction at times.

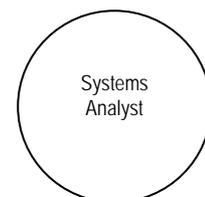
Mark kept hoping that folk would bring out difficulties:



It wasn't talked about, it was sort of rather than sort of saying 'look I really it difficult to you know, you know, associate with what you said or whatever else', they'd just be silent, or just talk about something different, so I felt sometimes, frustrating.

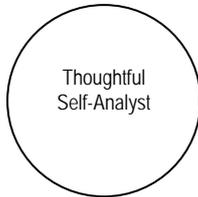
On one occasion he feels criticised by a consultant

I remember there was one particular session where the consultant was talking about, he didn't direct it to any particular person as such, but he was talking about, it was sort of about egos or about my dream is better than your dream type stuff.





And I found that offensive...but I didn't particularly say that. I didn't actually speak up...I just sort of thought, oh well OK.

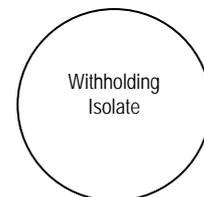


And I sort of had a bit of a think about it, and I thought well maybe he's right OK...maybe that's something I'm doing.

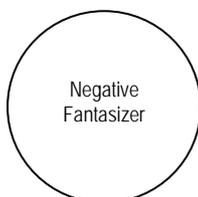
Mark then attempts to discuss the issue with others:



When I had the opportunity I said 'well look if that is the case, if I am actually doing well I'm sorry about that it's not you know my intention'. But that was it, it wasn't taken up or anything it was just sort of left there. And I thought oh yeah well fine but it wasn't a satisfactory outcome for me. Nobody else would take it on, I'd sort of said well look nobody else wants to talk about it, and I'll take a step. I put myself out there, if I've done anything wrong OK that's it, but that was it. It was just sort of left there



Mark's attempts to bring the area of difficulty into the open are futile and he is left with his own imaginings as to what other participants are actually thinking:



Well really it didn't leave me anywhere, and I thought well maybe I did, or maybe people had the perception that I was pushing maybe my own things. maybe they did perceive me as thinking that you know, some of the stuff I shared was more important than theirs. Which was not the case, but nevertheless, if that's what they perceived well fine but then we should have maybe talked about that.

Mark concludes that it is the absence of knowing each other that causes him to be reluctant to follow things up further:

You see in the group where you know the people you can talk about that. I would have kept pushing and said 'well let's not just leave it there'. Because I would have known that you know I could have done that, I would have had the freedom to do that.

Part of that I think is because we didn't know each other...we didn't know how people would react...if I sort of challenged them... I think the trust wasn't there...we weren't all on the same level of trust



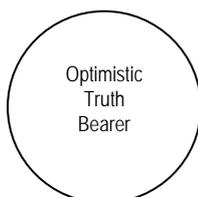
Mark recognises that the relationships between participants are not the focus of social dreaming:

That's sort of the difference, well I felt the matrix is not about that, it's about you know constructing something and see what comes up out of the dreams.

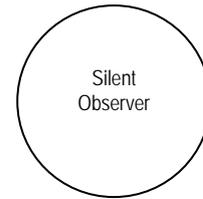
He looks to the reflective time after the social dreaming matrix as a potential place to discuss difficulties:

The matrix has got the structure, the chair position and everything. The task is to share the dreams and whatever spins off from that, and not really have a general discussion about what we've just talked about for instance. Like this particular thing to actually talk about that would have been something to talk about afterwards, in the 15 minutes afterwards.

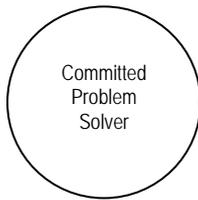
Mark has a yearning to discuss his experiences in the matrix at this time:



It would have been nice to maybe sort of, be able to talk about what actually happened. ...I said a couple of times 'oh yeah well this was a good session' and other times sort of saying 'oh I don't know, I don't really feel connected'. And then all that happened was people sort of looked and not really say much. Rather than saying 'oh why do you feel that?' or "I feel same', or you know it just didn't happen, I missed that.

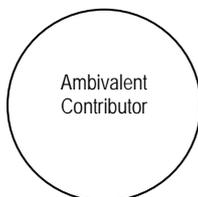


Mark compares the social dreaming matrix with other types of group experiences and identifies a lack of opportunity to discuss the dynamics that are having such a disruptive impact upon his participation:

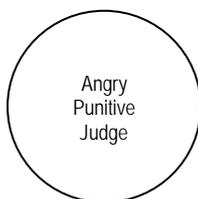


A lot of learning group type situations I've been through, when I studied for 2 years in the same learning group with the same people and the same consultant while that was just that space to...whatever came up we would work on that if we had an issue. And we'd just keep working away on it until that was resolved and then you know and go on to whoever else had a problem.

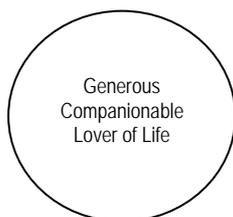
As Mark feels increasingly negative towards the other participants it is more and more difficult for him to attend to the work of social dreaming. He is unable to sustain his desire and willingness to work co-operatively with others when he perceives them as not working co-operatively with him:



But I found that by the end of the matrix; say by the end of the program I was starting to withhold stuff myself. Or not really withhold, I don't know that I actually withheld anything, but I felt like withholding stuff.

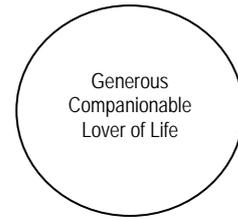


It's just like a payback or a punishment to the others. I think, alright, if you don't want to share...I feel like you haven't shared everything you could of. And you know I feel I have. Well I don't know if I really want to share this, but I think most of it I did anyway...whilst I was actually withholding it I'd feel really, I wouldn't feel right...I'd feel quite angry.



I eventually shared it. I'd sit on it, like at the start of the session. Sometimes just sit on the stuff. But towards the end of it when there was an opportunity share that anyway...and I felt a lot better after that.

But once I'd actually shared it, what was all that about?



What was the big deal? And I was glad to then have shared it because it did actually then, some of the stuff it would trigger stuff in others. And they'd say 'oh right, OK it brings up this for me' and gee I'm glad I did.

6.2.1 Central Roles and Role Clusters - Mark

There are three central roles identified from this role analysis. These are Generous Companionable Lover of Life, Withholding Isolate and Astute Systems Analyst. Each of these central roles is now presented with the role descriptions from Mark's interview that clusters around them.

Diagram 1: Generous Companionable Lover of Life Role Cluster – Mark

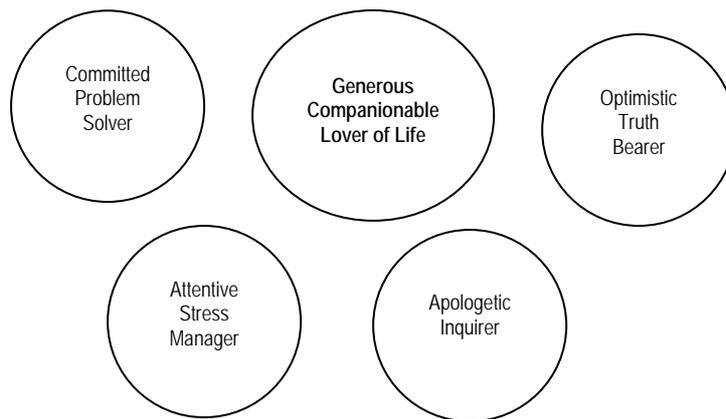


Diagram 2: Withholding Isolate Role Cluster – Mark

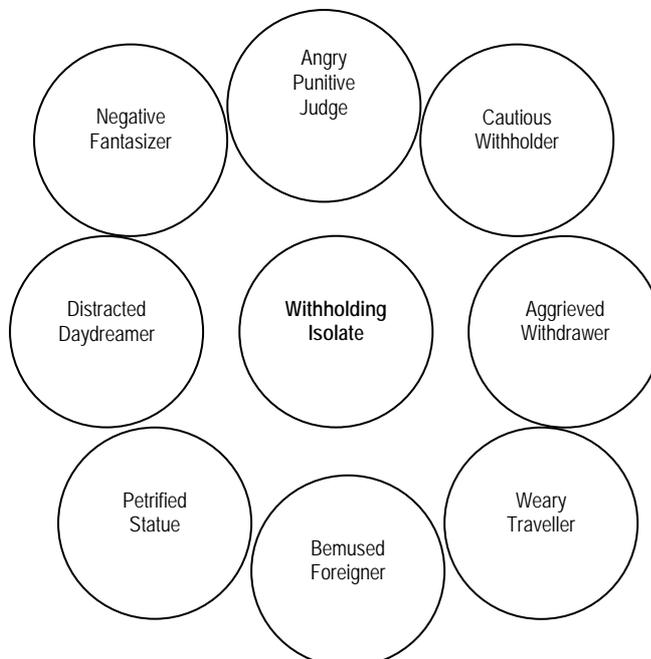


Diagram 3: Astute Systems Analyst Role Cluster – Mark

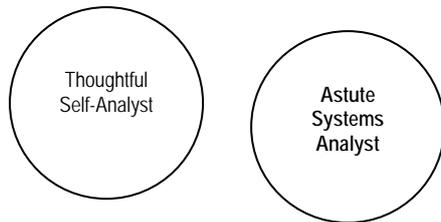
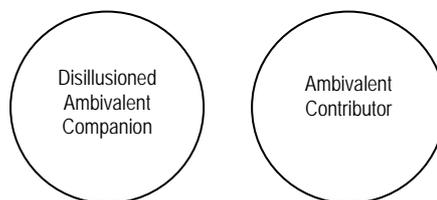


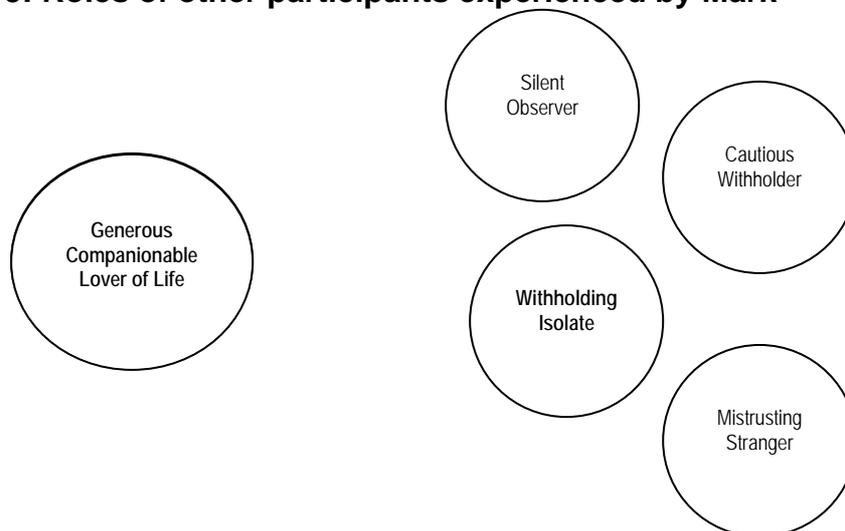
Diagram 4: Conflicted roles - Mark

There are also conflicted roles that Mark warms up to:



When he warms up to these roles Mark vacillates between the central roles of Generous Companionable Lover of Life and Withholding Isolate.

Diagram 5: Roles of other participants experienced by Mark

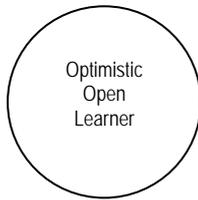


6.2.2 Summary

Central roles that emerge from Mark’s interview are Generous Companionable Lover of Life, Withholding Isolate and Astute Systems Analyst. Conflicted roles move between the clusters of Generous Companionable Lover of Life and Withholding Isolate. The role cluster of Withholding Isolate is significantly larger than the others. This is also the case in the roles that Mark experiences in other participants.

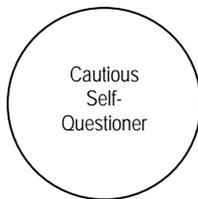
6.3 Erika's Tale

Erika is drawn to participate in the social dreaming matrix by the hope that she would learn about herself and others through the medium of imagery:



What attracted me to it was that sense that, it was using a less, well you can never use less verbal I guess but a, using more an imagery and other ways to learn about myself in a group and the group itself.

In the early stages she observes that there is a high level of caution in herself and others which she attributes to a lack of confidence in knowing what belonged within the social dreaming matrix:



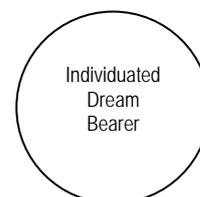
I think that we were a fairly cautious group in lots of ways. In terms of how much we shared early and a sense of some, well speaking personally of what fitted in the group. What did you bring? How did you bring it? How? For me particularly and I'm not so conscious of censorship in a sort of, no this is not something I want to reveal about myself. But it's something more about what's the work? And what's not the work?

Erika reflects upon the personal elements of dreams as one aspect of this:

It was a while before how did those personal, particularly the dreams that had very personal bits to them, where did that fit? And how would they be used, and then how would we talk about each others personal bits?

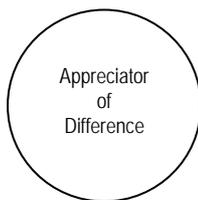
As the sessions progress Erika warms up to the uniqueness of each participant and she gets to know them through the developing patterns woven by their dreams and ways of communicating:

I had a sense over the time that patterns began to develop in what we presented, the sort of dreamers that we were and the sort of ways that we talked about ourselves. And our competence with languages and imagery and that sort of thing began to be known. And so there became some sense that we contributed in a fairly consistent way, consistent in a developing way.



I'm not saying that that was right from the start but over the period of time that we became the people that our dreams were, and our styles of dreams and the way we talked about them. So that felt, that's the familiar bit of people rather than what they did in their everyday life, that was more the incidental

Erika appreciates the differences in participants' contributions as well as the richness that is generated by being within the group:



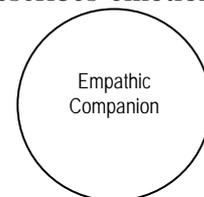
I just enjoy that difference in people and confirmed again and again in me just that sense that you, one on one or individually is only part of the possibilities. And therefore that group, and the difference that was there in those people was very rich in that regard and I really enjoyed that.

Erika finds the small number of participants enhances her capacity to get involved and to take up leadership:



Personal relationships within the work developed I think. And also because I'm the sort of person that doesn't necessarily jump forward in groups so a smaller situation I tend to move in more quickly...I think a few times I actually kicked the group off which is unusual for me.

Erika is alert to the emotional expression between people – she describes emotional sensitivity between people:



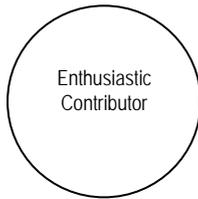
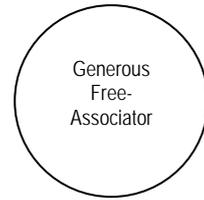
We were a good operational group, we had enough going between us to pick up on what the other was feeling

While also noting a level of restraint by participant in the sharing of their own emotions:



The majority of us were a fairly conservative group in what we brought of our emotions to things. And to be able to get to the next stage of trust where we dealt with some of the sort of maybe more conflictual or sexual or whatever taboo type topics might be there for a particular individual or group.

Erika is stimulated by the sharing of dreams and the different responses made to them by participants and this has the effect of encouraging her to share her dreams:

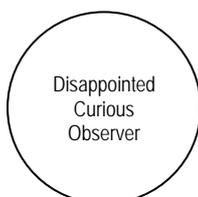
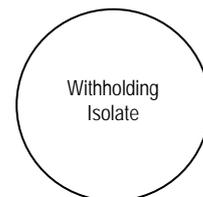


And was really once again reminded of the richness of groups that, you know I'd done a bit of thinking and feeling about them (the dreams). But the diversity was really what I found exciting, the directions that people took them which I really enjoyed, so that reinforced the bringing, very quickly...if I'd had them I valued them enough to bring them...I looked forward to bringing dreams when I had them.

Over time Erika observed differences in how people worked together from session to session:

It (a negative) would only be just about the variations from week to week and how much we made of things as a group would be much more just our sort of reflections about difference...

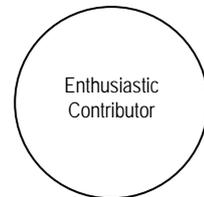
Erika experiences a level of repression that is deadening:



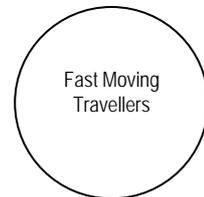
In fact got disappointed when, I guess, that sort of sense of things going into a black hole rather than being talked about...It's like a space, it's like something drops down a long way in the sense that the immediate feeling is that it's not making any ripples. It's not returning, it's not bouncing back, it's not doing, it's not processing...what's happened to it, and what could have been done differently to make that more active...what are the feelings that people can't talk about in that situation? I wonder about and get disappointed about, and not easy to do something about at times.

Erika notices a difference between how dreams and associations are shared and this is a source of dissatisfaction to her. There is a haste to share dreams which leads to an urgency in the speed with which they are shared. She feels a desire to spend more time with each dream and senses a lost potential:

When I think about it there's the urgency of telling the dream which is a very positive thing about the group I guess. And then that sense of, you know, what if there was a bit more silence or a bit more staying with? What difference that would have made? But I suspect we did do both, just a sense of every now and again thinking of don't go on yet, let's see what happens, that sort of feeling.



Sometimes I sort of sensed, oh no don't go on to another story yet, let's wait and see what happens.

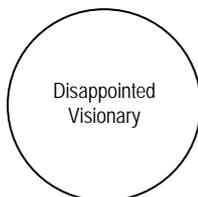


When Erika finds herself with an experience of emptiness she is reluctant to comment on her observation that more could have been built out of a particular moment:

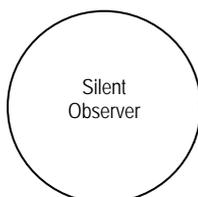


Which is to, if I've got silence and blankness, then I've got silence and blankness and so I can't be critical of somebody else who goes on and does something else. And I don't mean critical, I just mean disappointed critical, that's the feeling.

Erika is disappointed about the loss of potential:

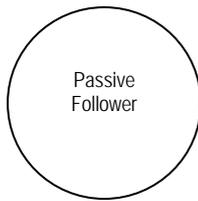


That this is a wasted moment, or we could have maybe done more with that, so not critical in the personal sense but much more of that emotional sense of, well what else could we have done with that moment?



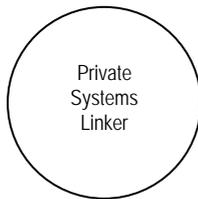
I never said that which I probably when I think about that could have easily but didn't.

She looks to the leaders to assist in addressing the pace of the matrix:



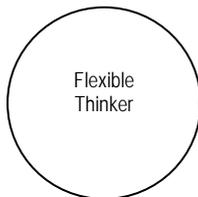
What would prevent me from saying it? My first reaction is that that's a leadership role and I think 'well so what?' That doesn't make any sense but that was my first reaction.

Erika generates a private solution to rectify the situation and address her dissatisfaction with the pace of the sharing of dreams and associations:



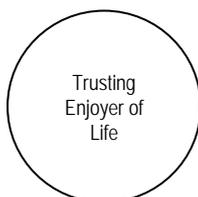
The way I dealt with it after a while would have been much more going back to things. So, bringing things back from another time or being associated back again to another session or things like that. So, rather than doing something as dramatic as saying, 'hey wait a minute', it would be more that I'd be likely to remember where it was at and bring it back again from another session...one of my strengths is remembering what happens and linking.

She activates her emotional memory to reconnect with a dream which acts as a catalyst for making an association:



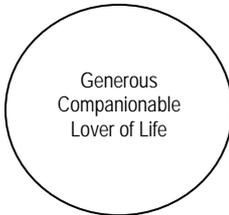
I will have a sort of a memory of an emotion of something that's happened. I'm thinking where there have been dreams with a similar theme like dark passages or basements or constricted spaces or things like that. I will have an emotional memory of that that will then bring the picture of the dream back and then be able to remember across. So I think thematically or in something like that... it'd be a straight association with a dream, and then very free to bring it back even if it wasn't one of that group... that's the way I dealt with that, don't let's leave it but doing it in a different way.

Erika found the matrix a place where she warms up to being a dreamer and she revelled in the freedom of being present with what was unfolding without any burden of responsibility:



I brought the dreamer part in that sense of dropping away some of the role stuff and the leadership stuff which is my day to day life, work life. Bringing much more a spontaneous, just going with whatever ...I don't feel responsible for that group at all and it was lovely, just to be there.

(On state of mind) Leaving other stuff behind, yes, actually valuing that time where I could just be. 'Concentrates' a bit the wrong word but 'allows' a better word probably, just to just speak, be in that moment and see what happens so just trusting the process.



Really good experience would be when the group was really whipping around with something, and back and forth on a particular dream or association. So that, where the sense that we were all in there with something that was sparking us off against each other and adding to pictures or bringing things back. That sort of sense of when it was the 5 of us rather than a pair or, or whatever. So that was my real highlights, when that did happen, and I think it did happen a few times very, very interactively.

6.3.1 Central Roles and Roles Clusters - Erika

The central roles from Mark's analysis have also emerged in this interview. These are 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life', 'Withholding Isolate' and 'Astute Systems Analyst'.

Diagram 6: Generous Companionable Lover of Life Role Cluster – Erika

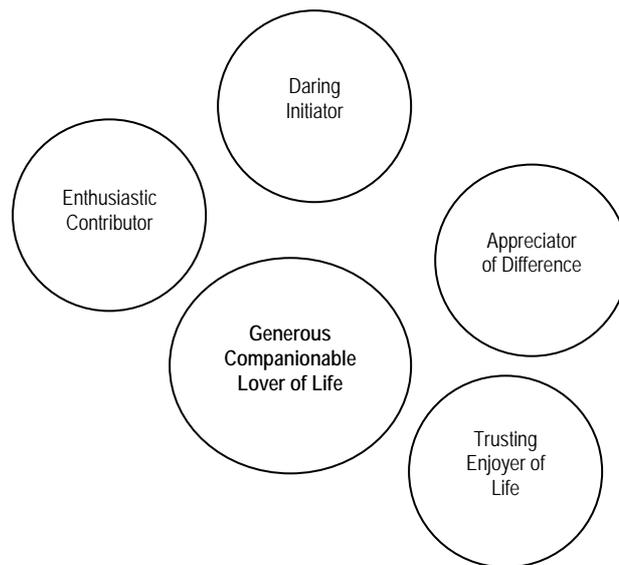


Diagram 7: Withholding Isolate Role Cluster - Erika

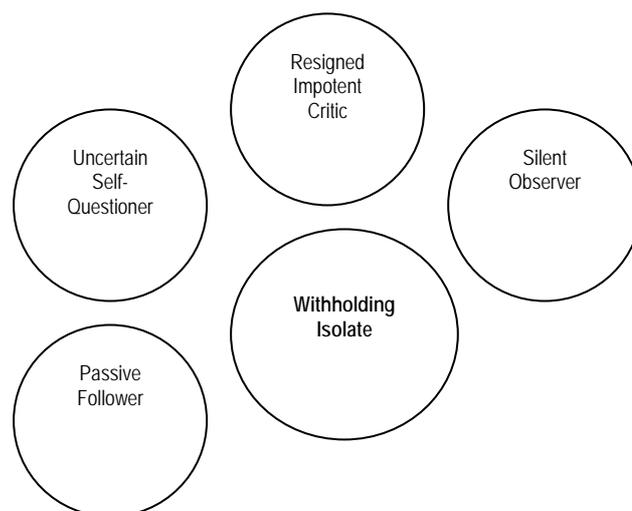


Diagram 8: Roles Cluster of Astute Systems Analyst - Erika

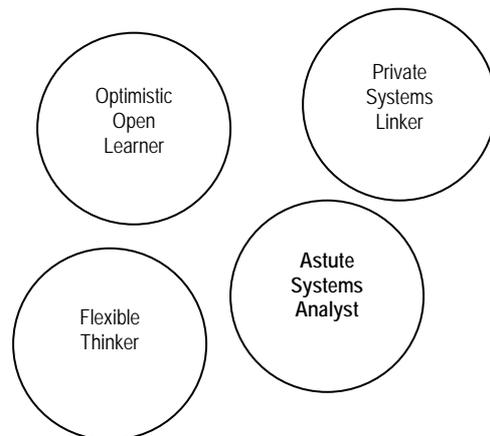
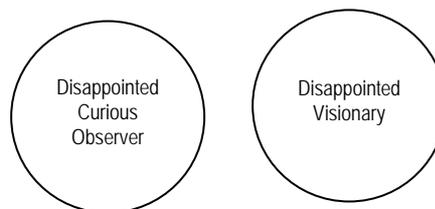
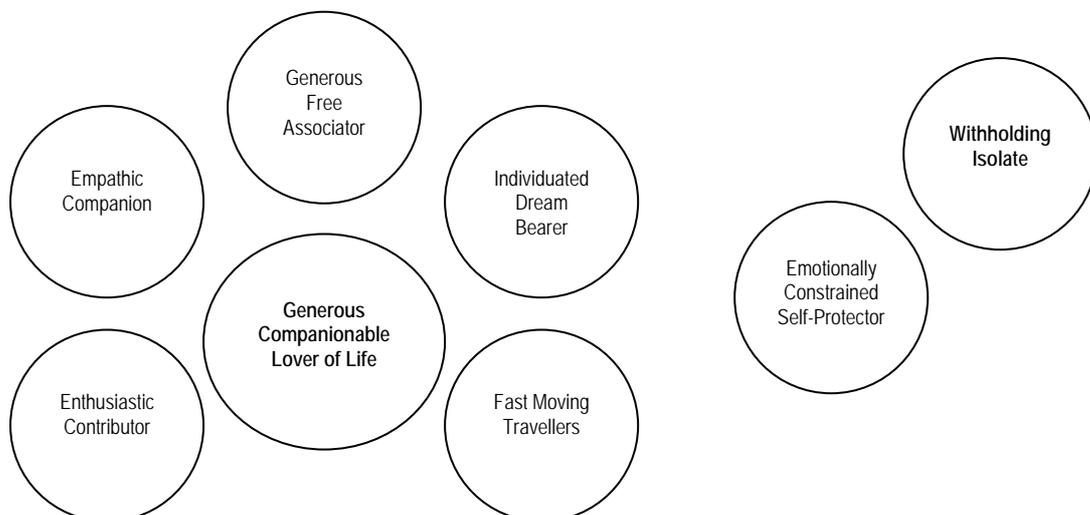


Diagram 9: Conflicted roles - Erika



The 'Disappointed Curious Observer' fluctuates between central roles of 'Withholding Isolate' and 'Astute Systems Analyst'. The 'Disappointed Visionary' moves between 'Withholding Isolate' and 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life'.

Diagram 10: Roles experienced of other participants by Erika

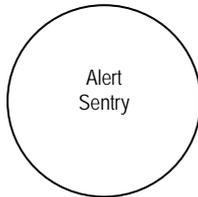


Summary - Erika

In Erika's role clusters there are more roles that cluster around the 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' than the 'Withholding Isolate' or 'Astute Systems Analyst'. This is also the case with her experience of other participants' roles.

6.4 Heath's tale

Heath comes to the social dreaming matrix in a state of vigilance – he is on the alert for dominating or bullying behaviour:



Some of the things that I was exploring in the earlier part of the matrix were whether people were exercising undue influence, in terms of wanting to push the group in certain ways and wanting to push the group into a certain pattern, to see whether anyone was bullying anyone else.

He limits what he shares while he finds out what the prevailing dynamics are:



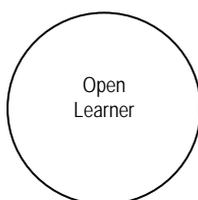
There was a sense for me that I had to find out what was happening from point of view before I would start offering more than what I was offering.

Heath comes into the social dreaming sessions on the alert for potential attacks:



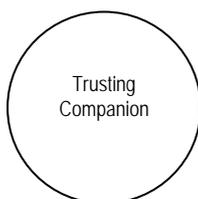
When you spend a lot of time in the battlefield you build up some extraordinarily strong armour that doesn't allow things to flow through or to come out.

Heath reflects upon the effect of putting up a shield in the matrix:



What I'm attempting to do is not be in either position - the victim or the bully. With the anxiety of being in either of those positions you're going to sit there with a shield all the time and you're not going to make the connections. And I suppose that's probably what happened. So there was a barrier and then I just allowed it to open up and feel what was happening.

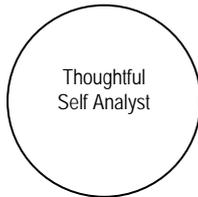
When he feels trust towards others and observes connections developing Heath reduces the amount of censoring he has been employing:



The censoring stopped after I established that I didn't think anybody would use the information against me.

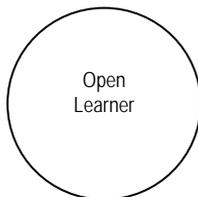
There was a certain sense that the group found some connectivity with everybody and nobody seemed to be left out from what I could feel, so once that happened I was then OK.

When Heath thinks he may have been bullied he discovers that he can generate a response that is oriented to maintaining connection in the relationship:



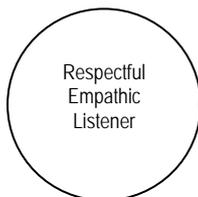
There was a transformation in terms of where I thought I may have been bullied. The transformation was by not responding. You know how sometimes somebody does something and you don't respond. By not responding, sometimes I felt that allowed a different connection to that person. So that if I think you're going to bully me and I respond in a retaliatory way then there is a disconnection going on there and there won't be a connection.

When feeling safe Heath is free to explore:



It goes back to getting a feeling whether you're safe again...and then exploring different things...in terms of not knowing the language I started going off and reading some children's books myself.

Heath learns about what others are willing to explore:



I have a strong association with most people in that matrix about some of the boundaries that they had and what they meant for them. They actually explained and spoke about them. So there was a feeling that a person wouldn't like you to start going further with certain things.

I've actually redefined my own role at work as more of a nurturing role which I never would have understood without going into a matrix where it is a very nurturing place

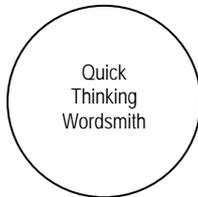
He finds his dream life is enriched:



The other thing that happened in the matrix is that your dreams become richer. I was amazed. There was a bit of enthusiasm about some of those dreams as well because they were different. I suppose that in your life if you keep ignoring your dreams and they happen, and then you start getting

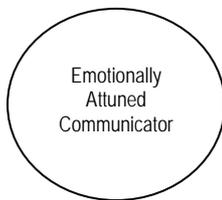
involved with people that are talking about them and offering them and discussing them, the richness of them is amazing.

Heath observes some matrix members associate to the dreams by relating to the words:



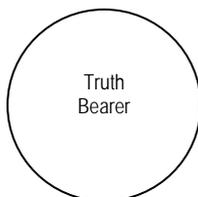
When the dream happens I think, unlike a couple of members were very quick about being able to turn phrases into another meaning like a word. Or pick up that a word could mean something else and then explore what that word would mean. That's something that I didn't find I could do, I regarded that as the analytical part.

Heath finds he cannot do this and instead makes associations to the dreams by tuning in to the feelings that arise in him



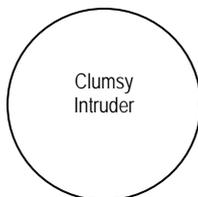
I was picking up more what the person meant by a feeling more than what they were saying. Because I didn't have any association with what they were saying with their words whatever thought or feeling came to me I would then express.

As well as tuning in to the emotions generated in him by a dream Heath is alert to his emotional responses to others:



I did express jealousy and envy in different things. And expressing those was in an opposite sense to the loving feelings so there's a connection there...somebody was using language I didn't understand so I became threatened and I actually expressed that.

Another difficulty he encounters is when personal associations are made to him



I had strong feelings about somebody making a specific reference to my relationship with one of my family members as the association they had to one of the dreams. And I thought it was going a bit too far, that I didn't want the person to go that far.

Heath protects himself:

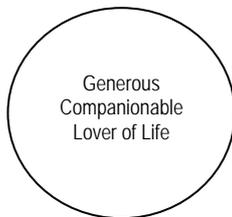


So, I was therefore shielding that. I didn't want it to become a personal exploration of me.



You could have your own boundaries so that if some of the exploration was done in a way that you could offer something, but you didn't have to offer any more if you didn't want to or you felt uncomfortable with that.

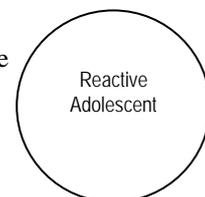
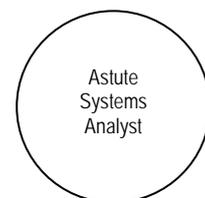
When Heath has difficulty understanding others in the matrix he welcomes attempts at clarification:



At times there was more explanation given by the people who were speaking of the concepts I had no knowledge of. So it was warmly accepted back, not well 'get stuffed, we're never going to tell you about these things, they're our secrets'. I mean they certainly did what I felt was a good attempt at doing that. Not that I still understood what they were talking about, but I felt that there was an attempt being made to explain what they were talking about.

Heath identifies a range of emotional experiences within the matrix:

There was plenty of the dark stuff and that's what was the richness as well. We didn't all sit there holding hands for weeks. There was anger expressed against X who says 'come on get on with the job'. I thought that was very interesting because the frustration that was being felt at the time was being felt by everybody.

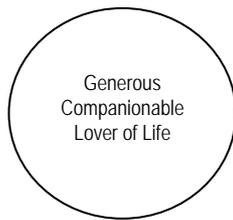


He experiments with different options for sharing his dreams:



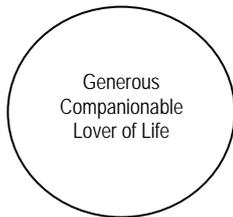
And I thought I would explore being in different spots...I was offering them (the dreams) at different times. The purpose was there was time and space for other people to offer theirs' at times or I would offer mine. So the purposefulness of that was that I was also exploring what it was like to be in different places.

Heath finds that it is possible to relax his guard and be open to others:



Allowing a flowing of what's happening in the group by being with, sitting, being comfortable with how you're sitting and allowing the connections to happen.

He develops comfort with the connections that develop between participants as they exploring something:

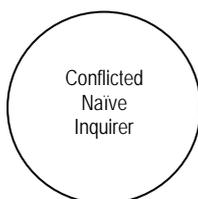


So what I was trying then was to get a sense of the feeling that was going on and I felt comfortable about that. Particularly when 2 other people were exploring something. I felt it was terrific to be able to observe that connection and feel that it helped you to connect to those 2 people

Heath is receptive towards positive feelings from others:

Somebody looked at me warmly and I had no idea what they were talking about. I didn't have a clue what connections they had made with me, but they were offering me something that was warm and so I just accepted it.

He finds that when others are discussing things that he does not understand sometimes he feels unable to inquire:



I didn't feel comfortable asking either and that's interesting, I mean why I shouldn't have said, 'I don't know anything about these stories? Can you tell me what they're about?' What I was arguing in my own mind at the time was that the matrix wasn't there for me to learn about Greek history.

6.4.1 Central Roles and Role Clusters

Diagram 11: Generous Companionable Lover of Life Role Cluster - Heath

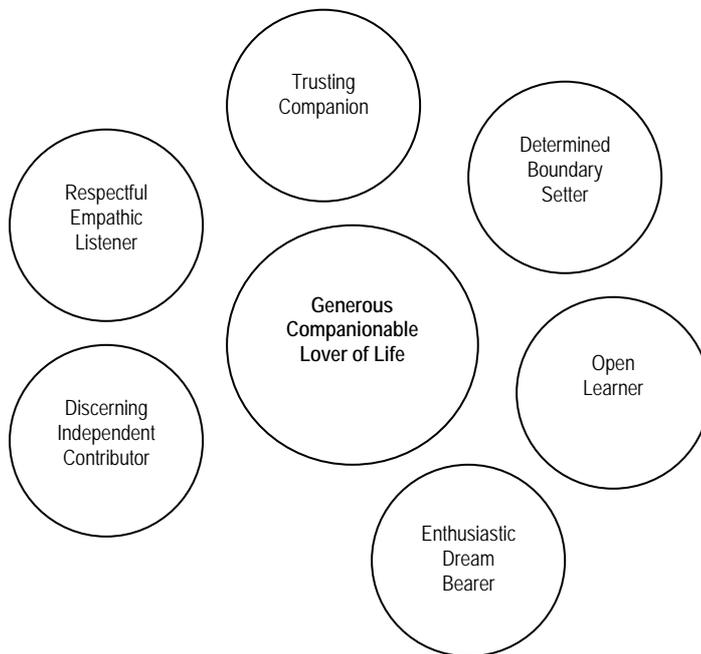


Diagram 12: Astute Systems Analyst Role Cluster - Heath

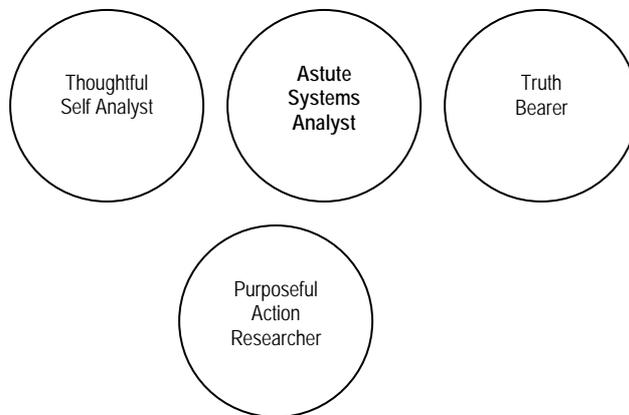


Diagram 13: Withholding Isolate Role Cluster - Heath

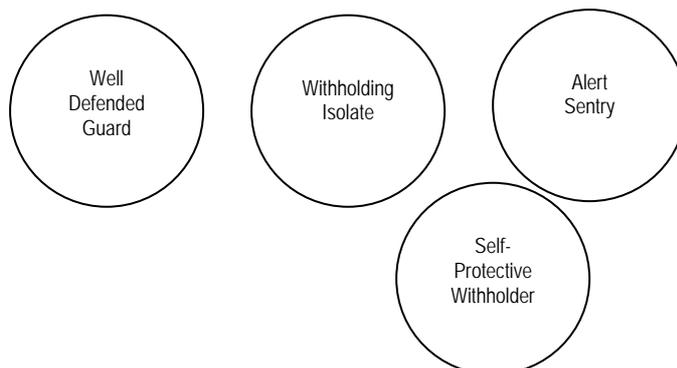
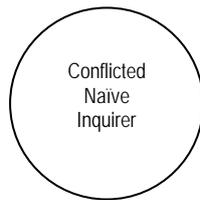
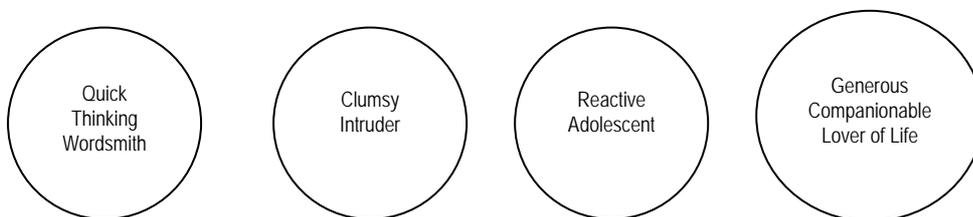


Diagram 14: Conflicted roles - Heath



The 'Conflicted Naïve Inquirer' moves between the central roles of 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' and 'Withholding Isolate'.

Diagram 15: Roles experienced in other participants by Heath



Summary - Heath

Heath warms up more to the role cluster of 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' than the role clusters of 'Withholding Isolate' or 'Astute Systems Analyst'. He experiences roles of other participants as evenly spread across the other role clusters.

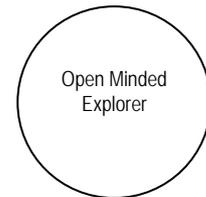
6.5 Caitlin's Tale

Caitlin is initially concerned about being excluded:

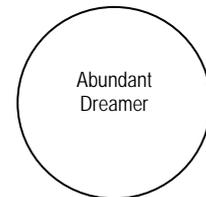


I can remember at the start having vague paranoid feelings that the others would bond and I would be the person who would be outside in some way...not in a major way but it was there.

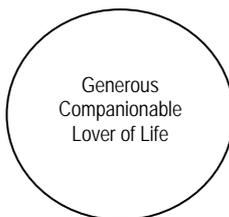
However her fears were not realized:



There wasn't anyone in there that made me feel afraid...the fact that people came meant they were very open to the experience in the first place...I felt there was a real openness and there were people like X who obviously dreamed a lot so there was that example set I think pretty early on



Caitlin observes and appreciates the differences in other participants:



I did actually like people. And I thought X for example...he seemed like a person who was not someone I would normally come in contact with. And I found him really refreshing whereas Y worked more, you know when you have worked in areas, in similar areas to people there is a kind of a shared dialogue.



There seemed to be space for people to kind of drop something, let it happen and move on rather than to peel layer after layer after layer. I think what I liked was the absence if you like, there were a lot of things that you could have probably put a lot of constructions on...made theoretical associations but that didn't happen.

Caitlin notes that all participants have and share dreams that are unusual:



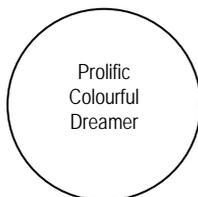
I mean there was something that we all had - the anxious dream, the ugly dream...the fear or the off the wall kind of bizarre you know...

This gives her confidence to express herself more freely:



...and I think that for me it makes it easier to look people in the eye and say the things that you're thinking without censoring so much...or feel so peculiar about yourself

The motivation to share dreams provokes a sense of competitiveness and Caitlin experiences pressure to come up with 'good' dreams:



The competition was pretty stiff when I think about it because there were some good dreamers in that group you know, there were people who obviously dreamed a lot and had really colourful dreams with really strong sort of narrative and lots happening

Caitlin feels a greater trust in her intuition and expressing her responses fearlessly:



I think that following that there were probably a few things that just happened at work where I thought just say it and don't worry so much about how it sounds and I can remember X saying where he decided to pursue something that he was doing as part of an investigation for his work that was an intuitive kind of thing and I'd say I've had a bit of that sort of experience as well, which is just let the intuitive kind of speak and see what happens rather than worrying about it sounding silly or irrational or you know doing that self talk where you ignore that voice that is coming up from where ever.

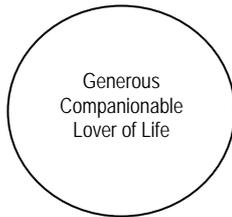


Had you asked me before I would have said 'well of course you should be able to listen to the intuitive voice' but it actually made me feel like you can just do it.



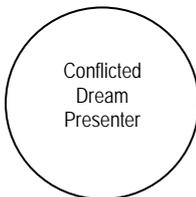
I felt bad when I didn't have any dreams or any interesting dreams. I can remember once or twice going without any dreams and feeling a bit sort of paltry really.

Caitlin thinks that the nature of dreams creates a freedom for participants to share them:

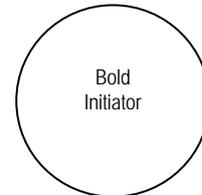


I actually felt freer in the matrix because people were talking about dreams. It seemed easier to put things out in a way and it may have been that particular matrix, because I haven't done other social dreaming matrices. But it seemed to me that your dream material is, because it arises from the unconscious, it felt like there was a freedom for people to put it out and associate

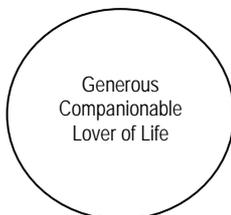
Caitlin deliberates over when to share her dreams and likes it when somebody else takes the lead:



The other things that went on for me were those questions about when do I say my dream, when is the right time, you know and it was always really good when someone would open up theirs first.



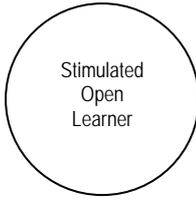
Caitlin enjoys the freedom of sharing associations without having to justify them:



The associations felt very free and I liked that as opposed to 'why do you make that link, what does it mean to you?' ...it actually felt very nice to sit with a group of people and to be with them in a way that felt intimate. Because the dream material was intimate you know and it felt it had emotional life.

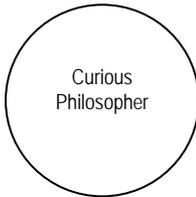
And the sessions in which links are made to the wider world:





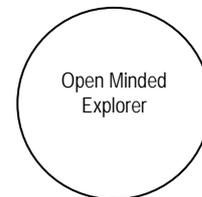
The days that were more interesting were the days when there seemed to be juicier material...what would happen is people would make links to the world or what was happening in the world and that felt good you know, that felt helpful.

Caitlin maintains an open attitude to how she will go:



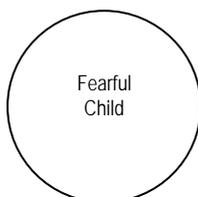
I guess I was in a fairly philosophical state to see what would happen, and what happens will happen.

And experiences a freedom in how things were expressed:



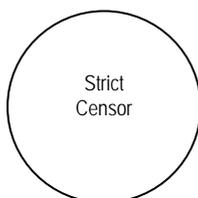
In the matrix it seemed that things could be said and then people could move and shift you know there was people weren't pinned if you like.

Caitlin is inhibited by fears that the other participants will judge her:



The things that inhibited I guess were the old feeling of fear of judgment because that was there to some extent, what might people think and I think that certainly operated.

Her response to this fear is to censor her dreams and omit sexual references:



And I can remember thinking I had censored some dreams, edited bits out that felt too sexual, that for me was the hard struggle

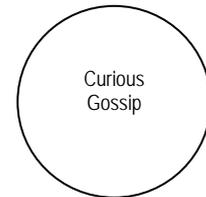
She also reins herself in:



I think I was probably too nice in social dreaming.

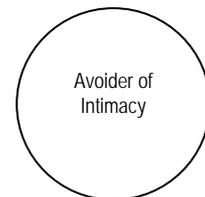
Caitlin notices times where the communication between participants is oriented to a more conversational style:

Sometimes I think it would then move into chat about, oh yes and did you hear about or whatever. And I mean I think the consultants would move it along then but somehow that would kill off the life in the matrix, that sort of chat.

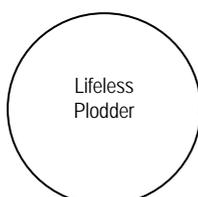


She observes that some topics are allowed to be explored, particularly violence and aggression:

I can remember A saying at one point perhaps it's easier for this group to talk about violence than sex or something. Because in the first maybe 4 or 5 sessions there were quite a lot of, there seemed to be a lot of themes or dreams that had a violent edge. And that continued through the group to some extent. But I think that it probably was very true in that people found it easier to talk about the fear of being attacked or even being the attacker in some way than to talk about desire or sex or those sorts of other longings.

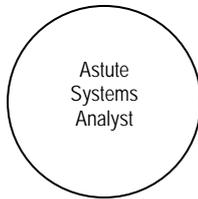


There were times when Caitlin found there was an absence of energy in the session:



I had some flat experiences you know. Some days I walked away and thought you know sort of so, sometimes it just felt there wasn't a lot of life and it was hard to know why that was exactly.

Caitlin identified a need to achieve balance between having the freedom to explore whilst attending to the purpose of the sessions:



I guess that's the line that has to be trod between giving people freedom to explore but not to kind of avoid you know the real, the reason that you're there.

Her knowledge of participants deepened through hearing their dreams:

The point of the exercise was not to delve into the individual and why they might think like that but the focus is social so it's more about the connections that we can make and people did emerge through their dreams as real individuals, the dream, each person's dream took a flavour, there was a uniqueness to it but it felt like knowing the person at a different level really saying their dreams



6.5.1 Central Roles and Role Cluster

Diagram 16: Generous Companionable Lover of Life Role Cluster: Caitlin

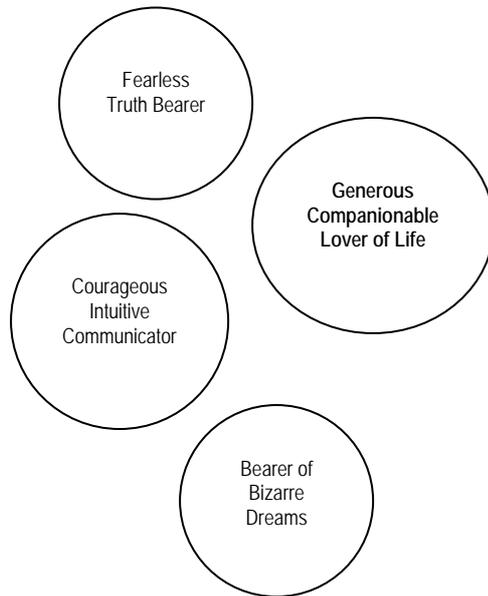


Diagram 17: Withholding Isolate Role Cluster - Caitlin

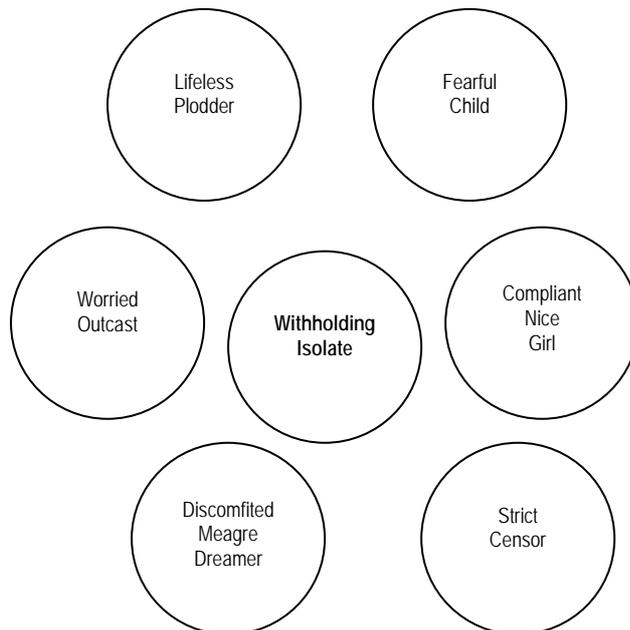


Diagram 18: Astute Systems Analyst Role Cluster - Caitlin

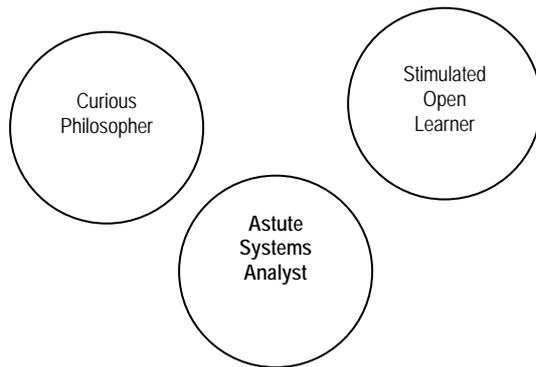


Diagram 19: Conflicted Roles - Caitlin

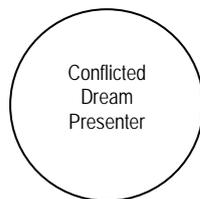
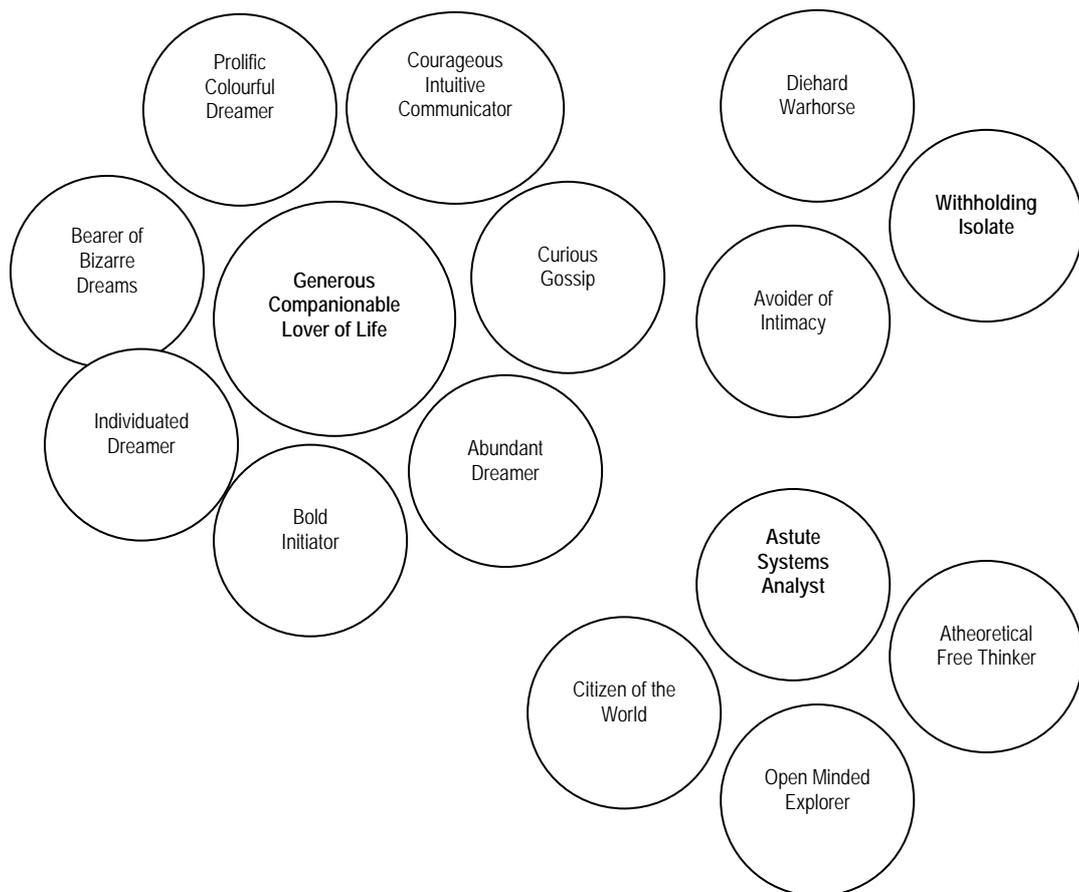


Diagram 20: Roles experienced of other participants by Caitlin



Summary - Caitlin

The distribution of Caitlin's roles falls more into the role cluster of 'Withholding Isolate' than the 'Astute Systems Analyst' or the 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life'. This is different to her experience of other participants' roles where the central role of 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' has the most roles clustering around it.

6.6 Summary

In Section 1 of this chapter the data from the transcripts of four social dreaming matrix participants have been presented. Each transcript has been reviewed and the journey of the participants through the matrix has been presented as role descriptions. These role descriptions have then been grouped according to the central roles that they cluster around. Central roles have been identified from the transcripts as 'Generous Companionable Lover or Life', 'Withholding Isolate' and 'Astute Systems Analyst'. The role clusters have been presented for each participant to demonstrate their role development during the social dreaming matrix. The role clusters have also been presented of the roles that each participant has experienced in other participants. A brief summary has been made of which central role the majority of roles cluster around for each participant.

In the next section these role descriptions will be analysed into the categories of progressive, coping and fragmenting roles. These will then be discussed in relationship to the three hypotheses of this study.

Chapter 7: Analysis of the participants' data

This section contains the data analysis. The focus in this chapter will be the data from the matrix participants. The matrix consultants' interview data will be analysed in Chapter 8.

The purpose of this section is to analyse the data presented in section one of this Chapter in relationship to the three hypotheses of the study:

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.

The role descriptions from participants' interviews will be analysed within the context of each hypothesis. Spontaneity is the common element across all the hypotheses and therefore the role descriptions will be used a means to assess levels of spontaneity. The analysis of levels of spontaneity will include how the roles are connected and how they affect the task of social dreaming.

7.1 Hypothesis 1

There is a relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system of the matrix

In this section the relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system will be explored. Levels of individual spontaneity will be ascertained through analysis of the role descriptions made in the previous section. Examples of role descriptions from the role clusters will be categorised into progressive, coping and fragmenting roles. The first letter of each participants name is placed alongside the role descriptions. Roles do not exist in isolation so these roles will be further analysed in relationship to the interpersonal situations in which they emerge. The developing role relationships between participants form the immediate social system of the matrix, so the role descriptions will be used to explore how these relationships are unfolding between participants.

In order to explore the development of each individual's spontaneity in relationship to other participants the following questions will be used as a structure for this section:

- 1) How did people begin the matrix?
- 2) What roles did participants warm up to?
- 3) When participants warmed up to progressive roles how did this occur? What happened?
- 4) When participants didn't warm up to progressive roles what happened?
- 5) How do the roles interact together?
- 6) What are the things that trigger people off to take up certain roles?

7.1.2 How did people begin the matrix?

Each participant approaches the social dreaming matrix with a different warm up, although three have a similar theme. Mark is warmed up to the 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' which is a progressive role. The other three participants are initially warmed up to roles that have a safety orientation. For Mark this is the 'Alert Sentry', Erika the 'Cautious Self-Questioner' and for Caitlin the 'Worried Outcast'. All of these are coping roles. These beginning roles are at odds with each other. The 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' is isolated from the other participants, who together form a sub group of roles which are oriented to

alleviating fears. The 'Alert Sentry' is on the lookout for being bullied, the 'Cautious Self-Questioner' is proceeding with caution and the 'Worried Outcast' is concerned about being excluded. This subgroup of roles is not complementary with the 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' who is expecting frank and co-operative relations. Interestingly the role development for each participant then proceeds along quite different pathways.

7.1.3 What roles did participants warm up to?

All participants warmed up to three central roles - *Generous Companionable Lover of Life*, *Withholding Isolate* and *Astute Systems Analyst*. These emerged from the participants' interview transcripts and provide a basis upon which to review the roles that individuals warmed up to during the matrix sessions. The roles that cluster around each of these central roles will now be analysed into categories of progressive, coping and fragmenting categories. Where participants have described roles of other participants these will be analysed in Questions 5 and 6 where interactions between the roles are explored.

The purpose of this section is to analyse the roles and development of each participant. The role descriptions will be presented collectively. By grouping all the role descriptions together from the four interviews it is possible to identify similarities and differences in the elements of the roles that cluster around the central roles. This gives an overall picture of the range and type of roles enacted by all participants. These are then be discussed in relation to their context and how they affect the task

7.1.4 Generous Companionable Lover of Life

Analysis of the role cluster of the 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' across all the participant's interviews is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Analysis of Generous Companionable Lover of Life Role Cluster

Progressive Roles	Coping Roles
Optimistic Truth Bearer (M)	Apologetic Inquirer - moving towards (M)
Daring Initiator (E)	Committed Problem Solver - moving towards (M)
Appreciator of Difference (E)	Attentive Stress Manager - moving towards (M)
Trusting Enjoyer of Life (E)	Fast Moving Travellers - moving away (E)
Empathic Companion (E)	Determined Boundary Setter - moving against (H)
Trusting Companion (C)	
Fearless Truth Bearer (C)	
Courageous Intuitive Communicator (C)	
Respectful Empathic Listener (H)	

All participants warmed up to progressive roles within this role cluster and some also to coping roles. For example, Mark is initially strongly warmed up to the central role of ‘Generous Companionable Lover of Life’ This warm up becomes erratic and then reduces over the series of matrix sessions. There are a limited range of progressive roles enacted. The coping roles of ‘Apologetic Inquirer’ and ‘Committed Problem Solver’ come into the foreground with the ongoing motivation to engage with other participants. Over time Mark enacts a larger amount of coping than progressive roles.

Erika warms up slowly and steadily during the matrix sessions to progressive roles of ‘Daring Initiator’, ‘Appreciator of Difference’ and ‘Enthusiastic Contributor’. The enactment of these become more prevalent as does the intensity of her warm up to them.

The progressive roles that Heath warms up to are ‘Trusting Companion’, ‘Respectful Empathic Listener’, ‘Discerning Contributor’ and ‘Enthusiastic Dream Bearer’. They emerge over time and are not in the foreground at the beginning of the matrix. There is a well developed warm up to these roles over time. Heath enacts one coping role of ‘Determined Boundary Setter’ which at times is overdeveloped.

Caitlin’s warm up to the progressive roles of ‘Trusting Companion’, ‘Fearless Truth Bearer’ and ‘Courageous Intuitive Communicator’ strengthens during the series of

matrix sessions. ‘Fearless Truth Bearer’ is a developing role. She does not enact any coping roles in this cluster.

Elements of these progressive roles include enthusiasm, co-operation, leadership, courage, appreciation and trust. Elements of coping roles include a desire to resolve conflict, and self determination.

7.1.5 Central role of Withholding Isolate

All participants warm up to this central role. The analysis of roles that cluster around ‘Withholding Isolate’ is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Analysis of Withholding Isolate Role Cluster

Coping Roles	Fragmenting Roles
Cautious Withholder- moving away (M)	Negative Fantasiser (M)
Aggrieved Withdrawer – moving away (M)	Bemused Foreigner (M)
Wearry Traveller – moving away (M)	Petrified Statue (M)
Angry Punitive Judge – moving against (M)	Distracted Day Dreamer (M)
Resigned Impotent Critic – moving away (E)	Uncertain self-questioner (E)
Silent Observer – moving away (E)	Strict Censor (C)
Passive Follower – moving towards (E)	Worried Outcast (C)
Alert Sentry – moving against (H)	Fearful Child (C)
Well Defended Guard – moving against (H)	
Self-Protective Withholder – moving away (H)	
Compliant Nice Girl – moving towards (C)	
Discomfited Meagre Dreamer – moving away (C)	
Lifeless Plodder – moving towards (C)	

7.1.6 Central role of Astute Systems Analyst

The role cluster of ‘Astute Systems Analyst’ has a majority of progressive and a small number of coping roles around it. These are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: Analysis of Astute Systems Analyst Role Cluster

Progressive	Coping
Astute Systems Analyst (M)	Private Systems Linker – moving away (E)
Optimistic Open Learner (E)	Truth Bearer – moving towards (H)
Flexible Thinker (E)	Curious Philosopher – moving towards (C)
Open Learner (H)	
Thoughtful Self-Analyst (M&H)	
Purposeful Action Researcher (H)	
Stimulated Open Learner (C)	

Elements of the roles that cluster around ‘Astute Systems Analyst’ include self-reflection, curiosity about others, openness to learning and capacity to think.

7.2 When participants warmed up to progressive roles how did this occur? What happened?

The presence of progressive roles is evidence of spontaneity, so it is of interest to explore the context within which participants warm up to progressive roles in the social dreaming matrix. What is happening in the matrix when a person enacts a progressive role? What forces influence them to warm up in this way? What strengthens their warm up to progressive roles?

In this section there is an exploration of these questions through analysis of the situations within which progressive roles emerge. Thematic analysis is the method used. The first section contains themes that are shared by several participants and the second comments that are unique to a participant.

7.2.1 Shared themes

Theme 1: Hearing another participant’s dream

The sharing of a dream by another participant in the social dreaming matrix is a catalyst for the progressive roles of ‘Generous Companionable Lover of Life’, ‘Individuated Dream Bearer’, ‘Bold Initiator’ and ‘Appreciator of Difference’:

As soon as somebody shared a dream and all of a sudden there was this energy there you know. And I think everybody felt it, everybody knew that we were on to something here. (Mark)

The urgency of telling the dream which is a very positive thing about the group. (Erika)

You start getting involved with people that are talking about them (dreams) and offering them and discussing them, the richness of them is amazing. (Heath)

The other things that went on for me were those questions about when do I say my dream, when is the right time, you know and it was always really good when someone would open up theirs first. (Caitlin)

Theme 2: Hearing associations made by participants

The sharing of associations to a dream enables participants to respond with progressive roles of 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life', 'Appreciator of Difference', 'Emotionally Attuned Communicator' and 'Fearless Truth Bearer':

Somebody would have a dream and talk about this dream and somebody would say 'I had this or this is happening'. And then somebody else would say yeah and everybody really got excited. (Mark)

The diversity was really what I found exciting, the directions that people took them which I really enjoyed. (Erika)

So what I was trying then was to get a sense of the feeling that was going on and I felt comfortable about that. Particularly when two other people were exploring something. I felt it was terrific to be able to observe that connection and feel that it helped you to connect to those two people. (Heath)

There was something that we all had - the anxious dream, the ugly dream...the fear or the off the wall kind of bizarre you know...and I think that for me it makes it easier to look people in the eye and say the things that you're thinking without censoring so much...or feel so peculiar about yourself. (Caitlin)

Theme 3: Sharing one's own dream

When the participant shares a dream they have had their enactment of progressive roles of 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' and 'Fearless Truth Bearer' is enhanced:

I was glad to then have shared it because it did actually then, some of the stuff it would trigger stuff in others. And they'd say 'oh right, OK it brings up this for me.'
(Mark)

If I'd had them I valued them enough to bring them...I looked forward to bringing dreams when I had them. (Erika)

I actually felt freer in the matrix because people were talking about dreams. It seemed easier to put things out in a way. (Caitlin)

Theme 4: Positive connections experienced between participants

The connections experienced between participants impacts upon their enactment of progressive roles. When enjoyment and appreciation is present the 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' emerges:

The difference that was there in those people was very rich in that regard and I really enjoyed that. (Erika)

We were a good operational group, we had enough going between us to pick up on what the other was feeling. (Erika)

There was a certain sense that the group found some connectivity with everybody and nobody seemed to be left out from what I could feel. (Heath)

I did actually like people. And I thought X for example...he seemed like a person who was not someone I would normally come in contact with. (Caitlin)

It actually felt very nice to sit with a group of people and to be with them in a way that felt intimate. Because the dream material was intimate you know and it felt it had emotional life. (Caitlin)

Theme 5: Dreams are a means of getting to know other participants:

Participants began to build positive connections through the knowledge they gained of each other through the dreams they shared:

People did emerge through their dreams as real individuals, the dream, each person's dream took a flavour, there was uniqueness to it but it felt like knowing the person at a different level really saying their dreams. (Caitlin)

Over the period of time that we became the people that our dreams were, and our styles of dreams and the way we talked about them. So that felt, that's the familiar bit of people rather than what they did in their everyday life, that was more the incidental. (Erika)

Theme 6: Connection to personal motivations

When there is a connection to personal motivating forces or vision the warm up to progressive roles increases:

I feel that the more I share of myself the more beneficial it is to myself and to others as well. (Mark)

Using more an imagery and other ways to learn about myself in a group and the group itself. (Erika)

7.2.2 Individual situations in which progressive roles are enacted

There are other situations in which a participant responds in progressive roles. For Caitlin this occurs when connections are made between the dreams and associations and the broader social system. Erika enacts 'Daring Initiator' in response to the small numbers in the group. She warms up to 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' as she feels able to bring 'the dreamer part' of herself to the social dreaming matrix and leave her work responsibilities behind. The 'Discerning Independent Contributor' emerges when Heath feels able to choose what he offers:

You could have your own boundaries so that if some of the exploration was done in a way that you could offer something, but you didn't have to offer any more if you didn't want to or you felt uncomfortable with that. (Heath)

When all participants are actively contributing to the matrix Erika responds as ‘Generous Companionable Lover of Life’:

We were all in there with something that was sparking us off against each other and adding to pictures or bringing things back. That sort of sense of when it was the five of us rather than a pair or, or whatever. (Erika)

The roles that participants warm up to vary considerably and several differences emerged from the analysis of the role descriptions. These are:

- 1) the intensity of warm up to a role
- 2) the range of roles enacted for each participant
- 3) the amount of progressive and coping roles enacted
- 4) when participants warm up to particular roles

7.3 When participants didn’t warm up to progressive roles what happened?

The absence of progressive roles indicates diminished spontaneity so it is of interest to explore the situations in which participant’s spontaneity is reduced. Reduced spontaneity is evidenced by enactment of coping and fragmenting roles. What factors influence participants to warm up to these? What kinds of forces are they experiencing within the social dreaming matrix that prompts these responses? What is the nature of the coping and fragmenting responses that participants enact? In this section the situations within which coping and fragmenting roles emerge are analysed as themes. As with the previous section these themes are presented in two sections – those that are shared and those that are unique to a participant.

7.3.1 Themes related to coping and fragmenting roles

Theme 7: Fears and anxieties.

The focus of the fear varies but all participants have some concerns that cause them to enact coping or fragmenting roles.

- a) Fear of being excluded leads to Caitlin being a ‘Worried Outcast’ at the beginning of the social dreaming matrix.

- b) Fear of being bullied provokes the ‘Alert Sentry’ for Heath as well as ‘Self-Protective Withholder’.
- c) Anxiety about what the work actually was caused Erika to respond as an ‘Uncertain Self-Questioner’.
- d) Fear of being seen as critical of others causes Mark to be a conflicted ‘Disappointed Critic’.

Theme 8: Fluctuating participation in sessions

Marked shifts in participation from session to session are noted by several participants as an issue of concern. When Mark experiences a lack of energy in the room he becomes a ‘Weary Traveller’ and during long silences he becomes a ‘Distracted Day Dreamer’. Caitlin finds some sessions don’t have a lot of life and she responds as a ‘Lifeless Plodder’.

Theme 9: Anxiety provoked by dreams

There are several factors relating to the dreams that result in participants not warming up to progressive roles. These are:

- a) When dreams have a personal aspect for the dreamer they respond with censorship and uncertainty. For Caitlin this is enacted as ‘Strict Censor’ and for Erika the ‘Uncertain Self-Questioner’.
- b) Uncertainty about when to share dreams and what belongs in the matrix causes some participants to be conflicted. Caitlin questions whether there is a right time to say her dream as an ‘Uncertain Self-Starter’. Similarly Erika ponders over how to work with the personal bits of dreams.
- c) Comparing amounts of dreams with other participants and coming up lacking leads to Caitlin enacting the coping role of ‘Discomfited Meagre Dreamer’. When a consultant suggests there is a dream competition going on Mark responds in the fragmenting role of ‘Negative Fantasiser’.
- d) The withholding of dreams leads Mark to the coping roles of ‘Disappointed Critic’ and ‘Disillusioned Ambivalent Companion’.

- e) When an association is made about his personal life and not his dream Heath responds in the coping role of ‘Determined Boundary Setter’.

7.3.2 How the roles interact

Several of the roles interact at the beginning in a way that supports a safety orientation. These are ‘Uncertain Self-Questioner’, ‘Alert Sentry’ and ‘Worried Outcast’. These roles contain similar elements of caution and fear and are symmetrical. They are all roles that cluster around the ‘Withholding Isolate’. There are also symmetrical roles that are progressive such as ‘Generous Free Associator’ and ‘Enthusiastic Contributor’.

The interaction between the roles of the ‘Cautious Withholder’ and the ‘Generous Companionable Lover of Life’ becomes conflictual resulting in warm up to ‘Angry Withholder’ and ‘Disappointed Critic’. The ongoing experience of the ‘Withholding Isolate] in its various forms is at odds with ‘Generous Companionable Lover of Life’. This has the effect of isolating the person who is warmed up to ‘Generous Companionable Lover of Life’ which causes conflict and eventual loss of warm up to role.

On the other side of the interaction the ‘Withholding Isolate’ is motivated by a range of fears and concerns which need to be relieved before other roles emerge. Paradoxically the enactment of ‘Generous Companionable Lover of Life’ and related roles contributes towards a reduction of fears for Heath but an increase in anxiety for Mark. Once sufficient safety is established coping roles go into the background and progressive roles begin to emerge. For example, the coping role of ‘Alert Sentry’ is careful and cautious to begin with and then in response to the progressive ‘Open Learner’ takes a back seat and the ‘Trusting Companion’ comes to the fore.

The ‘Astute Systems Analyst’ observes differences between participants – sometimes this is in relation to their own functioning and sometimes it is how participants are interacting with each other or the task. For example, Heath notes that some participants made associations as a ‘Quick Thinking Wordsmith’ and he concludes that he did not have this role developed. This comparison leads him to the progressive role of ‘Emotionally Attuned Communicator’. At other times comparisons result in

coping or fragmenting roles. For example, 'Prolific Dreamer' heightens awareness of 'Discomfited Meagre Dreamer'. All participants remarked on the differences between them. Some observe that these are people that they would not normally encounter in their everyday lives. For them this was an enjoyable thing. However, for another participant the differences are alienating as he finds it hard to comprehend some people and thinks that they find it hard to comprehend him. There are also differences experienced in terms of language and comprehension.

Some roles interact in a complementary way. Examples of these are 'Individuated Dream Bearer' and 'Enjoyer of Life' as well as 'Daring Initiator' and 'Empathic Companion'.

The three main ways that the roles interact are complementary, symmetrical and conflictual.

7.3.3 Things that trigger people off to take up certain roles

Fear and anxieties are triggers that cause all participants to respond in coping and fragmenting roles. The roles that cluster around 'Withholding Isolate' are concerned with alleviating fears. Some roles arise in response to concerns experienced by participants about how others will respond to them. This occurs at all stages during the matrix. Negative experiences in previous groups cause three participants to approach this social dreaming experience warily.

7.3.4 Summary

In this section there has been an exploration of the spontaneity of the individual and the developing immediate social system of the matrix. This has been done through the analysis of role descriptions into progressive, coping and fragmenting categories. The central roles of 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life', 'Withholding Isolate' and 'Astute Systems Analyst' and their role clusters have provided the data for this analysis.

The role descriptions have then been reviewed to see how the different roles and role relationships have developed. Role descriptions of the individuals themselves and those that they experienced in other participants have provided the data for this

review. Specific areas of focus for this review have included the timing and context of when roles emerged and how they interacted. Analysis has been done of the process of warming up to progressive roles and factors that contributed to as well as obstructed their enactment. This analysis will be interpreted in Section 3 of this chapter.

7.4 Hypothesis 2

Social dreaming, to be effective requires that matrix participants and consultants maintain spontaneity.

In this section of the exploration of the social dreaming method, the focus is on the relationship between participants' spontaneity and the effectiveness of social dreaming. There will be analysis of the consultants' spontaneity in the next Chapter.

The measure of effectiveness of the social dreaming method under consideration here is to what extent work is being carried out on achievement of the task. The task of participants is to share dreams and associations from which connections can be made to the broader social system. How does participant's spontaneity impact upon the task? The analysis will focus on the following questions:

- 1) How do the roles affect the task?
- 2) What roles supported the task?
- 3) What roles didn't?

7.4.1 How do the roles affect the task?

From the presentation of the data it is evident that the roles have an impact upon the achievement of the task of social dreaming. There are some roles that support the achievement of the task of sharing dreams and/or associations, and there are some that don't.

Some roles affect achievement of the task directly and some indirectly. For example, the Meagre Dreamer does not have many dreams to share and therefore is limited in their ability to contribute to this part of the task. An example of how roles affect the

task indirectly is when the Alert Sentry wants to ensure they are not being bullied by other participants so this role censors dreams and associations until this is established.

The interaction that occurs between the roles impacts directly upon the task. The 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' encounters the 'Withholding Isolate' resulting in ambivalence and subsequent withholding of associations. When a 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' encounters another 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' there is increased enthusiasm and generosity in sharing dreams and associations. These symmetrical roles build a foundation for participants to co-operate in working together toward achieving the task. Other symmetrical roles that emerge are 'Empathic Companion' and 'Enthusiastic Contributor'.

Conflicted roles cause erratic connections with the task. Conflicted roles include 'Disappointed Curious Observer', 'Disillusioned Companion', 'Ambivalent Contributor' and 'Conflicted Naïve Inquirer'. These roles cause vacillation between working on the task and moving away from it.

7.4.2 What roles supported the task?

The roles that cluster around the central role of 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' contribute toward achievement of the task. Examples of these include 'Optimistic Truth Bearer', 'Daring Initiator', 'Appreciator of Difference', 'Trusting Enjoyer of Life' and 'Courageous Intuitive Communicator'. These are all progressive roles which support the motivation to learn about the wider social system.

7.4.3 What roles didn't support the task?

All participants describe responses in which they restrict sharing of dreams or associations during the course of the social dreaming sessions. These responses fall into the categories of coping and fragmenting roles. Examples of coping roles are 'Strict Censor', 'Cautious Withholder' and 'Distracted Day Dreamer'. Fragmenting roles include 'Petrified Statue', 'Worried Outcast' and 'Fearful Child'.

Concerns about the roles that other participants may enact have an impact upon the task. These concerns lead to limitations being made upon what is contributed to the developing matrix of dreams and associations. The 'Well Defended Guard' does not

share dreams or associations for fear of making self vulnerable. 'Compliant Nice Girl' does not want to upset anybody.

The roles that cluster around the central role of 'Withholding Isolate' are primarily concerned with alleviating fears or anxieties or being overwhelmed by them. Examples of roles that are attempting to alleviate fears are 'Cautious Withholder', 'Aggrieved Withdrawer', 'Weary Traveller', 'Angry Punitive Judge' and 'Uncertain Self-Questioner'. These are all coping roles and involve moving away from working on the task – either directly such as 'Cautious Withholder' or indirectly such as the 'Uncertain Self-Questioner', who is preoccupied with internal dialogue.

Roles in which anxiety has become overwhelming include 'Negative Fantasiser', 'Bemused Foreigner', 'Petrified Statue', 'Distracted Day Dreamer' and 'Resigned Impotent Critic'. These all create an inability to attend to the task mentally. The source of difficulty varies. For example, the 'Bemused Foreigner' cannot understand the dream and therefore feels unable to make associations. The 'Resigned Impotent Critic' feels dissatisfied but unable to improve the situation.

The 'Mindless Gossip' has a negative effect on the task. The 'Fast Moving Traveller' moves swiftly from dreams and associations, never staying in any one place for any period of time. This is variously experienced as freeing – through not getting stuck in any one place and limiting - the potential to explore any dream in depth is not realized. Depending on the context therefore this role could be working toward achievement of the task or avoidance of it.

The 'Enthusiastic Contributor' affects the task in different ways. When people feel enthusiastic about contributing dreams there is a desire to produce and present these. This is simultaneously productive and fraught. It is productive in that dreams are being generated and shared which is essential in providing the raw data for the development of the matrix to generate learning about the wider social system. However, it is also fraught as a number of other roles are then enacted which impede the task. The 'Dream Comparer' is self conscious and anxious about the quality of their dream. The 'Dream Competitor' is concerned about having the best dream or a good dream and the dreams become trophies rather than data to be used in the service

of the task. When several people warm up to the 'Enthusiastic Contributor' at the same time it skews the development of the matrix towards dreams and there is less time and attention for associations. When the 'Enthusiastic Contributor' is overdeveloped it is a coping rather than progressive role. This is progressive when it is working toward the task but coping when it becomes focused on one aspect only of the task which again potentially overloads the matrix with dreams.

7.4.4 Summary

In this section roles have been discussed in relationship to how they affect the task of sharing dreams and associations in a social dreaming matrix. Progressive roles have been identified that assist in the achievement of the task. Coping and fragmenting roles that impede the development of the task have been identified. Examples of specific roles, their stage of development and impact upon the task have been discussed.

7.5 Hypothesis 3

If reactive forces predominate in the immediate social system it becomes restrictive and the spontaneity of participants is reduced.

In this section the data is analysed from the perspective of reactive forces within the immediate social system of the social dreaming matrix. As the immediate social system consists of the developing role relationships these will be the focus of the analysis. The following questions will be explored. What reactive forces are evident? What effect do these have upon the role relationships when they are in the foreground? What roles do individual participants warm up to in response to these role relationships? What do these roles reveal about participants' spontaneity? The data from each participant will be analysed in relation to these questions.

7.5.1 Mark

The withholding of dreams by other participants is a reactive force experienced by Mark. He also regularly experiences times during the matrix in which there is tension or lack of energy. At times he feels anxiety coming up in himself which he thinks it is bouncing around between people. Mark finds it difficult to relate to other participant's dreams and thinks they have similar difficulties with his. The comment that best summarises his view of the relationships between participants when reactive forces

are present is *'it felt like starting from zero every time, so that we're not actually building anything'*.

The more that he experiences these reactive forces the more negative he becomes towards other participants and the role relationships become characterised by friction, anxiety and mistrust. Examples of roles enacted by other participants are 'Mistrusting Stranger', 'Silent Observer' and 'Withholding Isolate'. These are all coping roles.

When tension and anxiety predominates Mark responds in the fragmenting role of 'Petrified Statue'. When withholding and silence are predominating Mark warms up to the coping roles of 'Disappointed Isolate' and 'Angry Punitive Judge'.

7.5.2 Erika

Early on in the matrix Erika experiences caution and uncertainty as strong forces and responds as 'Cautious Self-Questioner'. Like Mark she observes variations from week to week in how much is able to be made out of each session. She perceives that there is a high level of emotional restraint between participants and observes that this prevents discussion of more difficult topics. This is evident when the coping role of 'Emotionally Constrained Self-Protector' is enacted by Erika and other participants. There is a potent description given by Erika where a high level of restriction is evident:

That sort of sense of things going into a black hole rather than being talked about...It's like a space, it's like something down a long way in the sense that the immediate feeling is that it's not making any ripples. It's not returning, it's not bouncing back, it's not doing, it's not processing

In response to these experiences Erika enacts coping roles of 'Disappointed Curious Observer', 'Passive Follower', 'Private Systems Linker' and 'Resigned Impotent Critic'.

7.5.3 Heath

Heath is greatly concerned that there will be controlling or dominating forces present within the relationships. While his fears are more imagined than in the actual relationships they nonetheless preoccupy him and motivate him to enact the coping

role of Alert Sentry. He remains committed to this role until he is certain that it is safe to do otherwise. When he does experience intrusive behaviour he responds in the coping role of 'Determined Boundary Setter'. On occasion Heath feels excluded when participants talk about things he doesn't understand and responds as a 'Conflicted Naïve Inquirer'. Despite wanting to understand, he does not ask but goes away and tries to work things out alone.

7.5.4 Caitlin

Reactive fears identified by Caitlin include worry about being excluded or judged and she responds in coping roles of 'Worried Outcast' and 'Strict Censor'. She notes that it is easier for participants to focus on the theme of aggression as seen in the coping role of 'Diehard Warhorse'. This creates a restriction on exploring other areas. Caitlin observes the negative impact of participants warming up to 'Curious Gossip'.

Sometimes I think it would then move into chat about, oh yes and did you hear about or whatever. And I mean I think the consultants would move it along then but somehow that would kill off the life in the matrix, that sort of chat.

Caitlin finds herself enacting 'Compliant Nice Girl' which she experiences as limiting. Sometimes she feels there is not a lot of life within the matrix and she also becomes a 'Lifeless Plodder'. She feels dissatisfied both with herself and the other participants.

7.5.5 Summary

In this section there has been analysis of the reactive forces in the role relationships of the immediate social system of the matrix. All participants experience reactive forces in the role relationships during the matrix sessions. Sometimes these are in the context of their response to other participants and at others their observations of how other participants' relationships are unfolding. The impact of these reactive forces upon individuals have been analysed by identifying the roles that they enact in response to them. These roles have been categorised into progressive, coping and fragmenting which provides a basis upon which to assess individual spontaneity. The findings of this data analysis will now be interpreted in the next section of this chapter.

7.6 Interpretation of participants' data

This section contains the interpretation of the data. There will be an exploration of the role analysis completed in the previous section to see how the analysis fits the developing and working hypotheses. The interpretation will be structured around the three hypotheses of this study:

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.

7.6.1 Hypothesis 1: There is a relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system of the matrix.

The immediate social system in social dreaming consists of the developing role relationships between participants of this social dreaming matrix. The catalyst for these developing relationships is the sharing of the dreams and associations rather than more common forms of social interaction such as conversational chatter about hobbies, homes, work or holidays. Some participants of this social dreaming matrix describe getting to know others through their dreams rather than through the usual social methods such as employment or place of residence. One participant says 'I knew more about their internal life than their public life'. Some participants find that they develop an understanding and appreciation of each other through the different kinds of dreamers that they are and the dreams that they bring.

The role analysis demonstrates that at the beginning of the social dreaming matrix all participants are attuned to the developing relationships between them. There is considerable thought given to the nature and type of responses that will be made to them. Each participant identifies particular thoughts and feelings about how other participants will respond to them. This then affects how they warm up to participating in the early stages of the matrix.

For example, the 'Alert Sentry' is concerned about whether bullying or undue influence will be exercised by other participants. The 'Worried Outcast' is oriented to whether the other participants will include or exclude her. The 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' expects that there will be free flowing contributions to which he can contribute. The 'Cautious Self-Questioner' notes all participants are slow to reveal too much of themselves in the early stages. The warm up to each of these roles shows that each participant is influenced by the developing relationships – real or imagined. When the role relationships are characterised by fear, anxiety and self doubt spontaneity is reduced as can be seen in the coping roles identified above.

A link can be seen between experiences of relationships in previous group situations and the effect this has upon this how participants warm up to this one. For example the 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' is born out of experiencing constructive and open relationships in a previous group. The 'Alert Sentry' has been engaged in battle with participants in other group settings. These roles have emerged in response to positive and negative experiences in previous group situations. They are an example of an old response being used in a new situation which is often indication of lower levels of spontaneity and in this case has arisen in response to previous relationships. Participants have brought with them memories of previous encounters which may or may not have any basis in reality in this situation.

As the matrix continues the developing role relationships continue to be a factor in influencing participants' responses. When several participants are oriented to safety and enact coping roles this leads to participant Mark losing his warm up to a progressive role. He then warms up to coping and fragmenting roles being unable to sustain his spontaneity when faced with the ongoing experience of coping and fragmenting roles of other participants.

As well as reducing spontaneity there is also evidence of the developing role relationships enhancing individual spontaneity. When dreams and associations are being shared by several participants in the progressive role of 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' other progressive roles emerge. The central role of 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' is a significant progressive role enacted by all participants.

The maintenance of warm up to progressive roles is influenced by a range of factors. One of these is the connections between participants. The type of connection experienced in the relationships is described by all participants as significant to their participation. Where participants feel connected and trusting of each other they are more comfortable in sharing their dreams and associations. Progressive roles such as 'Enthusiastic Contributor' and 'Open Learner' emerge. One participant is uplifted to see that there are positive relationships between all participants and warms up to being a 'Trusting Companion'.

Where there is an absence of connection with others, willingness and capacity to contribute is diminished. For example, one participant observes people are unable to connect with him at times and that they do not take any initiative. He experiences erratic and unsustainable connections and is disheartened. The coping role of 'Disappointed Isolate' emerges. All respondents display sensitivity to whether or not they or their contributions will be accepted.

The data analysis so far demonstrates that the developing role relationships affect the individual's spontaneity. There is also evidence of individual spontaneity having an impact upon the developing relationships. An example of this is when the conflicted role of 'Ambivalent Contributor' warms up to sharing a dream and observes that this has an enlivening effect upon the other participants.

The roles that are enacted around sharing dreams and contributions vary in their nature and effect. For example, the 'Strict Censor' leaves some parts of the dream out and the 'Discomfited Meagre Dreamer' doesn't have many dreams to share. Heath decides to experiment with sharing his dreams at different times as a 'Purposeful Action Researcher'. This heightens Mark's frustrations due to delayed and erratic contributions being made and he warms up to the coping role of 'Disillusioned Ambivalent Companion'. The process of learning for Heath may well have inadvertently created difficulty for Mark.

The difference in how and when the dreams are shared is one contributing factor towards the differences from session to session described by all participants. There

are times when participants are all warmed up to roles around the 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' and at others the role cluster of 'Withholding Isolate'. When the matrix of dreams and associations is lively progressive roles of 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' and 'Fearless Truth Bearer' emerge. When the matrix is lifeless coping roles of 'Disappointed Visionary' and 'Lifeless Plodder' are enacted.

Role relationships are experienced which contain intimacy, withdrawal, enjoyment, appreciation of difference, fear of difference, fear of being attacked, need to protect vulnerability, increased freedom to use intuition, closer relationships and more distance in relationships. For some the matrix experience is confirming of their relationships with others. For others relationships are characterized by fear and suspicion. One participant has increased confidence in groups and another has increased suspicion wanting to ensure he gets to know group members and feels comfortable with them. They represent different sides of the same coin of intimacy: the motivation to have close, trusting, reciprocal relationships and the fear of harm that can come to oneself in that level of closeness.

7.6.2 Summary

In this matrix most people did not know each other so there are few previously established role relationships that people draw upon for connections. This is a different situation to matrices with a group of people who work together or are from a particular community where there are many role relationships already developed. The space before and after a session may be used in a conversational way but when the session begins the focus shifts to the work of building the matrix. This highlights the work of social dreaming as being to share dreams and associations with the relationships being of secondary importance. Although this may be the intention of social dreaming each respondent of this study demonstrates through their interviews that they are also acutely aware of the developing immediate social system and their relationship to it.

You might wonder if these people had been in the same matrix, as in some ways their experiences vary so much. One person feels increasingly imprisoned. Another person delights in feeling free to make associations to dreams without justification. One person could spend a much longer time in the matrix. Another feels they have had

their fingers burnt and that this matrix provides the yardstick for the type of social dreaming matrix that they would never participate in again. One person thoroughly enjoys the difference between people. Another experiences suspicion, another hostility. One participant feels the relationships are becoming increasingly free, while another that they are increasingly rigid. These different experiences influence the roles that each participant warms up to during the sessions. For some roles become more progressive, for others they become fragmenting. One participant feels mainly positive to other participants, another becomes increasingly positive, and one feels increasingly negative while another feels consistently positive and appreciative.

It is evident from the data analysis that participants have markedly different experiences of the role relationships in this social dreaming matrix. However one thing that all participants have in common is that their experience of the developing role relationships affects their responses and therefore their spontaneity. This data analysis has shown that the roles that individuals warm up to are influenced by their experience of the roles that others enact.

These examples highlight the dynamic nature of the relationship between individual spontaneity and the developing role relationships. It is never simply a one-way cause and effect but a complex and constant interweaving between the two. The impact of this relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system upon the effectiveness of social dreaming will be discussed in the next section.

7.7 Hypothesis 2: Social dreaming, to be effective requires that matrix participants and consultants maintain spontaneity

It is hypothesized in this study that the effectiveness of social dreaming requires the maintenance of spontaneity by participants and consultants. As this is a study of the social dreaming method rather than its outcomes, the focus is on the effectiveness of the process. In this case it is the task of sharing dreams and associations that contributes to the effectiveness of social dreaming because it is through this process connections are able to be made to the broader social system.

In the data analysis role descriptions have been made and categorised into progressive, coping and fragmenting roles. This provides a basis upon which to assess spontaneity levels. These roles will now be interpreted with regard to their impact upon the task. There will be discussion of how spontaneity contributes to or impedes work on the task. Other factors that emerged from the data analysis that impact upon participants' spontaneity and working towards the task will also be discussed.

The capacity to share dreams and associations is greatly enhanced when participants enact the central role of 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' and those roles that cluster around this. These progressive roles express and support the motivating forces of participants to engage with each other around the task. They indicate a high level of spontaneity which assists in achievement of the task.

The central role of 'Withholding Isolate' is common across all participants and has a significant negative effect upon the achievement of the task. When a participant is warmed up to this role or any of the roles that cluster around it they restrict or withhold their dreams and/or associations. Some of these are coping roles, where decisions to withhold are purposeful and intentional. Some are fragmenting and characterised by such high anxiety that it is just not possible to attend to the task.

The stage of development of a role impacts upon the task. For example, the 'Narrator of Violence' shares dreams about aggression and makes associations related to fears of being attacked or being the attacker. This could be seen as evidence of progress toward achievement of the task as dreams and associations are being shared. However, closer scrutiny of the expression of the role and the context within which it is enacted leads to a different conclusion. One participant proposes that participants are so comfortable with discussing the area of aggression that it becomes a recurring theme as a preference over any new material. In this case the 'Narrator of Violence' is actually an overdeveloped role. Spontaneity in this case is low as this is an old response to the new situation and it is actually limiting the breadth of possible exploration.

Roles that cluster around the 'Withholding Isolate' all result in impeding progress on the task. However, there are a range of motivations and emotional states underlying their enactment. The 'Silent Observer' does not know what to do, whereas the 'Fearful Child' is worried about judgment. So although the result is the same in outward behaviour in that dreams and associations are not shared, there are many reasons for this. This is a significant point when thinking about the spontaneity of the consultant in their work and will be discussed further in the next chapter.

The work of the consultant has an impact upon the task. Two participants describe a consultant intervening to redirect the participants to their work. For one this is a positive experience as it is a relief to bring this out in the open when 'everybody' is experiencing the frustration of the work not being done. For another participant the consultant's intervention is experienced as criticism and provokes angst and negativity and they warm up to coping roles.

Conflicted roles have a direct impact upon the task. They take up the time and energy of a participant when they are being pulled between two different forces. Examples include ambivalence and self questioning.

The data demonstrates at times that there are difficulties that affect the capacity to share dreams and associations. The fluctuation in participation between sessions is noted and all participants identify times where there is an absence of life in the matrix. The data analysis shows that at these times participants tend to warm up to coping and fragmenting roles. This is evidence of reduced spontaneity and impacts upon the participants' capacity to work on the task. For example, some coping roles affect the way that dreams are shared. The reactive fears underlying the coping roles lead to the generation of restrictive solutions such as delaying, censoring or editing dreams. Similarly fragmenting roles affect the capacity to attend to the work of making associations to the dreams. High levels of anxiety prevalent in fragmenting roles result in a participant being unable to maintain a mental focus on the task. Likewise the physical tension and discomfort that arises from anxiety serves as a major distraction from the task.

Where there is an enabling solution generated in response to a difficulty, work on the task continues. Enabling solutions include:

- valuing dreams whatever they are and sharing them;
- accepting feeling ignorant and trying new things;
- enjoying exercising intuition;
- inquiring when not understanding;
- experimenting with when and how to contribute;
- luxuriating in imagery;
- appreciating difference.

When participants enact enabling solutions they also enact progressive roles.

There will be further in-depth discussion on the different factors that influence enabling or restrictive solutions in the next section of Hypothesis 3 which explores the relationship between spontaneity, reactive forces and a restrictive immediate social system.

7.7.1 Summary

In this section there has been an exploration of the relationship between maintenance of spontaneity by participants and the effectiveness of the social dreaming method. This has been done by reviewing the role analysis to assess levels of spontaneity as they emerge in relationship to the task. The role analysis shows that where participants warm up to progressive roles they continue to work on the task of sharing dreams and associations. Their capacity to do this is evidence of maintenance of spontaneity.

Where difficulties are encountered and coping and fragmenting roles are enacted in response to these, participants do not continue to share dreams and associations. Some difficulties arise in a participant's warm up to the dreams and associations and some are in response to the role relationships. When roles are conflicted or overdeveloped, capacity to work on the task is diminished. Coping, fragmenting, conflicted and overdeveloped roles are all evidence of inability to maintain spontaneity and reduce the effectiveness of the social dreaming method.

The enactment of coping and fragmenting roles is often in response to reactive fears or forces. There will be further exploration of this area in the next section.

7.8 Hypothesis 3: If reactive forces predominate in the immediate social system it becomes restrictive and the spontaneity of participants is reduced.

In this section the findings from the data analysis will be interpreted in relationship to the impact of reactive forces upon the immediate social system and subsequently individual spontaneity. The data was analysed to identify what reactive forces were actually evident from the interview transcripts and the effect these had upon the role relationships when they were dominant. Subsequently, there was an analysis of the roles that individuals enacted in regard to their levels of spontaneity. The results of this analysis will now be explored and specifically discussed in relationship to the hypothesis.

First it is necessary to establish the presence of reactive forces in the role relationships that form the immediate social system. Reactive forces consist of fears and anxieties that arise in response to working on a task. Analysis of the data shows that all participants in this social dreaming matrix experienced reactive forces. A number of these are discussed in Section 1 where the data demonstrates there is a relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system of the matrix. There are also a number of examples of reactive fears given in Section 2 when demonstrating the link between maintaining spontaneity and effectiveness of social dreaming.

The data reveals the presence of many reactive forces experienced by participants. Examples of these include fear of being excluded, judged or bullied. When these fears are in the foreground, restrictive solutions are enacted as seen in the enactment of coping and fragmenting roles characterised by withholding, alienation or fear. These in turn contribute towards the development of the immediate social system. For example, a participant warms up to delaying sharing their dreams. This solution to their fears then contributes to the development of a restrictive social system, as seen in the restrictive effect it has upon another participant who begins to do the same.

There are several references in the interviews to times in the matrix when there is a change in the momentum of the matrix. One person describes it as things going into a black hole, another as a sudden loss of energy. At these times people warm up to roles characterized by silence such as ‘Silent Witness’ and stop communicating with each other. Relationships are described as being fraught with high levels of tension, or feeling as though they are beginning from zero for each session. At these times it seems that the matrix has ground to a halt and the relationships and work on the task are restricted.

There are a number of roles that connect around the experiences of dissatisfaction with the way that the matrix of dreams and associations unfolds. All participants describe times where they think there are barriers to achieving the depth of learning that could be possible within the matrix. Examples of how work on the task becomes restricted include withholding of dreams and social chat ‘killing off’ the life of the matrix.

When people experience the reactive forces in the immediate social system of the matrix they lose their spontaneity demonstrated by falling silent. Descriptions of the quality of the silence make it clear these are often not thoughtful reflective times. These experiences happen unexpectedly and provoke anxiety, disappointment and a sense that the potential of the matrix is not being realized. The reactive forces have become prominent and spontaneity of participants drops.

Reactive forces are seen in the central role of ‘Withholding Isolate’. The roles identified from the transcripts and role clusters show that there are a range of different world views, emotional states and actions that are linked to this central role. The whole role system is characterised by diminished willingness or capacity to work on the task of social dreaming. There are differences between the natures of each role cluster but they lead to the same result. When participants are warmed up to these roles the role relationships become restricted – in terms of expression to each other, becoming self absorbed or caught up in internal conflicts and not working on the task. These coping and fragmenting roles reveal a reduced level of spontaneity.

The enactment of an overdeveloped role also contributes to a restrictive environment. Examples of this include when the 'Narrator of Violence' and 'Avoider of Intimacy' allow only a small number of themes to be explored – some repetitively and others superficially. They all have the effect of limiting anything new being introduced to the social dreaming matrix. The overdeveloped role of 'Narrator of Violence' is not contributing to progress but to a restrictive immediate social system in which only certain themes are given expression. It is used as a defence against exploration of other themes such as intimacy or desire. The 'Avoider of Intimacy' is also part of this set of role relationships.

There are overdeveloped roles related to niceness or politeness. One person says she is too nice. Others don't want to upset anyone. As these attitudes are repeatedly enacted they become an accepted norm in the immediate social system. They are coping roles -moving towards or away - and they contribute toward restrictive social system functioning. At these times, caution is taken with what is said and responses are oriented to managing fear rather than making progress with the task.

Much of the time, most participants demonstrate an awareness of the changing dynamics as is evident in the central role of 'Astute Systems Analyst'. The difficulties that are occurring are observed and reflections are made about them.

When the role relationships have become restrictive, different solutions are generated by participants. On the whole participants warm up to coping and fragmenting roles in response to the difficulties that affect their participation in the matrix. One person says it is not their responsibility; it is that of the consultants. Others feel conflicted about how and when this could be done. A common response is to work on the difficulties privately. One person takes issues from the matrix to their individual psychotherapy. Another works to pick up on the things they think are being missed and bring them back to the matrix at another time.

One participant takes up an active role in attempting to discuss difficulties, but is met by 'Withholding Isolates'. Most participants express a desire to have something better

happening. However, they then warm up to roles characterised by wishful thinking, passive observation and working privately to generate a solution such as the 'Private Systems Linker'. All participants warm up to the roles that cluster around 'Withholding Isolate'. Subsequently participants feel unable to improve the situation, make efforts which fail or reduce their contributions.

For example, two people notice things are going awry in the immediate social system but feel unable to say anything about the situation. Both are concerned about being seen to be critical. An example is given where a consultant suggest there is competitiveness occurring between dreamers. A participant feels offended by this and is unable to effectively resolve this with the consultant. Another participant notices problems but thinks it is the consultant's work to address these. These unresolved conflicts around criticism and taking up one's own authority and leadership interfere with the ongoing work of building the matrix.

There is a common view expressed in the data that at times each participant felt unable to address the difficulties that they experienced in the immediate social system. The reasons for this ranged from being incapacitated by high levels of anxiety (fragmenting role) to withdrawal (coping role) when the solution is not considered the work of the participant. The role analysis of responses to these situations reveals roles that are mainly coping and fragmenting roles. This indicates a reduced level of spontaneity by participants.

7.8.1 Summary

All participants describe restrictive experiences in the roles and role relationships. They notice these times from the role of an 'Astute Systems Analyst'. However, the majority of solutions generated are restrictive in themselves as they are aimed at alleviating fears and anxieties. They see this but are caught in the anxiety. There is also a general sense of uncertainty and passivity about what to do when the immediate social system has become restrictive. The data shows that mostly participants keep silent about the difficulties experienced with subsequent reduced spontaneity. Consequently the majority of responses are coping and fragmenting roles. This indicates reduced spontaneity of participants.

The question is raised about who is responsible for addressing restriction that occurs in the immediate social system. This area will be considered further in Chapter 7 when exploring the work of the consultant.

7.9 Linking of hypotheses

In this section there will be discussion of how the three hypotheses are linked.

The first hypothesis argues that there is a relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system of the social dreaming matrix. This is demonstrated through the role analysis which reveals a clear link between the spontaneity of an individual and the developing role relationships of the immediate social system.

The nature of the relationship between individual spontaneity and the developing role relationships becomes inextricably linked with the second hypothesis. Interpretation of the data shows that when the immediate social system is experienced as a nurturing place, warm up to progressive roles increases and dreams and associations are shared freely so work is being done on the task. There are then links that emerge between the third and second hypothesis. When the immediate social system is characterized by restrictive forces the effectiveness of social dreaming is affected due to the reduced spontaneity of individuals which then limits their contributions to the matrix of dreams and associations.

When reactive forces predominate and individual spontaneity is reduced this has a negative effect upon the effectiveness of social dreaming. For example an overdeveloped role such as 'Narrator of Violence' is oriented to restricting the range of themes that can be explored. The fear of having to broach confronting and unfamiliar topics is then alleviated, but the role relationships become limited in their range of associations to the dreams. The resulting restrictive role relationships then also have an effect upon the task.

Another way in which the three hypotheses are linked is through the role relationships themselves. The data analysis shows the role relationships can become such a focus that attention is paid to them rather than to the achievement of the task. When

participants become preoccupied or adversely affected by the role relationships their responses aim to alleviate fears. This creates a warm up to coping and fragmenting roles rather than those which contribute to progress on the task of sharing dreams and associations. The enactment of coping and fragmenting roles indicates a reduced level of spontaneity and this has an impact upon the effectiveness of the social dreaming matrix. The role relationships therefore influence individual spontaneity by enhancing or reducing it. This links to either the maintenance of spontaneity and effectiveness of the social dreaming matrix, or to the reduction of spontaneity in response to restrictive role relationships.

While participants are aware that the developing relationships are not the focus of social dreaming they all describe times where they do become focal for them. All participants describe awareness of and sensitivity to the developing relationships. These role relationships then affect participants' capacity to attend to the task. There are examples of coping roles such as withholding or censoring that influence what is shared. There are fragmenting roles where anxiety is so high that to attend to the dreams at all is extremely difficult. There is evidence of conflict arising from this where a person is aware that they are warmed up to anxiety and wanting to make associations to the dreams but are unable to do so due to being distracted by tensions within the immediate social system.

Communication about difficulties in the developing relationships is not an accepted norm within this social dreaming matrix. When a participant attempts to discuss difficulties in how the relationships are developing this is not permitted. Some participants keep their dissatisfactions with the social system private. Perhaps this is due to their awareness that the developing relationships are not the work of social dreaming. However, the data shows that when the difficulties are not worked through this causes a person to warm up to coping and/or fragmenting roles. These then reduce capacity to engage with the task. The result of this for one participant is alienation, anxiety and dissatisfaction. For another it is to try and bring the topics back at a later time. When the reactive forces stay in the foreground for a person their

spontaneity is reduced, the task is avoided and the impact of the role relationships is restrictive.

7.9.1 Summary

The analysis of data from the participant interviews demonstrates that there is a relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system of the matrix. Each respondent describes situations in the matrix where their spontaneity has been heightened or diminished by their experience of the role relationships that they experience. This effect occurs from the individual to the immediate social system and vice versa.

Spontaneity has been assessed by the making of role descriptions and analysis of these into categories of progressive, coping and fragmenting. Progressive roles are evident when participants warm up to their own motivating forces, such as wanting to learn through sharing of dreams and associations with each other. At times this is in response to the expression of motivating forces by others. Coping and fragmenting roles are enacted when the reactive forces are in the foreground for the individual or within the role relationships (real or imagined). When motivating forces are in the foreground spontaneity is high. When reactive forces are in the foreground spontaneity is diminished.

The enactment of coping and fragmenting roles contributes toward restrictive social system functioning. Restrictive social systems then contribute further toward reduced spontaneity of individuals. Reduced spontaneity restricts the data available to the developing matrix as dreams and associations are limited, censored or withheld. When the immediate social system is restrictive so is access to learning about the broader social system through the social dreaming method.

This in turn has a direct impact upon the effectiveness of the social dreaming matrix as seen in the capacity of participants to work on the task. When participants are warmed up to progressive roles they have a high level of spontaneity and willingly contribute their dreams and confidently share their associations. When they are preoccupied with fears they warm up to roles that are oriented to alleviating these and

become withdrawn and withholding. The role relationships themselves then become the focus and participants' responses are oriented towards these rather than the work of the matrix. This reduces the effectiveness of the social dreaming method.

The way that participants warm up to sharing dreams for the developing matrix has an effect upon participants' spontaneity. There are differences in the amount and type of dreams of the participants. One person describes a tough dream, competition that she can't match as she is an occasional dreamer. She sifts through her dreams to find interesting ones. A consultant suggests that there is a competition about who has a better dream. Competition is evidence of coping roles – moving against each other. From the beginning some people have dreams with strong narrative while others have fragments. Comparisons of dreaming styles are made. This influences participants' attitudes toward the dreams they choose to bring. It is as if there is the idea there is some dream that is more suited to social dreaming, rather than accepting the dream that does emerge and trust that it will be worthy in itself. The progressive role of 'Alert, Accepting Dreamer' indicates a high level of spontaneity that results in sharing of dreams while the 'Censoring Self-Critic' withholds a dream or some of its content therefore orienting the matrix to safety which if maintained limits exploration.

The primary purpose of social dreaming is to learn about the broader social system through the sharing of dreams and associations. This occurs in the medium of the developing relationships within the immediate social system. While the immediate social system is not intended to be a central focus of the social dreaming method it is a factor in its effectiveness. The building of the immediate social system relationships is as important as the building of the matrix itself in contributing to the effectiveness of the social dreaming method, and spontaneity is a key element.

7.10: Exploration of Spontaneity in a ‘Mini-matrix’

7.10.1 Introduction

A socio-analytic symposium was held in Tasmania, Australia by the Australian Institute of Socio-analysis (AISA). I saw this as an opportunity to get together with a group of interested professional colleagues who could be introduced to the social dreaming method as well as assist me to deepen my understanding of spontaneity in social dreaming. With this in mind I successfully applied to present a work in progress paper which included an experiential activity. There were three parts to this presentation. The first was a short introduction to the social dreaming method. This was followed by a ten minute experiential activity in which a dream was presented and those present were invited to make associations and connections. This dream was shared with the researcher by an interviewee who is a matrix participant in this study during their interview. The third part of the session was a ten minute plenary in which participants were asked to describe factors that enhanced and/or obstructed their spontaneity to make associations and connections. Each of the three sections of the session will now be described and the results presented and discussed.

7.10.2 Section 1: Introduction

An overview of a range of some of the different thoughts over the ages about dreams was presented. These included ideas about dreams being a way to process the activities of the day, as a source of connection with a higher power and as a means to build communities. An image was shown to represent each one of these ideas. As the social dreaming process stimulates use of the creative, imaginative mind it was thought that using pictures was a fitting medium for the presentation. It was also thought that these images would be a good stimulus for participants to then proceed with the associative processes.

7.10.3 Section 2: Experiential activity – a ‘mini’ social dreaming matrix

I presented a dream that had been shared by one of the matrix participants in this study during their face to face interview. The person who had given me the dream was an associate member of AISA and had at one stage been planning to come to the conference.

As the dream had been given to me in the course of my research I thought it was fitting to share in this presentation and gained consent from the dreamer to do so. On a purely practical note the time constraints of the session meant that there wasn't actually a lot of time available. So, while ideologically it may have been better for a dream to come from the people attending the symposium session my anxiety that this may take some time resulted in taking a 'shortcut' for the purpose of getting the associations 'out on the table' so there was something to reflect upon.

The dream:

I had previously written an article about reconciliation and it got published in a Tasmanian newspaper, and some people had read it and they said oh gee I read your article and we were getting together a group of people, and in this group that were about to march because John Howard was about to make a speech, and what he was going to do after the report and things like that, so we were going off to listen to him speak and on the way in this group was Cathy Freeman and she said look I was down in Tasmania and I saw your article and I read it and it was quite terrific and she said I've actually written an article myself, and she'd written it on a piece of paper, it was very unusual, like the back of a Cadburys chocolate wrapper...

A large amount of associations were made very quickly with the majority of people present contributing something. My experience was of being on a roller coaster and I felt great delight and appreciation at the generosity with which people shared their associations. I thought that some people remained connected to me in my role as the workshop presenter and communicated their association or connection directly to me. This reminds me of other matrices in which people address themselves to a consultant.

7.10.4 Section 3: Reflections upon spontaneity

Participants were asked to reflect upon their experience of making associations to the dream. They were given the following two questions to consider:

- 1) What enhanced your spontaneity to make associations and connections?
- 2) What reduced your spontaneity to make associations and connections?

There was then a 10 minute period in which people were invited to communicate their responses to these questions. The following reflections were made in this time:

7.10.5 Factors that enhanced spontaneity:

- wanting to say their association
- having a strong link to childhood memories from the dream
- experiencing this exercise as being part of the conference
- determination : thought association was unspeakable and made a decision to say it immediately as felt that if waited would not have been able to say it
- strong positive connections to the dream : relating to the success of the Sydney Olympics
- presence of a generosity of spirit

7.10.6 Factors that reduced spontaneity:

- physical position in the seating arrangement: a person sitting on the outside described feeling on the outside of the activity
- the number of associations: felt overwhelmed by the number of associations
- the rate of the associations: feeling that the speed of the associations made caused them to feel as though there was no space to put in their own
- self criticism: a person described thinking that their association was unacceptable
- feelings of ignorance: a person described thinking that there were many knowledgeable comments being made and they experienced themselves as not feeling knowledgeable enough to make a contribution
- what are the rules?
- never been to anything like this before (confided in me privately afterwards that felt too anxious to say anything)
- uncertainty about what an association actually was
- uncertainty about when to say an association – where does it fit?
- the dream being from outside the group (another person immediately challenged this saying “was it?”)

7.10.7 Analysis

There is some resonance between these identified factors and the role descriptions that were created from the participants’ interview data in the previous section of this

chapter. Each stated factor that enhances or reduces spontaneity is reviewed according to its fit as an element of a previously identified role description. These factors are then grouped with the relevant role. With the exception of making a strong link to childhood memories all the factors identified find some resonance with previously identified roles. The factors that enhance and reduce spontaneity are linked with the role descriptions with which they resonate in the following tables:

Table 4: Factors that enhance spontaneity with role descriptions

Role description from participant data	Factors that enhanced spontaneity
Generous Companionable Lover of Life	Wanting to share association Presence of generosity of spirit Relating to successful Olympics
Intrepid Explorer	Determined to share the ‘unspeakable’
Experiential Action Learner	Experiencing activity as part of conference Strong link to childhood memories

Table 5: Factors that reduce spontaneity with role descriptions

Role description from participant data	Factors that reduced spontaneity
Uncertain Self-Questioner	What are the rules? What is an association? Where does the association belong? Not knowledgeable enough
Fast Moving Traveller	Large amount of associations Speed of associations
Bemused Foreigner	Sitting on the outside The dream is from outside the group
Petrified Statue	Too anxious to say anything
Strict Censor	Thinks association is unacceptable

7.10.8 Summary

Participants of a 'mini-matrix' make associations and connections to a dream shared with them. They identify a range of factors that enhance or reduce their spontaneity to make associations and connections to this dream. These factors have been compared with role descriptions identified from participants' data earlier in this chapter. A strong resonance is evident between these factors and the role descriptions. The majority of identified factors clearly link as elements to these roles. The repeated pattern of these roles through this chapter confirms the strength of their descriptions.

Chapter 8: Consultant Data Analysis

8.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to extend and expand the understanding of the work of the consultant to a social dreaming matrix. Since the introduction of social dreaming a clear statement has been made, and endures, to direct the focus of the consultant. This is to make connections between the dreams and associations to the broader social system, but there is little else published in the way of supporting how this leadership function is taken up effectively. It is argued that the consultant has a leadership function that is unique to social dreaming and as such requires some ‘fleshing out’. It is the intention of this chapter to develop a framework for thinking about and enacting the work of making connections between the dreams and associations and the broader social system. It will do this by a detailed examination of each of the roles taken up by consultants in this research.

There will be a systematic approach to analysing the data from email questionnaires and face to face interviews with people who have worked as consultants to social dreaming matrices. The aim of this analysis is to identify other elements/ dimensions of the consultant’s work that contribute to/ support the primary task. This analysis will be linked to hypothesis two which is: social dreaming, to be effective, requires that matrix participants and consultants maintain spontaneity. The analysis explores the relationship between the maintenance of consultants’ spontaneity and the effectiveness of social dreaming. Of particular interest is the identification of roles consultants’ perceive they enact which contribute toward an effective social dreaming matrix. There is also exploration of consultants’ observations of participants functioning in the social dreaming process and this is used to inform discussion around hypotheses two and three. Hypothesis three states that if reactive forces predominate in the immediate social system it becomes restrictive and the spontaneity of participants is reduced. The data analysis identifies roles and themes which reveal the spontaneity of participants as perceived by the matrix consultants.

There are two main areas of focus in this chapter. They relate to the spontaneity of the consultants and their perceived spontaneity of participants. The first is the spontaneity of the consultant. As mentioned in an earlier chapter the stated work of a consultant to

a social dreaming matrix is to make connections between the dreams and associations. However this does not include all the things that the consultant actually does or all of the things that may be required of them in order for a social dreaming matrix to be successful in connecting with learning about the broader social system. It is hypothesized that as well as the task stated above there are a range of other secondary tasks that are required for a consultant to be effective. These tasks are related to a number of the elements of the social dreaming method including the dreams, associations and the immediate social system of the matrix. Questions in the semi-structured interviews have been formulated around these central elements of the social dreaming method. A range of questions are asked to discover how consultants work with the different elements of the social dreaming method themselves.

The second focus is about consultants' observations of participants' spontaneity. Consultants are also asked what they have observed in the way participants go about the sharing of dreams and associations. This enables exploration of hypotheses two and three from the experience and perspective of the consultant.

I argue that the achievement of these secondary tasks contributes directly to the achievement of the primary task of the consultant. It is further hypothesised that a significant factor in the achievement of both the primary and secondary tasks is the spontaneity level of the consultant. Therefore the exploration of secondary tasks in this chapter will be done in relationship to spontaneity theory with analysis done wherever possible from the perspective of role theory (Clayton 1994). Role descriptions will be made from the responses in the interviews. From these findings the work of the consultant will be discussed.

Further areas for consideration in this analysis are the spontaneity of the consultant in:

- 1) the consultant's capacity to contribute to the development of a progressive immediate social system;
- 2) containing anxiety of participants by responding in progressive ways to the fragmenting and/or coping roles so that the immediate social system of the matrix is not restrictive in an ongoing way resulting in limitations being placed on the sharing of dreams and associations.

The findings in this chapter are:

- 1) the roles that consultants take up
- 2) themes and roles that participants take up from the consultants' perceptions
- 3) themes from consultants' experiences of social dreaming
- 4) the future of social dreaming as seen by the consultants

The major finding from the consultants' data is that in addition to the usual task mentioned there are a range of secondary tasks that consultants attend to. These tasks are achieved through the enactment of particular roles. In summary the roles that have been discovered are:

Table 6: Roles that assist with secondary tasks of the consultant

Role No.	Role description
1.	Relaxed Welcoming Host
2.	Coherent Objective Educator
3.	Patient Alert Witness
4.	Clear Thinking Systems Analyst
5.	Dream Weaver
6.	Focused Active Listener
7.	Mindful Open Learner
8.	Creative Artist
9.	Dream Midwife
10.	Orchestra Conductor

The chapter will examine and elucidate the data in support of these findings.

Because this chapter aims to expand the thinking of practitioners about the role of the consultant in social dreaming, for people who are already working with social dreaming, it gives them an opportunity to reflect upon their practice in relationship to what their colleagues have experienced and learnt. They can consider the validity of the secondary tasks identified and the relevance of them to how they are working in the social dreaming method.

For people who are at the beginning of their work with social dreaming the identification of secondary tasks and central roles can assist in fleshing out the framework which underlies the primary task of making connections between the dreams and associations.

For people wanting to develop their leadership capacity in the social dreaming method this chapter provides a catalyst for reflection upon areas of functioning that may require development. It also provides a framework for thinking about social dreaming from a systems perspective. Spontaneity always exists in relationship to others so is a crucial factor in working with the two significant systems of social dreaming – the matrix of dreams and associations and the immediate social system of roles and role relationships between participants.

In the interviews, the word ‘role’ is used to describe the work of the person who takes responsibility for being a consultant. It is unlikely that respondents would have been thinking of the word ‘role’ from the perspective of spontaneity theory; more likely that they would use the common sense of the idea of role. However, in their answers there is sufficient description from which to glean the spirit of the work and use this as a basis for role descriptions in terms of spontaneity theory. So, the term ‘role’ as used in the interview questions is from the broader perspective of the work of the consultant.

This chapter is of particular value to the study as it explores the experiences of people who have been consultants to social dreaming matrices in different countries and contexts. As little has been studied or written about this, these findings can contribute to the development of thinking and practice of the consultant for the benefit of the whole method.

8.1.1 Use of the term consultant

At the time the questionnaire was constructed the term consultant was used for the people who took up the responsibility for the running and leadership of a social dreaming venture. However, there has subsequently been some debate about what the most suitable term should be. The notion of consultant was rejected by some people as not accurately fitting the nature of the work that the person did. There were also the

connotations to the 'group relations' notion of consultant which was thought to interfere with peoples' ability to work with the dreams.

Lawrence decided to use Bion's original word which was 'taker', but in America questions arose over what the taker actually took (Lawrence 2002 IV p2). The idea of a host was then introduced by Martin Walker. Similarly to Lawrence, he was aiming to differentiate the role from group consultants and to highlight that it was non-expert in nature. Walker (2002 IV p1) describes the work of the host as to provide a welcoming place for dreams. Lawrence accepted and adopted the term and subsequently a number of people began to refer to themselves as hosts. There continues to be further debate over whether this is a suitable term. This is reflected in the analysis of data in this chapter where interviewees use the words 'consultant', 'host' and 'taker' in their responses.

It is argued here that the ongoing debate about what this role is called occurs because the work itself is not clearly defined or understood. I don't think any of the terms really suit the role and wonder if this is due to the fact that the role itself has yet to fully evolve through in-depth experiences over time in a range of settings, particularly long term matrices, from which the nature of the work can be clearly defined. This chapter is intended to make a contribution towards a deeper understanding of the work of the consultant and may help in this dilemma.

I have chosen to stay with the term consultant although I don't think it is an accurate term for the breadth of work that is done. I was asked by one participant to change the word to host in this study as they think it represents the work more accurately than the term consultant. While host does have a different nuance than consultant and is more inclusive in representing some of the work done it does not seem to any more accurately capture the whole of the nature of the work. In Australia, the term consultant has been the most commonly used term and in the absence of any better descriptor I have decided to stay with this for the time being.

8.1.2 Structure of the chapter

The structure follows the questions in Appendix B used in the email questionnaires and interviews of consultants. The first part of this chapter contains the demographics

of the consultants including their professional backgrounds and current roles (i.e. the first question). This is followed by a description of the matrices that they have consulted to including the context and some details about participants (i.e. question 2). The rest of the chapter is structured around the questions 3 - 7 the answers to which form the body of the data to be analysed.

The data analysis is linked to two hypotheses. These are:

Hypothesis 2: Social dreaming, to be effective requires that matrix participants and consultants maintain spontaneity. The previous chapter explored participants' spontaneity and this one will focus upon the consultants.

Hypothesis 3: If reactive forces predominate in the immediate social system it becomes restrictive and the spontaneity of participants is reduced.

A combination of role analysis and thematic analysis has been used to analyse the data.

8.2 Presentation and analysis of the data

This section contains the demographics of the consultants that are interviewed for this study and the context of the matrices to which they consult. The first two questions are:

Question 1: Demographics

Age

Professional background

Current role

Question 2: Matrix logistics

How many matrices have you participated in?

What context were they in?

What was the purpose of each matrix?

What sort of people were in the matrices?

What motivated you to participate in the matrix?

The responses to these questions will now be presented.

8.2.1 Question 1: Demographics

In this question consultants are asked to describe their professional backgrounds and current work roles. There were two women and six men interviewed. Three people were interviewed face to face – one woman and two men – including Gordon Lawrence. Five people completed email questionnaires – one woman and four men.

Professional background of consultants

People are all from professional backgrounds related to the social sciences or psychologically oriented helping professions. These include social scientist, clinical psychologist, organizational consultants, occupational therapist in children's' mental health, social worker in physical rehabilitation; public health; administration of capacity building grants.

8.2.2 Question 2: Matrix logistics

The aim of this question is to find out the number of social dreaming matrices that consultants have worked with, where they were held and the types of people that participated.

Number of matrices consulted to:

The number of matrices that the eight people had worked with ranged from one to ten.

Contexts within which the matrices were held are as follows:

- Australian Institute of Socio-analysis (AISA) international group relations conferences
- AISA weekly matrix
- AISA socio-analytic fellowship program
- Public and private organisational consultancies
- Weekly seminar for managers/ doctoral students in a university
- "Inhouse" workshop for people working for the Social Democrats
- 3 day workshop for managers of a hospital and related services
- Weekly sessions in a university seminar
- William Alanson White Institute, New York

- Northern New York sponsored by the New York Centre of A.K. Rice
- 1 in Philadelphia sponsored by the Philadelphia Centre of A.K. Rice
- A group of French managers

One consultant describes how she decided intuitively to run a social dreaming matrix in the 3 day workshop she was consulting to after it had actually begun. She negotiated it by making clear that she was inviting people to participate in the matrix as a voluntary activity.

The countries within which the matrices were run include Australia, America, Germany, France, England and Austria. Matrix members consisted of professionals, clinicians, conference delegates, university students and graduates, socio-analytic students and managers of private and public organisations, faculty of the White Institute; others self selected from a wide variety of backgrounds.

Hypothesis 2: Social dreaming, to be effective requires that matrix participants and consultants maintain spontaneity

In Chapter 6 this hypothesis was explored to learn about matrix participants' spontaneity through their experiences. In this chapter this hypothesis will be explored from two perspectives. The first is the consultants' spontaneity as described by them in their work with social dreaming matrices. There will be analysis of the interview and questionnaire data to identify roles consultants enact in their work. These roles will be categorised into progressive, coping and fragmenting and will provide a basis upon which consultants' spontaneity can be assessed.

The second area of exploration is the participants' spontaneity as perceived by the consultants. There will be analysis of the consultants' observations of the sharing of dreams and associations by participants in the matrices with which they have worked. There will be thematic analysis of consultants' observations of participants' responses and their sharing of dreams and associations.

This part of the data analysis will be done in two sections – the first will focus on the presentation of dreams and the second on the making of associations. The thematic and role analysis of these two areas will then be interpreted in the light of what is

revealed about consultants' spontaneity as it contributes to the effectiveness of social dreaming.

The data will now be reported from the email questionnaires and face-to-face individual interviews of eight people who have worked as consultants to social dreaming matrices.

8.2.3 Work of consultant in presenting dreams

At the time of this study, the work of the consultant is named as being: to make connections between the dreams and associations (Lawrence 1998). However, there is no statement about what - if anything - they do in regard to members presenting their dreams. What have consultants observed about this area? Do they notice any difficulties arising for participants in sharing dreams? How do the consultants respond to difficulties? What responses do they warm up to? What do their responses reveal about their spontaneity? Three questions were asked to explore these areas and discover how the consultants' worked with the processes of participants sharing their dreams. The questions are:

- 3a) What do you see is the role of the consultant with regard to members presenting their dreams?
- 3b) What difficulties have you encountered that prevent dreams from being presented?
- 3c) What have you done to overcome these difficulties?

In this section role descriptions, within spontaneity theory, have been formulated from the responses given by consultants. Each role is portrayed in a circle with supporting quotes alongside. Roles have been numbered as they have been identified.

8.3 The role of the consultant with regard to members presenting their dreams

The sharing of dreams is an essential activity in the development of a social dreaming matrix so it is particularly useful to find out the consultants' experiences and views on their part in this process. It is of interest to see if there are common roles or themes

that emerge from these consultants' practice of social dreaming. This group of consultants has some common themes from their practice of social dreaming which can inform the wider field about useful interventions.

One of the first roles to emerge from the data is 'Relaxed Welcoming Host'. In this role the consultants took on a welcoming demeanour. They aimed to create an encouraging environment for participants so they felt comfortable to share their dreams. Effort was made to maintain a relaxed emotional atmosphere. One element of the role of host includes inviting the person and their dreams to join the social dreaming matrix.

Role description Quotes from interview transcript

Role 1)



Create a space for unselfconscious sharing. (A)

I encourage openness and non-censorship. (C)

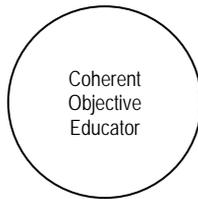
Creating the conditions for dreams to be voiced and dreams to be worked at...where you don't have to sit down and worry about the dreams. (B)

Allowing, encouraging. (F)

I invited those who were interested to turn up the next morning. (H)

Another group of responses indicate that the consultant assisted matrix members to understand what social dreaming was. They worked with matrix members to increase their understanding of how to participate. I call this role 'Coherent Objective Educator'. Elements of this role include giving information so that the task was clear for participants. Information was given using ordinary, everyday language so as to make the social dreaming process accessible to participants. Teaching was provided about the difference between personal and social dreams. Guidance was given to focus upon the dream and not the dreamer. Expectations about how to participate were outlined. Reflective silence was given a legitimate place within the matrix. The purpose of the seating arrangement is explained.

Role 2)



Present the task in simple language, non-jargony and non psychological way. (A)

I introduce the concept of social dreaming. I suggest that dreams may serve several functions so that a dream can be an individual's dream and also be a social dream. I suggest that members who do not have dreams can still be valued participants. I suggest that we do not have to have many dreams and that silence is often appropriate. I say that the important thing is that participants be "available for thought". (C)

Help the matrix think about what the matrix is learning and thinking. (E)

The initial introduction's probably very important. Trying to help people understand that it's not like an ordinary dream group and it's not about a person's dreams, in so far as the personal meaning. But it is about sharing this and really gaining from an experience of connection with others around the dreams. (G)

There's something about eye contact and I talked about the notion of why the seats are arranged as they were. That it's not a normal kind of conversation, and eye contact isn't really part of it. And you know because it's new, people break that from time to time and when there was eye contact it would transport people back to some kind of normal social interaction. So just at the beginning of each session I would reiterate the notion of why the seats were arranged the way that they were. (H)

I talked about the process, about the various things that might surface and that it's a different way of coming to grips with some of the issues for them, exploration. (H)

Another role that several consultants described has a range of elements that include working 'internally' or privately where most of the activity happens on the 'inside' so to speak. There is an emphasis on leaving space for the participants to work with the dreams themselves. I call this role 'Patient Alert Witness'. In this role the consultant was attentive and present in their demeanour. They strove to be available for listening without making hasty verbal interventions. There was a desire for participants to have the opportunity to learn through their participation in the social dreaming process without unnecessary interventions from the consultant.

Role 3)



Stay out of the way...do not offer interpretations (A)

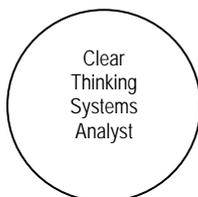
You think of all sorts of things and in a sense you're running through these in your mind to say what would be relevant and maybe wait for the next thing. I never intervene early. I tend to let them go for a bit and then people realise that this is the stuff of the matrix, is hearing the dream. If you come in and 'interpret' you can kill it. I think it's something about also in a sense holding the matrix, whatever it's going to produce...plus the far more hard work of people disentangling something about what maybe their life is like in an organisation or wherever. (B)

Be available. (E)

Being available for thoughts/ connections and allowing associations/ interpretations. (F)

As the 'Patient Alert Witness' listens attentively to dreams being shared a range of data is being made available to the matrix. This role of 'Patient Alert Witness' therefore contributes to consultants enacting the next role identified of 'Clear Thinking Systems Analyst'. Elements of this role include maintaining mental alertness and clarity. As the dreams were shared by participants the 'Clear Thinking Systems Analyst' began to note connections that arose between them. There was a specific focus on linking dreams in a systemic rather than individual way. This demonstrated to the participants that the focus was on the developing conversation between dreams. The 'Clear Thinking Systems Analyst' keeps focused on the social rather than the personal elements of the dreams.

Role 4)



Helping the matrix to think about what the matrix was learning and thinking. Naming connections noticed between the dreams. (E)

From time to time I made a comment on the scenes that I saw and I suppose I would name something basic of being human that I thought it connected with. (H)

I take a stance of accepting dreams, regardless of the content, as being about the matrix not the dreamer. (D)

8.3.1 Summary

This section of the study has reviewed the consultants' views on what assists participants to share dreams in a social dreaming matrix. Four roles have been identified. These are:

- 1) 'Relaxed Welcoming Host'
- 2) 'Coherent Objective Educator'
- 3) 'Patient, Alert Witness'
- 4) 'Clear Thinking Systems Analyst'

The first two roles, 'Relaxed Welcoming Host' and 'Coherent Objective Educator' arise from the consultants' emphasis on the initial introduction to social dreaming at the beginning of the matrix. There is a clear motivation to creating a positive welcoming atmosphere for the participants at the beginning of the social dreaming matrix through the role of the 'Relaxed Welcoming Host'.

Depth is then added to the welcome as the 'Coherent Objective Educator' introduces participants to key guiding principles of social dreaming. This progressive role provides information and understanding to participants who are new to social dreaming. It also gives a focusing reminder to people in their matrices who have had previous experiences with social dreaming. The 'Coherent Objective Educator' discusses the rationale for the practical set up of the configuration of the chairs and explains that members do not need to have eye contact with everybody. Participants are informed about the difference between personal and social dreams. If participants do not have dreams this does not preclude participation. Guidance is given about differences between participation in social dreaming and other types of groups. The clarity of the introduction is highlighted at the beginning of the social dreaming venture. Underlying both 'Relaxed Welcoming Host' and 'Coherent Objective Educator' is the absence – or containment – of the consultant's own anxiety so that they are able to provide clear and unconflicted leadership at the beginning of the matrix.

Teaching matrix members that in social dreaming the focus is on the dreams not on the individual, and that the matrix is different from a dream therapy group or a group

relations event is also identified as part of the consultant's role. One consultant described asking 'who's got the first dream?' because they want to try and make the work ordinary rather than having people sitting around for ten minutes as they used to before they took this approach. The demeanour of the person is as important as the words that they say. This can just be said flatly or invitingly. Once people are welcomed and informed about the social dreaming process most of the consultants recommend 'staying out of the way' with the expectation that this gives space for participants to share their dreams.

This motivation is seen in the third role of 'Alert Patient Witness' as identified from the consultants' responses. There is a spirit of patience and discretion in this role. The 'Patient Alert Witness' is present to the work that participants are doing and gives time and space for dreams to begin to talk to each other. There are no hasty interventions but a thoughtful reflective attitude towards the participants and the dreams that are being shared.

As the dreams are offered to the matrix the consultants then set about the work of identifying links between them. They do this in the fourth role of 'Clear Thinking Systems Analyst'. Attention is given to making - and sharing - connections between the dreams in a discerning and timely way.

In response to this question some consultants described what they didn't do with regard to members presenting dreams. For example, 'don't interpret' (B), 'stay out of the way' (A), 'rarely sharing dreams' (C). This is quite difficult to represent in role descriptions as it is describing what a person doesn't do (which of course is any number of things) rather than what they actually do. These 'what not to do' comments are clearly significant in these consultants' learning from their experiences. They highlight an area where role analysis cannot always represent the responses from the interview transcripts. Role descriptions can be made when a person has a response but when they describe not doing something it is difficult to represent as a role. The closest role to represent these comments would be 'Patient Alert Witness' in which the consultant is astutely alert and non-intrusive.

The roles of 'Relaxed Welcoming Host', 'Coherent Objective Educator', 'Patient Alert Witness' and 'Clear Thinking Systems Analyst' are all progressive roles. They are oriented to assisting participants to understand and work on the task of social dreaming. The consultant is active and expressive at the beginning to welcome and educate people about how to go about social dreaming. They then recommend becoming more introspective and working 'internally'. There is a strong sense of not interfering with the participants work by making comments too early. The work at this stage of the development of the matrix is in providing the space for connections to emerge from the dreams and associations. In enacting these four progressive roles consultants are attending to both the development of the immediate social system and the matrix of dreams, associations and connections.

All this points to the consultant's capacity to warm up to progressive rather than coping or fragmenting roles as being a significant factor in their work. The presence of all these roles supports the hypothesis that consultants need to maintain their spontaneity. Evidence of spontaneity is seen in the movement between the different roles in response to changing circumstances. This will be illustrated further later in this chapter. As progressive rather than coping or fragmenting roles are enacted the consultants are oriented to creating an environment conducive to achieving the task. The elements of spontaneity that are evident in these roles include adequacy and vitality.

There is an expectation that once participants are welcomed and educated that they will then proceed with the work of sharing their dreams and associations. One consultant described this as the hard work that the participants have to do and waited to see what then emerged from the thoughts and free associations. Another consultant described themselves as a member of the matrix who had some influence on making the environment a safe and contained one for people to join.

This role analysis shows the responses that consultants found to be helpful in assisting participants to presenting their dreams. This process of making data available for the matrix is a significant factor in contributing to the effectiveness of the social dreaming method.

I argue that consultants perform secondary tasks that assist them in working on the primary task. These tasks are illustrated by the 'Relaxed Welcoming Host', 'Coherent Objective Educator', 'Patient Alert Witness' and 'Clear Thinking Systems Analyst'. The motivation underlying all these roles is to enhance the capacity of the participants to share their dreams. These roles therefore set the scene for achievement of the primary task of social dreaming. As participants feel comfortable to share their dreams and also understand how to participate the consultant is then able to work with the dreams that are offered. The patience exercised in watching and waiting for several dreams to be shared is rewarded by a range of dream data being available for the consultant to think about and analyse.

Identification of these roles provides some guidance about useful activities that the consultant can engage in to facilitate sharing of the dreams and associations. For example, the 'Patient Alert Witness' consciously gives space for several dreams to be shared in the knowledge that hasty interjections can cut across the work of the participants. The 'Clear Thinking Systems Analyst' keeps a mental focus on the links between the dreams and not the dreamers.

The 'Coherent Objective Educator' assists the participants to understand the task and what is required of them. Again the aim is to increase the warm up of the participant to share their dreams and associations with each other. The enactment of these progressive roles demonstrates the consultants' understanding of the need to complete the related tasks that will assist participants to maintain their spontaneity. The completion of these tasks paves the way for work to be able to be done on the primary task of making connections between the dreams, associations and the broader social system.

8.3.2 Difficulties encountered by consultants that prevent dreams being presented

The second hypothesis of this study proposes that for social dreaming to be effective matrix participants and consultants need to maintain their spontaneity. One way in which the spontaneity of participants is evident is through the offering of dreams to the social dreaming matrix. Therefore, an exploration of difficulties which prevent dreams being shared is of particular interest in this study. This question aims to elicit

difficulties that consultants have observed that reduce participants' ability to offer their dreams. The consultants' observations have been grouped into themes which are summarised in the following table:

Table 7: Difficulties noted by consultants that prevent participants presenting their dreams

Theme No.	Identified theme
10	Living in the past – bringing old responses to the new situation
11	Dream poverty – scant supply of dreams
12	Dream anxiety – does my dream measure up?

Each of these themes will now be presented in detail with accompanying quotes from the consultants' interviews.

Theme 10: Living in the past – bringing old responses to the new situation

This theme is characterised by the application of 'old' responses that have been made in previous situations and are now being applied to the current social dreaming matrix. There are three types of 'old' responses described by consultants. These are previous experiences with groups, dreams and a consultant.

Consultants reported that when participants have participated in groups with a different theoretical perspective to the social dreaming method and they use learning from this to guide their understanding and participation in the matrix it cuts across their ability to participate effectively. For example, one consultant identifies a difficulty they encountered as *'members trained in 'Tavistock' group relations methodology which skews participation in a pre-set direction, such as a tendency to focus on psychotic regression in groups, splitting and projective identification'*. Similarly, another consultant finds *'members thinking too much of the matrix as a group and relying on group relations experience for understanding what occurs – deadly!'*.

The second aspect of this theme is participants drawing upon previous experiences with working with dreams. A consultant encounters difficulty with *'membership trained in, or, client of, psychotherapy which puts premium on individual nature of dreams'*.

The third aspect linked to this theme is a where a participant has had a relationships with a consultant in another setting. This is illustrated by a consultant who finds *'it may be difficult for people who've known you in a study group context to see you in a different kind of way, in a different kind of role; I think that might take time'*.

Theme 11: Dream poverty – scant supply of dreams

The second difficulty experienced by participants is identified by consultants as the amount of dreams participants had or made available to the matrix. Some participants didn't have dreams or couldn't remember them. Examples given by consultants were *'difficulty of recall'*, *'some people said well I didn't have a dream'* and *'many say they never dream'*. Another consultant reported variations between number of dreams shared by different cultures *'it seems to me there are cultural differences in the preparedness and amounts of dreams shared. According to my experience Germans seem to tell less dreams than Americans'*. Yet another consultant noted that participants *'begin by relating recurring dreams from the past'*.

There was uncertainty of whether people would participate in the matrix. One consultant found *'the first session is always 'critical'. One never knows whether people really will join and share their dreams'*.

Theme 12: Dream anxiety – how does my dream measure up?

The third theme arising in response to this question is anxiety about the quality of the dreams affecting what is shared. There was filtering of dreams for their perceived value. For example, there was *'valuing of long dreams over fragments which leads to discarding the fragments'*. Some participants wanted to present the most *'valuable'* dream. This was described by one consultant as *'some members seem to experience a competitive wish to have the best dreams; this usually becomes less apparent as the matrix progresses'*. Another observed *'I think there's anxiety probably'*.

8.3.3 Summary

In this section the difficulties encountered by consultants to participants sharing their dreams have been analysed into three themes. These have been described and illustrated with examples from the consultants' interview data.

Consultants observed that the application of learning from previous experiences prevented participants being able to participate in the 'here and now' social dreaming matrix. Lawrence (2001) described a major problem in America in the early days of social dreaming as being when people were preoccupied with the group relations model. There would be long discussions about what a matrix was and what a group was. This of course got in the way of the social dreaming process.

When participants attempt to relate to the elements of social dreaming through previous experiences they are orienting themselves to safety by drawing upon that which is familiar to them. An orientation to safety is usually seen in coping roles and therefore is evidence of low spontaneity. When participants are unable to participate in social dreaming as a new experience they are demonstrating inflexibility which is also a sign of reduced spontaneity.

The pattern of using an old response to a new situation is consistent with a low level of spontaneity. This demonstrates an orientation to safety as people try to make the new situation familiar by drawing upon something about which they already have some understanding. Consultants identify this as an obstacle to dreams being presented. One consultant described this as 'deadly' which gives a potent sense of the effect on social dreaming when participants have low levels of spontaneity. Similarly, when a person presented a recurring dream they are drawing upon something very familiar to them even though this may be the first time they have shared it with a group of people.

The difficulty of participants not remembering or having dreams is encountered by several consultants. Perhaps feeling pressure to produce a dream for a matrix interferes with a participant's ability to do so. Perhaps it is an indication that dreaming patterns and recollection of dreams is a variable thing between individuals or as noted by one consultant between cultures.

The relationship between one dreamer and a dream, and other dreamers and dreams, is highlighted when participants experience a desire to have the ‘best’ dream (whatever that might be!). In this scenario a person acts as if it is *their* dream that they are entering into competition with other dreams rather than *a* dream that they are contributing to the developing matrix. There is a desire for ownership and subsequent recognition for themselves. Similarly, when a fragment of a dream is given lesser value than a whole dream there is a perception held that different forms of dreams have different values. The desire to have a dream as a trophy or to dismiss a fragment as of lesser value both highlight that even though the theory of social dreaming maintains no such distinctions about dreams this does not prevent participants from doing so.

This analysis of the consultants’ observations shows that the maintenance of participants’ spontaneity requires work from the consultants. This is evident so far in regard to the sharing of dreams. The thematic analysis has shown difficulties in presenting dreams when participants are enacting coping, fragmenting or overdeveloped roles. This is further evidence of the hypothesis that participants must maintain spontaneity to contribute to the effectiveness of the social dreaming method. The next section will explore how consultants respond to the difficulties that they encountered.

8.3.4 What are the consultants’ responses to overcome difficulties in dreams being presented?

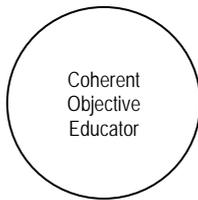
This question is a significant one. The data analysis so far has shown that consultants have encountered difficulties in participants sharing their dreams. An exploration of what they do in response to these helps to identify further secondary tasks that they undertake.

The answers given by consultants to this question are analysed into role descriptions. The previously identified roles of ‘Relaxed Welcoming Host’, ‘Coherent Objective Educator’ and ‘Patient Alert Witness’ reappear and there is a new role which I call ‘Dream Weaver’.

A new element of the role of 'Coherent Objective Educator' is described by one consultant who introduces the concept of 'making the dreams welcome'. This is relating to the dreams and the dreamer as separate entities. It is an attempt to re-orient the participants to focus on the dreams and not the dreamers.



I put value on the role of dream fragments as "pieces of thinking" (B)



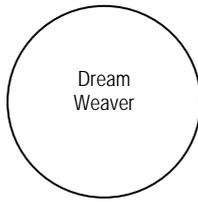
To introduce the entire event as about the dreams, not the dreamer...reinforced the nature of the matrix, pointed out the attempt at applying ego-centric technology to a socio-centric environment, moved from interpretation to association. This can set the stage for dreams to be welcome for their content. (D)



Just waited (F)

The emergence of the new role 'Dream Weaver' is significant. When the consultant has successfully facilitated the sharing of dreams there are a number of elements available from different dreams. The presence of these dream elements results in a lot of 'yet to be organised' material. The 'Dream Weaver' simultaneously contains the anxiety of holding the many different elements of dreams and associations in mind whilst maintaining the conviction that they will eventually be brought together into some coherent whole in the future. They do not know how the connections will unfold or what they will be in the early stages of the developing matrix. The 'Dream Weaver' works with the strands of the different dreams to make links between the social elements of the dreams whilst not being drawn into commenting upon the group dynamics:

Role 5) Dream Weaver



I put an emphasis on associations rather than interpretation and ignore 'group dynamics' as they tend to get pushed away by the dreams themselves. I try to think in more contemporary psychoanalytic perspective. I focus on the thinking in the group rather than the anxiety. I link different dreams with each other to emphasize their not being private. I value associations along with dreams to detoxify worries about 'forgetting' dreams. I put value on the role of dream fragments as 'pieces of thinking'. All this, I try to do primarily in my own thinking, and rarely as verbal interventions. (A)

I usually wait for a bit and get 3/4 dreams and then I might intervene and try and link the dreams alright and you link the 4 dreams but you also as it were open up all the other links not just between the 4 but what the links might mean (B)

I allow them to tell these old dreams and use that as a way to help others develop their skills in associating to the dreams (they almost serve as training)...we are often able to bring the old dreams into the present by having associations that help themes develop in the matrix. (C)

From time to time I made a comment on the scenes that I saw and I suppose I would name something basic of being human that I thought it connected with (H)

The 'Dream Weaver' contributes to the development of the participants as well as the matrix itself. For the participants the 'Dream Weaver' demonstrates how to relate to a number of dreams and associations without succumbing to the anxiety of holding so many things in mind. At any point in a matrix there is a lot of 'yet to be integrated' material and it is important that it is clear that something will be made of this. The 'Dream Weaver' shows how the different strands can be woven into coherent learning about the broader social system. This progressive role therefore is a central role for the developing matrix. The 'Dream Weaver' does the groundwork necessary to enable links to be made to the broader social system. This gives coherence and meaning to the work of the participants. Emotions and thoughts that the 'Dream Weaver' has as they listen to the dreams and associations are used to inform the weaving process. The 'Dream Weaver' prevents a matrix from becoming a mish mash of yet to be

integrated material which can be overwhelming for participants and consultants. This role takes what has emerged from the immediate social system of the matrix i.e. the role relationships of the participants and actively works with the developing matrix.

8.4 Making associations

As with the presenting of dreams the making – and sharing - of associations is an important element of the developing matrix. Making associations involves a different process to that of sharing dreams. Sharing dreams involves remembering a dream and then recounting it. Making associations is a more complex task as it requires a person to register their response in the moment that they hear a dream and then to communicate this association. A participant needs to be able to be open to whatever emerges in their awareness as they hear a dream and have confidence to express this.

Several areas are now explored. The first is the way in which consultants have worked with associations. The second is consultants' perceptions of how participants have proceeded with making and sharing associations. Difficulties in working with associations are identified and solutions generated by the consultants to these are then discussed. The interview data is analysed into role descriptions and themes.

Three previously identified roles reappear. These are 'Patient Alert Witness', 'Coherent Objective Educator', 'Clear Thinking Systems Analyst' and 'Dream Weaver'. While the same roles are enacted for sharing dreams and associations some new elements of these roles emerge in response to this set of questions. The new elements are summarised in the following table:

Table 8: Consultants' roles in making associations to the dreams

Consultant's Role	New element of the role
Patient Alert Witness	Keeping own associations to dreams private
Coherent Objective Educator	Sharing own associations to model how it is done Teaching the difference between associations and interpretations State the task as being to make associations
Clear Thinking Systems Analyst	Making written notes

8.4.1 Role of the consultant in matrix members making associations

The following questions were asked of the consultants about making associations:

- 4a) What do you see is the role of the consultant in matrix members making associations?
- 4b) What difficulties have you encountered in matrix members making associations?
- 4c) What have you done to overcome these difficulties?

The role descriptions derived from the first question will now be presented.

4a) Roles of the consultant in matrix members sharing associations

The responses to this question are analysed and presented in the form of role descriptions. The first role is the previously identified 'Alert Patient Witness'.



Mostly, to keep quiet and let the associations be made. (C)

The less you have to do that (show members how to make associations) the better, although it does mean holding onto your own associations which you might want to give sometimes. (G)

Hold back from active involvement (A)

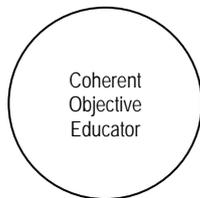
I didn't want to be intrusive in that. So, I was feeling my way very much with how to go about this and how much to say and how much to just stay out of the process and let people experience it...I tended to want to trust the process and allow people to make their own sense of it, their own links and privately making sense of what was going on. (H)

I take notes so that the associations are visual rather than from my own mind. (D)

The next role is also familiar from my previous discussion. It is that of 'Coherent Objective Educator'. This role takes on an added element of role modelling how to make associations. Matrix members who have had previous experiences of social dreaming are also identified as being able to take up this role

Occasionally one has to remind people that social dreaming is not just about sharing dreams but also to associate to them and to find links among them. On other occasions one has to remind them what the difference between an association or a 'statement' may be. (F)

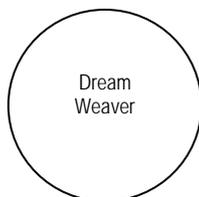
Introduce the task as 'associating to dreams made available to the matrix so as to make links and associations'. (A)



If the members are not doing it it's probably important the consultants help in order for the members to get started with doing that association, to show the kind of way in which it is appropriate to do it or is possible. (G)

I found that having people in a matrix who had been in a matrix before is very helpful, like at conferences where say 2 or 3 members of the conference have done a social dreaming matrix before, frequently they'll be the ones to offer their dreams at the beginning and associations. (G)

The role of 'Dream Weaver' takes on an added element of role modelling for matrix members. This role is not just considered the domain of the consultant. Quotes illustrate some consultants' views that matrix members also need to learn to do this:



I also find it important to help members to make links between the dreams. (F)

Model the making of associations by linking images from several of the dreams while never interpreting. (A)

The taker needs to help the matrix weave associations (perhaps awake dreams) and dreams into the story or dream or thinking of the matrix. (E)

The intention of the 'Dream Weaver' is to assist participants to work on the task by modelling how links can be made between the dreams and associations. They are actively working to make connections but rarely contributing associations themselves. The purpose of this role is to integrate the many strands of dreams and associations.

8.4.2 Difficulties encountered in matrix members making associations

As the associations are such a crucial part of the developing matrix it is important to learn about what may prevent matrix members sharing these. This question attempts to discover what consultants' perceptions are on obstacles that arise for participants in making associations to the dreams. The responses to this question have been summarised into the following themes in table 9.

Table 9: Difficulties noted by consultants that prevent participants sharing associations

Theme No.	Identified theme
13	Preoccupation with interpretations of dreams
14	Taking time to learn how

Theme 13: Preoccupation with interpretations of dreams

A difficulty in making associations occurs when matrix members were preoccupied with interpretations of the dreams. This happened for different reasons. For example, one consultant described *'being an 'expert' in group relations thus unable to distinguish between interpreting and associating'* which resulted in *'a tendency to interpret rather than associate'* (A). Another consultant found matrix members *'tend to ask me what interpretations I make to the dreams, or they try to interpret them themselves'* (C). These responses demonstrated a lack of understanding of the social dreaming method as seen in the view of the consultant as an expert in dream analysis. One consultant referred to the difference between interpreting dreams and making associations to them and observed *'it takes time for some members to make this shift'* (D).

Theme 14: Taking time to learn how

Another obstacle to matrix members sharing associations is observed by consultants as the time it took to learn how to go about doing this activity. During the early stages of the matrix associations were not forthcoming *'if people are unfamiliar with the matrix and its work I think that there is a space and that there aren't any associations to the early dreams'* (G) and *'except from a certain reservation at the beginning of not being used to the method, none'* (F).

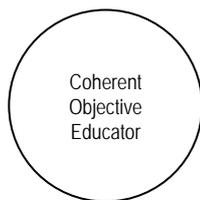
The delay in sharing associations was also related to anxiety interfering with the learning process as one consultant noted *'difficulties arising from anxiety...usually connected to falling into group relations normative behaviours. (A)*

In the consultants' experiences, some participants encountered difficulties in making associations at the beginning of their social dreaming experience. This usually resolved as time progressed and people learnt what was expected of them.

8.4.3 Consultants' responses to overcome difficulties

4c) What have the consultants done to overcome the difficulties in matrix members sharing association? The responses made by the consultants to identified difficulties are analysed in role descriptions with accompanying quotes. Two roles are identified and both of these have been discussed previously. These are 'Coherent Objective Educator' and 'Dream Weaver'

Several consultants described responses made in the role of 'Coherent Objective educator'. Explanation, encouragement, restating the task and modelling how to make associations were all done to overcome difficulties in matrix members making associations to the dreams. These are illustrated with the following quotes:

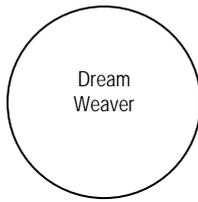


I suggest that it is not necessary to understand or interpret each dream and I encourage members to make whatever associations occur to them. (C)

Occasionally I may have reminded them on the task, i.e., that the matrix is about sharing dreams and associations. (F)

Modelling associations from dream to dream seems to help. (D)

One consultant attempted to reduce interpretations by increasing a focus on the elements of the dreams in the role of Dream Weaver. In this role they were redirecting attention to the dreams in such a way as to reduce the opportunity for interpretations to be made.



When there is too much interpretation going on, I re-introduce elements of the dreams in such a way as to assure that they cannot be thought about logically. (A)

8.4.4 Summary

This section of the data analysis has explored consultants' experiences of working with associations as well as their perceptions of participants' sharing of associations in the social dreaming matrix. As previously discussed the sharing of associations is an essential element of the social dreaming matrix.

The data has revealed that consultants have consistently worked to invite, encourage, teach and role model to participants how they can effectively engage with the social dreaming process. Consultants described a range of progressive roles that they drew upon to facilitate the sharing of dreams and associations by participants. These roles are 'Relaxed Welcoming Host', 'Coherent Objective Educator', 'Patient Alert Witness', 'Clear Thinking Systems Analyst' and 'Dream Weaver'.

A thematic analysis reveals several difficulties that obstruct the sharing of dreams and associations by participants. These include attempting to participate in the social dreaming process by drawing upon experiences of other ways of working with groups, dreams or the consultant. A difficulty in remembering or even having dreams prevented participants reduce the amount of dreams available for participants to share. Overvaluing or undervaluing dreams provides a distraction from the 'ordinary' sharing of dreams advocated by Lawrence.

When consultants perceived members in the matrix to be floundering they focused their efforts on reconnecting participants with the matrix of dreams and associations. They drew upon roles that aimed to facilitate and enhance participants' capacity to contribute to the developing matrix. The majority of roles that consultants drew upon are those that they warmed up to in the beginning stages of a matrix. In particular these are 'Coherent Objective Educator', 'Patient Alert Witness' and 'Clear Thinking Systems Analyst'. One new progressive role that emerged in responses to difficulties is 'Dream Weaver'. This role has a strong link to the primary task of the consultant in

which they are working to make connections between the dreams and associations and the broader social system.

All of the identified roles demonstrate responses that perform a range of secondary tasks that contribute towards the work of the consultant in fulfilling the primary task of making connections between the dreams and associations.

8.5 Consultant aims

The next area of data analysis focuses specifically upon the consultants' aims and perceptions of their work with a social dreaming matrix. Previous questions have explored the sharing of dreams and associations as they are key elements of the social dreaming matrix. This section endeavours to open up the area of the consultants' work by asking open ended questions to discover what they were trying to achieve.

Two further questions are asked to draw out detailed description of learning the consultants have come to about their work with social dreaming matrices. Given the potential for a complex array of dreams and associations to be presented to the matrix it is of interest to find out how the consultants approach this work mentally. It is also of interest to find out what the consultants have concluded about their task and role following their experiences in social dreaming matrices. The following open ended questions therefore are asked:

5a) What state of mind are you attempting to achieve when consulting to a matrix?

5b) What do you see as the task and role of the consultant to a matrix?

The responses are analysed using role and thematic analysis. Because social dreaming is so different from other group methods it is interesting to explore what emerges from consultants' experiences of their state of mind in this work. This is also an opportunity to explore the range of roles that these consultants have enacted to the various situations that they have encountered. The role analysis will be used to inform a discussion on the consultants' spontaneity in relationship to the effectiveness of the social dreaming method.

8.5.1 State of mind consultant is attempting to achieve in a matrix

This question asks consultants what state of mind they are attempting to achieve in a matrix. The purpose of this question is to elicit the mental activities that are unique to the consultants' role in a social dreaming matrix. The primary task of making connections between dreams and the broader social system is a very different activity to other ways of working with dreams in groups such as dream analysis or dream therapy. Finding out how consultants have pursued this work is of great interest therefore in extending understanding of their role in the social dreaming method.

Three new roles emerge in the consultants' responses. I have named these 'Focused Active Listener', 'Mindful Open Learner' and 'Creative Artist'.

The role of 'Focussed Active Listener' contains several elements. It involved the consultant tuning in to a particular way of listening. The difference is in what the focus of the listening is. Consultants go about this in different ways. One consultant paid attention to their physical body as a way of registering their response to the dreams and associations. Another consultant described moving their focus to a deeper level of consciousness and connectedness with participants. A third consultant focused on bringing their mind to the matrix in a state of 'readiness', another aimed to stay focussed on the dreams themselves. The common thread through all these activities was the development of the capacity for a strong mental focus in a purposeful way.

Role 6)



I also pay attention to somatosensory information...or what is going on in my body. (A)

Go down a level in my awareness in my consciousness – wanting a stronger connection with matrix members away from the practical so the state of mind in a big kind of concept would be along the lines of oneness. (H)

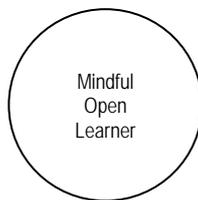
I find the phrase 'to be available for thought' to be very helpful. (C)

I try to remain open to the dreams and focussed upon them. (D)

I think that ones got to have a state of mind when you go into the matrix, and I suppose that state of mind is a state of readiness. (G)

The second new role is one that builds on the capacity to focus. It encapsulates the motivation to enter into each matrix with an open mind, without preconceptions or expectations. Consultants endeavoured to relate to what was shared in the matrix moment by moment. I have named this role 'Mindful Open Learner'. In this role the consultant maintained an open attitude to what was emerging moment by moment. They attempted to be neither connected to thoughts that arise from the past nor the future.

Role 7)



To quote Bion's use of Eliot – 'No memory or desire'. (E)

As open a mind as possible. (F)

Don't know what the dreams are going to be and I think it is important to be ready for basically anything...the notion of not going in as far as one can avoid it with preconceptions about what might take place and letting something emerge in each matrix which is fresh and new. (G)

Both the 'Focussed Active Listener' and 'Mindful Open Learner' are working with their own associative processes in that they are alert to their responses to the dreams and associations being shared by participants.

The third new role that emerged in the responses to this question is that of the 'Creative Artist'. The experience of being in a social dreaming matrix enabled one consultant to access their creativity. Two consultants feel free to use different aspects of their functioning in their work.

Role 8)



I try to free associate as much as possible and have developed a particular knack at 'receptive parapraxis' or hearing words which sound like but are different from the ones spoken. (A)

There are often opportunities to be in a way more creative in terms of making links...using a different aspect or different part of oneself. (B)

One previously identified role is seen again. The first is one in which the consultant was maintaining a focus on their work in identifying connections as a ‘Clear Thinking Systems Analyst’. A further dimension to this role was described by one consultant as he attempted to make links between the dreams and the knowledge he has of an organisation which the participants are from. In this case the consultant was working directly with the primary task of making connections between the dreams and associations to the broader social system,



I attempt to be aware and hold in my awareness several dreams. I search for themes. (C)

When working with people from one and the same organization I try to relate the dreams to what I know about it. (F)

8.5.2 Summary

Exploration of the state of mind that the consultants attempts to achieve to has revealed three new roles. These are ‘Focussed Active Listener’, ‘Open Learner’ and ‘Creative Artist’. They are all progressive roles which express the consultants’ motivation to engage with their work in a meaningful way. These roles are linked by the motivation to be purposeful, focused and open to identifying connections between the dreams and associations as they are shared.

8.6 Task and role of a social dreaming consultant

The questions asked so far have explored the different elements of social dreaming – the dreams and associations – and how participants and consultants have worked with these. Consultants are now asked “what do you see as the task and role of the consultant to a matrix?” The purpose of this open question is to find out what consultants have made of their task and role. This could be all manner of things so it is hoped that responses will glean a range of activities that consultants have discovered from their experiences in social dreaming matrices.

8.6.1 Task of the consultant

The roles of ‘Focussed Active Listener’, ‘Clear Thinking Systems Analyst’ and ‘Dream Weaver’ emerge again. There are then two new roles identified. I call these

‘Dream Midwife’ and ‘Orchestra Conductor’. All of these roles are now presented with their supporting quotes.

The ‘Focused Active Listener’ directed attention to the dreams:



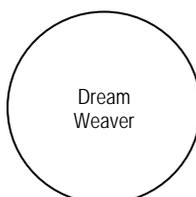
The task is to be attentive to dreams and to help participants to be attentive to the dreams. (C)

The importance of a container for a social dreaming matrix was highlighted by the ‘Clear Thinking Systems Analyst’:



I think the container for social dreaming is very important, in other words what’s the task? Within a group relations conference you have the primary task of the conference which gives the container for the matrix, and then the matrix has its own task which is to associate to, and make connections with one’s own and other members’ dreams. As far as consultancy goes, that again provides a different container for the matrix meaning. There’s the primary task of the consultancy and the primary task of the organisation that you’re working with which affects the matrix. (G)

The connections made from the dreams and associations shared in a social dreaming matrix lead to collective rather than individual learning. Meaning is made from the links between different dreams rather than focus on one specific dream. The ‘Dream Weaver’ works with thought, feelings, images and scenes to make a pattern from which meaningful links can be made to the broader social system. As they are not sharing dreams and associations they are able to take an objective stance in viewing what is being shared. Examples from the interviews are as follows:



I usually make links between dreams which suggest something about the availability of dreams themselves. (A)

To create the opportunities for participants to think...the dream is a form of thinking and then to take that on as it were to thinking in the everyday world

or thinking in the daylight...whereas they've been thinking in the night before when they dream and I think that's what I am after. (B)

To assist in making associations and establishing links to the dreams. (D)

To help the matrix understand and think about the dreams and associations made available to it – to help the matrix bring some meaning to its moment in time.(E)

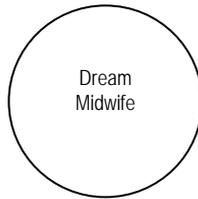
The main role that I would see is of making connections between members' dreams, between sense of dreams of themes that are coming out. And somehow linking in a broader kind of way, that you've got a bit of space for as the consultant, because you're not actually having to be involved so much in associations. You've got a bit of time to think about the connections that are going on, how the dreams are moving you and what you are making of these dreams inside yourself that you can then offer to people in the matrix. (G)

It was only when I couldn't help myself where I saw such a common theme or linking theme that I would comment. (H)

The two new roles that emerged from the consultants' responses will now be presented and discussed.

The first is the 'Dream Midwife'. As is commonly understood within the broader social system a midwife works to facilitate the birth of a baby. In the social dreaming matrix the 'Dream Midwife' worked to facilitate the birth of dreams and associations. As with giving birth having dreams is an essentially natural and healthy human process so *'the gentlest touch'* is used when all is going well. In this case the 'Dream Midwife' worked in collaboration with the 'Patient Alert Witness'. As the experienced midwife notices interferences to the birthing process they intervene to overcome these. Similarly, in the social dreaming matrix the 'Dream Midwife' worked to overcome obstacles to the dreams being borne. This is shown in the following quotes:

Role 9)



To get the dreams out and onto the table. All other tasks are subsidiary to actually having dreams to work with. A matrix without dreams is by definition a failure. (A)

I think the gentlest touch the better. (G)

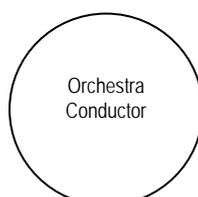
When there is a real scarcity of dreams I may offer one of my own although this is done quite rarely. On rare occasions I may also share a dream which contains many themes already present in the matrix. (A)

I have a tendency to address things which get in the way of dreams being reported like feeling one's dream isn't 'good enough' or 'long enough' or 'recent enough. (A)

Mainly a 'more experienced' member, being aware about my own dreams but very seldom sharing them. (F)

The second new role is one in which the consultant takes up leadership of a matrix much as a conductor takes up leadership of a group of musicians. I call this the 'Orchestra Conductor'. A conductor stands outside of the music making and facilitates a number of people playing different instruments to combine to produce a unified piece of music. A conductor provides leadership in the speed and timing of the notes that are played. Similarly one consultant described their role as maintaining a rhythm so that dreams and associations flowed together harmoniously. A conductor provides a beat for musicians to relate to and work within, a consultant provided the boundaries of time and territory for matrix participants to work within. Asking for the first dream is the 'Orchestra Conductor' providing the first beat. In social dreaming the 'Orchestra Conductor' is leading a group of improvisators with the melodies emerging from the dreams that are presented. The 'Orchestra Conductor' assists in co-ordinating these.

Role 10)



I say, well this is the primary task, who's got the first dream? Cos I want to make it ordinary, I don't want them to be sitting around for 10 minutes... what I am attempting to achieve is to create the opportunities for the participants to think, I mean they are already thinking when they give a

dream, the dream is a form of thinking and then to take that on as it were to thinking in the everyday world of thinking. (B)

To manage the boundaries of time and territory, to be supportive of the matrix, to venture themes which may be useful. (C)

Providing containment (time, rooms, sitting arrangement). (F)

The other bit of the role that's important for me how does one assist the group to establish a rhythm in the matrix at what its doing. By the rhythm I mean you know the dreams, associations, dream association. If there's dream, dream, dream one feels I know as a consultant swamped by what's happening, and participants similarly I'm sure because there's no space for association and connection, it's just one thing after another. I think there's something about the role of consultant helping to establish the matrix's own rhythm. Not my rhythm as a consultant but it's somehow when the rhythm doesn't seem there, it seems as a consultant one feels there's something going on that's not there or needs establishing in some way. (G)

The responses to these open ended questions have revealed two new roles as well as several previously described. The new progressive roles of 'Dream Midwife' and 'Orchestra Conductor' provide some insight into the work of the consultant in relationship to how they assisted participants to work together on the task.

8.6.2: Purpose and gains from social dreaming matrices

In this section consultants are asked to reflect upon a specific matrix that they have worked with and several questions are posed to explore further the work of the consultant.

I report here an analysis of data from the consultants' interviews where the following questions are asked:

Question 6

- a) Think about one specific matrix – what were your aims in running it?
- b) How was it different from other matrices?
- c) What did you gain from it? Can you mention the three most important things?

- d) What do you think matrix members gained from it?
- e) Overall in your experience what are the main things participants have gained?
- f) What effect have you noticed of matrix participation on members' creativity?

The questions are analysed in two sections. The first explores the range of aims for different matrices in Questions 6a and 6b. The second section investigates gains made by consultants and participants from their social dreaming experiences as investigated in questions 6c to 6f.

8.6.3 Section 1: Aims for running social dreaming matrices

- 6a) Think about one specific matrix – what were your aims in running it?
- b) How was it different from other matrices?

These first two questions will be analysed and discussed together. The purpose of these questions is to discover the different aims for social dreaming matrices being run. It is expected that the primary aim of making connections to a broader social system will be the same but anticipated that within this there will be variations in stated aims from matrix to matrix. This question seeks to discover what these are to extend knowledge of the different contexts within which social dreaming can be used. One theme emerges which is the aim of facilitating learning about the organisation through the social dreaming matrix. There are also four separate responses to this question which are presented individually following discussion of this theme.

Theme 15: Facilitating learning about an organisation through social dreaming

Several consultants described the aim of facilitating organisational learning through participation in a social dreaming matrix. One matrix was within a consultancy to a department of a community mental health organization that dealt with children and youth where *'the department was itself acting as if the others did not understand it or its work, and it felt isolated (like many young people). The aim in running it was to assist the department in understanding its own dynamics and its relationship to the*

rest of the organisation'. (C) For one consultant, the aim of a matrix with a group of social democrats was to explore the 'occult' in organizations.

Similarly, another consultant describes the task as to bring *'meaningful learning to the organization from the matrix*. During two days of professional development seminars preceding a conference the aims of another four-session matrix were identified as *'to familiarize conference members with social dreaming, nest the professional development seminars so as to make them more meaningful, provide an entry point to the whole conference and a window into unconscious processes surrounding the conference'*. (A)

8.6.4 Individual aims for running a social dreaming matrix

The individual responses to this question are now presented. One consultant aimed to build more robust relationships between people through their participation in social dreaming. It was hoped that social dreaming would provide another pathway toward discussing relationship difficulties and the consultant *'thought it might be a way for them to start connecting with each other more strongly, and being able to name some of the issues and concerns and anxieties that they all shared but were reluctant to talk about. Because there was a view that if you talked about your anxiety you weren't going to be seen as professional'*. (H)

One consultant was not able to describe her aims for a matrix. Another stated their view that the aims of a matrix varied depending on the context. For example, the task of a matrix within a group relations conference was different to that of a weekly matrix.

Differences between matrices were identified variously by consultants as *'the members were part of a working unit, unlike others I have worked with'*, *'not very different, only more focused'* and *'it was an internal or inhouse event, people really wanted to explore their own situation and organization'*.

8.6.5 Summary

The consultants interviewed primarily ran matrices as part of their organisational consultancy work. Most of the consultants aimed for people to learn about the

dynamics of organizations they belonged to through their participation in a social dreaming matrix. This learning varied from increased understanding about the dynamics of a department or a subgroup within it to the relationship between departments of an organization. This learning also included a focus on understanding and building more effective working relationships. All the aims focused on the broader social system of each organisation studied.

Consultants aligned the aims for a matrix with the identified task of the consultancy. Social dreaming was found to be a catalyst for raising issues in a different way. One consultant highlighted the container for a matrix as being provided by the task and stressed the importance of this in bounding the area of exploration.

Another identified aim was to use the social dreaming method to strengthen the relationships and subsequent working potential of participants in the consultancy process.

Lawrence (2001) writes of the universality of dreams across different countries and cultures. However he notes that particular circumstances spark off particular sets of dreams. Naturally, there are differences between matrices depending on the membership. For example, in a conference setting the relationships between participants will be at various stages of development. This will range from people who have known each other for a long period of time through to people who are meeting for the first time. There will be a diverse range of interests motivating participants to attend. For example, there could be researchers, practitioners and students of a particular discipline attending the same conference. On the other hand a group of managers who have worked together in the same organisation are likely to have established relationships through their history of working together.

8.6.6 Section 2: Gains experienced from social dreaming matrices

In this section consultants are asked to consider four questions around the gains made through participation in social dreaming matrices. This includes gains the consultants have themselves made as well as those that they have observed made by participants. The questions are:

Question 6) Think of one specific matrix

- c) What did you gain from it? Can you mention the three most important things?
- d) What do you think matrix members gained from it?
- e) Overall in your experience what are the main things participants have gained?
- f) What effect have you noticed of matrix participation on members' creativity?

We know from the research already done that an expected outcome from the social dreaming method is the learning gained about a broader social system. However, it is anticipated that there are other gains for participants and consultants. The data from the first set of questions (6c and 6d) is analysed by themes and the second (6e and 6f) into role descriptions.

Gains identified by consultants

Two of the consultants who completed the email questionnaires did not give any response to the question of gains they had made. Two themes are identified from the responses of the remaining five consultants. These are 1) Learning about the organisation and 2) The development of relationships.

Theme 16: Learning about the organisation

As expected learning about the broader social system is a gain identified from the consultants' responses. However the responses also gave some finer detail which is useful in deepening understanding about this area. This detail is summarised as follows:

- 1) identification of different types of broader social systems
- 2) locating the learning gained about the broader social system in time i.e. learning about the present and the future
- 3) stimulating awareness of different emotions experienced within the organisation e.g. fear, compassion

These will now be presented with supporting quotes.

Learning was gained from the social dreaming matrices about different types of 'broader social systems'. For one consultant this was their work with an organization where *'I could experience what I only knew from Gordon's case that social dreaming actually is a method to get insights about a specific organization'*. Another learnt more about specific work group issues *'I gained an insight into how dreams of individuals do have a way of leading to work group issues'*. Similarly another consultant observed it *'gave me some maybe additional insights into how they functioned as a group'*.

The way that this learning about an organisation was achieved is experienced as different from other ways of learning about organisations. For example, a consultant described *'feeling that one is exploring and developing meaning in a different way than is normally there and if the matrix is working well I think that occurs in most matrices, the value is there, without any specific thing you know'*. The number of participants needed in a social dreaming matrix to achieve learning was found by one consultant to be *'that a group of eight people is 'enough'*.

The second strand of this theme is the location of learning to time. This was illustrated by one consultant who identifies a gain as *'thinking about the organization's future in a more creative and concise way'*. Alternatively another consultant found that social dreaming was useful for gaining learning about the 'here and now' of the organization as *'once people overcame their scepticism they really got fascinated, enjoyed it and took it as a 'tool' to better understand their own organization'*.

The third strand of this theme was the bringing into awareness of different emotions experienced by consultants and people within an organisation. For example, a consultant discovered there was *'awareness within the organization of underlying dynamics that related to certain unconscious fears among the employee's'*. Another described how she gained *'courage that I suggested something that was pretty out of left field and the majority took it up'*. A third consultant observed *'there's a feeling of connectedness which is there which may not have been there'*.

Theme 17: The development of relationships

Several consultants identified benefits gained in the quality and outcomes of the relationships between participants and themselves. This is illustrated by one consultant who ‘*saw how social dreaming has a positive effect on the relationships within the work group*’. A benefit was noted in productive working relationships emerging through the social dreaming process ‘*I saw how the members could make practical decisions about their working relationships through their associations to their dreams*’.

The ability to communicate at deeper levels was observed with participants ‘*speaking about things that are deeply psychological in a less if not non-threatening manner*’. Similarly another consultant found participation in the social dreaming matrix led to a greater level of acceptance of participants as it ‘*gave me a much stronger feel about the people sort of individually and reminded me about shared humanness so that no matter how revolting they might be later on in the group session like it was just a reminder for me that you know there’s all this stuff they’re struggling with, internally and externally, so it helped with my compassion*’.

8.6.7 Consultants’ observations of gains made by matrix members in this matrix.

The second question seeks to discover gains consultants have observed that participants have made from a social dreaming matrix. Their responses have been analysed in role descriptions as they give an indication of the spontaneity of participants. Five roles are identified. Several of these roles also emerged from the analysis of the participants interviews. These are summarised in the following table:

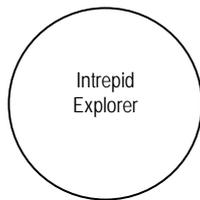
Table 10: Gains made by participants as observed by consultants

Role No.	Role description
1.	Intrepid Explorer
2.	Generous Companionable Lover of Life
3.	Creative Thinker
4.	Clear Thinking Systems Analyst
5.	Action Focused Learner

Each of these roles will now be presented with supporting quotes.

The role of ‘Intrepid Explorer’ captures the emergence of a spirit of inquiry in participants. They were able to enter into a process of learning which is of value in itself rather than being outcome driven.

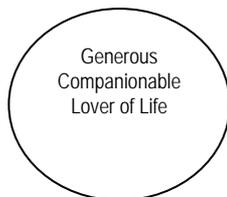
Role 1)



The depth of affect and the intensity of the listening, and the nature of the material that people were talking about. I was struck by the level of exposure and willingness to be vulnerable in the things that were said...talking about some of the real issues, meaningful issues for them beyond the kind of intellectual process or beyond the if only process or the blaming the system...My gut feeling is that it helped people get into a space where they were inquiring or exploring rather than only feeling like they had to come up with answers and solutions. (H)

The second role is one that was identified in the participants’ analysis. This is the ‘Generous Companionable Lover of Life’. Participants benefited from openness and willingness to work collaboratively. There was absence of competition and self absorption.

Role 2)



They gain a renewed sense of their connectedness to other people and a respect for the power of the community to understand and manage their own destinies. (C)

Members gain a sense of having relationships with other members without the usual jostling for position; competition for the best ideas; and collaboration. (D)

A deeper appreciation for each other and all that contained for the whole. (E)

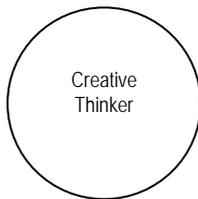
On a social level it’s also the making of meaning together – it’s a real antidote to ‘basic assumption me’ where it’s my ‘me-ness’ which is important and other people can disappear. (G)

Something about a universal understanding of the human condition and strong linking around that and inquiry into it...because we all experience the basic things around aloneness and abandonment and you know fear of those

things. There's something in sharing that that connects. Where I realise that the boundaries between me as an individual and you as an individual, in some ways aren't real at all because the humanness connects us. (H)

A third role that emerges is the 'Creative Thinker'. Consultants observed that participants benefited from being able to think in more creative and flexible ways as a result of the social dreaming process.

Role 3)



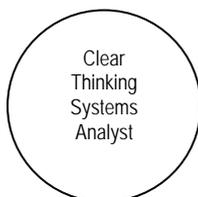
Out of that experience what they were basically saying to me was that, 'OK, we can't necessarily apply it, but God we've thought, and so what we're going to take out is a sort of refreshed or whatever thinking process'. (B)

It is a highly creative process and I suppose it opens people to their own potential to be creative thinkers with others. ((D)

People being able to say in a fairly uncensored way some fairly crazy things because dreams are crazy things. But to know that they weren't going to be replied to. I think it's that notion of there's no direct response or feedback. So although that was struggled with a little bit, it does promote a feeling of acceptance and being heard. And something rich happens when somebody else then responds with some of their own experience rather than an intellectual comment about what's been heard. (H)

The fourth role that I identify is 'Clear Thinking Systems Thinker'. In this role participants gained insight into the ways that they are relating to each other. This includes the aspects of their relationships that were not constructive or had been kept hidden.

Role 4)

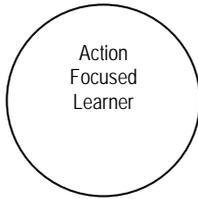


They gained appreciation for how their relationships within the work group had isolated one member of the unit. (C)

A much deeper awareness of their own organization. They were able to acknowledge the 'shadow' side and allowed each other to be more concerned about organization and its future development (in relation to its past which came up in the dreams and associations). (F)

In the fifth role 'Action Focused Learner' participants applied learning gained from the matrix. For some participants the increased understanding of their working relationships led to making changes to address the difficulties that have come to light.

Role 5)



They found ways to apply their insights into three or four specific changes in procedure...they improved their working relationships with other units in the organization. (C)

The theme in the different ways in each of the dreams was the theme of being illegitimate within this institute but they didn't realise they shared this, but social dreaming brought it out. Once they became aware of this it enabled them to start thinking, how have they been made illegitimate, and reclaiming their own legitimacy, which allowed them to reclaim their own authority for the task. So they were able to get on and do their own job better. (G)

One consultant found that some people didn't gain much from social dreaming thinking it *'was very sort of wasted time, new age, and disappear'* while others *'find it like ducks to water or a different medium which has been waiting for them and they're able to work with this medium in a way that other mediums don't allow them to work and I think that people who are like this gain a tremendous amount out of it.'* (G)

Summary

The data analysis has revealed the progressive roles of 'Intrepid Explorer', 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life', 'Creative Thinker', 'Astute Systems Analyst' and 'Action Focused Learner'. The emergence of these roles demonstrates an emergence of spontaneity within the participants of these social dreaming matrices. Some of these roles were also identified in the analysis of the participants' data.

8.6.8 Effect of matrix participation on members' creativity

The interest in exploring the relationship between social dreaming and creativity has arisen through personal experiences. Creativity is one of the forms of spontaneity so the presence of creativity is an indicator of the presence of spontaneity. As this thesis is essentially an exploration of spontaneity in social dreaming an exploration of creativity is therefore relevant. The writer's experiences have been that her sense of personal creativity has been expanded through the sharing of dreams and associating to others' dreams in social dreaming matrices. In particular this has been experienced as more flexible and expansive thinking.

Several consultants observed that creativity of participants was enhanced and this sees the re-emergence of the role of 'Creative Artist'.



The dream goes into the matrix and the associated work goes on and that sparks off all sorts of things. And that's really what it's about, that there's no outcome so to speak, there's no end game. The end game is in fact learning to think. (B)

Dramatically enhances one's creativity in the moment. (E)

The work with the dreams made them experience totally different ways and possibilities of being creative. (F)

I think as a participant in that process myself...yes it does loosen up the creative and innovative process and I assume it did the same for them. (H)

Another consultant made the link to creativity occurring while asleep as seen in Einstein dreaming a formula and Mary Walsteadcast dreaming of Frankenstein. One consultant did not notice any effects upon participants' creativity. Two consultants did not comment on this question.

The next group of questions explores the reflections and observations made by consultants' in their experiences with social dreaming matrices.

7) Consultants' reflections and observations of their experiences as a consultant

- a) What is different to being consultant to a group and consultant to a matrix?
- b) What is happening in the matrix that helps you to know it is working as a matrix?
- c) Tell me about a good matrix experience and then a terrible one
- d) How has being a matrix consultant affected your creativity in areas such as writing, group leadership?
- e) What is your experience of matrix members during the matrix?

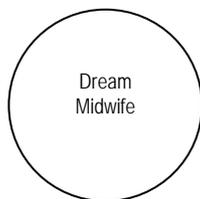
8.7 Difference in being consultant to a group and consultant to a matrix

It is hypothesized that the work of a consultant to a group and a social dreaming matrix is different. This question attempts to discover the consultants' views on what these differences are as a way of gaining a deeper understanding of their work. Results from this study so far have shown that consultants to a social dreaming matrix have secondary tasks to do that support the primary task of social dreaming. Explicit exploration of consultants' observations on this area will assist in informing what is unique and also what may be similar in leadership work with groups and social dreaming matrices.

Of the eight consultants interviewed one had not consulted to a group so offered no comparisons. Of the remaining seven consultants some have spoken about their perceptions of participants and others have spoken about themselves. These responses have been analysed into role descriptions.

The first three roles that are identified are the 'Dream Midwife', 'Clear Thinking Systems Analyst' and 'Dream Weaver'. Consultants indicated that a major difference in their work with groups and matrices was rather than working with the group dynamics their efforts went into working with the dreams, associations and connections. So, rather than working with the immediate social system of role relationships they were working with the developing matrix.

The 'Dream Midwife' directs their attention and energy to the delivery of the dreams.



The task of getting as many dreams out as possible, as an end in itself. Refraining from interpretations. It is essential that one not become an 'expert' at dreaming or groups. There is thus some similarity to certain types of group consultation which seek to avoid the consultant's being the final authority on the work being taken up by the group. (A)

An important difference is that the host should address group dynamic issues only for the purpose of facilitating more dreams and associations, not for the purpose of understanding or learning from the group dynamic itself. (A)

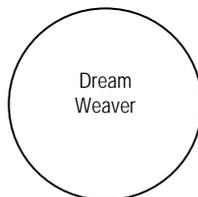
The role of ‘Clear Thinking Analyst’ is present in both groups and social dreaming matrices however they work with different elements. In groups the ‘Clear Thinking Analyst’ focuses upon what the members represent to the group whereas in social dreaming they focused upon what the dreams represent for the broader social system.



The only similarity is that in both contexts, I honour the unconscious as the working element. In group consultation, the emphasis is in what members represent to the group; in social dreaming, the emphasis is on what the dreams represent and contribute to a matrix and what that may be for the larger context in which the dreams occur. (D)

The normal social stuff doesn't get acted out; it doesn't get in the way with the matrix. So the kind of neurotic stuff that people have which they project onto someone else doesn't happen to the same extent. (H)

The ‘Dream Weaver’ is a role which is unique to the social dreaming matrix. In this role the consultant kept the linking of the dreams in the foreground and the dreamers in the background.



Completely different. As a group process consultant I am much more an object to which things are done and in a system in which dynamic processes are alive. As a ‘taker’ I am much more a part of the process in the matrix, not outside, not containing. (E)

In the matrix I am not concerned about the group, its dynamics, integration, psychosis; the focus are the dreams and not the dreamers. (F)

They have different tasks – in the matrix deliberately not looking at the transferences because the point is not to look at the relationships between the members of the matrix and the consultants, it's actually something which is I suppose freer, focus is on the dreams and not the dreamers. (G)

The ‘Dream Midwife’ and ‘Dream Weaver’ maintain a focus upon the dreams and associations that arise in response to them. Usually there was no interpretation given of dreams or of the relationships between matrix members. The one exception identified to this was when working with the group dynamic was needed to facilitate more dreams and associations. In this case the ‘Clear Thinking Systems Analyst’ worked hand in hand with the ‘Dream Midwife’ to produce more dreams for the matrix. The ‘Clear Thinking Systems Analyst’ observed that the relationship between

participants was getting in the way of sharing dreams and associations. In the context of social dreaming the interest of the ‘Clear Thinking Analyst’ was not in understanding of the relationships between participants but rather in overcoming obstacles they presented to dreams being shared. Participants were viewed for their potential to share dreams and associations rather than as a source of learning about the group itself.

Another distinction that was made was that the consultant was part of the process in social dreaming. The process included sharing dreams, associations and connections for the matrix and the consultant worked actively in the area of connections. This is seen very clearly in the role of ‘Dream Weaver’ where there is an active ‘hands on’ approach to weaving the strands of dreams and associations together to make a coherent picture.

The deliberate lack of attention to relationships leads to the identification of the next role of ‘Patient Alert Witness’. In this role the consultant purposely waited for transferences to be expressed through the dreams:



It’s almost as if social dreaming is a democratic adventure, because there’s no hierarchy. There is around the host, the taker but I don’t think that lasts very long. I think the way the transference operates is somebody dreams about their boss and if I was to address the transference of the here and now, I actually rob the dream. So you have to wait, particularly if it runs over a few days. And then they will start dreaming about their bosses...it’s worked through the dreams. (B)

With the focus being on the developing matrix rather than the group dynamic consultants observed that the group dynamics themselves became less potent.

8.7.1 What is happening in the matrix that helps a consultant to know it is working as a matrix

This question attempts to discover the consultants’ views on the elements of a working matrix. Previous questions in this chapter have explored the consultants’ views on what is happening in a matrix when difficulties arise that affect the sharing

of dreams and associations. It is also useful to know about what is happening when a matrix is working well. One theme emerges from the data:

Theme No 18: The matrix of dreams, associations and connections to the broader social system is prominent and evolving.

When a matrix was working well consultants observed that attention to the dreams and associations was in the foreground and the individual was in the background. The separation between individual and group became less pronounced. There was a relaxing of personal boundaries as seen in participants being able to dream about each other or people who had died.

There is a sense of balance between dreams and associations. People start dreaming about each other. There are people who have died appearing in dreams. Members begin commenting on how tenuous and arbitrary their sense of an individual self is. Finally, an uncanny sensation develops in the group that thinking and dreaming merge together and that the creative spontaneous work of the group begins to have a dreamlike quality to it. (A)

That people share dreams, associate to them and are not (too much) concerned about themselves as individuals. (F)

Participants were able to make meaningful connections between the social dreaming matrix and their lives:

When participants begin to express amazement, and when they begin to be alertly silent. Also, when the matrix at the end of a session begins to make applications to the group of which they are a part or to their own lives. (C)

When the associations and links begin to have what seems to be momentum. (D)

The consultant had an affirming intuitive experience:

It always feels as though it is working. (E)

In summary then the consultants saw the matrix was working well when the matrix of dreams, associations and connections was in the foreground and progress could be seen in its development.

Question 7 c) Experiences of a good matrix experience and a terrible one

This question aims to discover consultants' views on what contributes to the workability of matrices. The terms 'good' and terrible' are used to provoke memories of extremes of experiences. From these a range of factors can be identified to assist in understanding more about working and non-working matrices. The responses to this question have been summarised with supporting quotes given.

When comparing the differences between good and difficult matrix experiences several contributing factors were identified. One is the membership of the matrix. This includes 1) the backgrounds of participants, 2) whether they have met and 3) the value systems that they hold. Participants who were from the similar background of a Presbyterian church moved forward in their learning together whereas a public matrix with more diverse membership struggled to maintain momentum and continuity. In one matrix participants brought a system filled with conflict, competition and a power differential and this was reflected in how the matrix unfolded.

Online matrices experienced difficulties including those arising from participants having never met in a face-to-face matrix, a host who questioned the behaviour of interpretation of dreams being experienced as critical and uncertainty about when the matrix management were in members or management roles.

The application of learning from a matrix is another factor that was identified as one that differentiated a good matrix from a difficult one. Two areas related to this are 1) having a means to reflect upon the matrix and 2) applying learning from a matrix.

Issues of projection and transference can stop the flow of a matrix and one consultant mentioned the notion of the quickening which is a time scheduled after a matrix to reflect upon what has happened. When a participant was going through difficult personal things that may be related to their experience within the matrix a consultant

suggested that the quickening may be a time to work with this but not on the deeply personal parts for a person.

I've occasionally had to work at the group relations bit of the thing. But I think that's sometimes better done in what we now call the quickening rather than within the matrix itself. I mean it's nice to have some sort of space for what is significant in stopping the development of the matrix. The quickening also is interesting in the notion that it adds another component to the matrix of being not just the matrix experience, but reflecting on it then. What's happened? What are the links that have been made or what are the difficulties that are there? (G)

Theme 19: Ability to apply learning from the social dreaming matrix

The capacity of participants to take learning from a matrix and apply it as part of what they are doing was identified as a good experience. When this happened the dreaming was integrated into rather than split off from participants' lives. This could be why a public matrix with diverse and changing membership faltered as there was no common focus for the learning created collectively to be related together to a broader social system.

One was done in a company and that seemed to work, in a way what happened was all sorts of stuff, all the parallel processes became part of the discourse, dreaming deserves not to be split off, its got to be integrated as part of what one's doing. (B)

This was originally set for three sessions, but was extended to six sessions. It was advertised for the church that I attend as a matrix that would concentrate on the 'future of this church'. It began with eight members and ended with twenty. The matrix allowed members to share their thoughts and feelings in a surprising way. Presbyterian Elders revealed a rich dreaming life that they thought was unique to themselves. Instead, they discovered that they could make associations about their own faith and about what the congregation needed to do to maintain itself, and more importantly, to maintain itself in relation to a genuine mission. They acknowledged that the results of the matrix will have an effect on the educational program, a capital fund drive, and mission and outreach. (C)

And I think it's helpful if one is going to work with social dreaming it (the quickening) gives a platform to action rather than rather than simply remaining as an interesting phenomenon reflection but it's not linked with action, I think that the

notion of the quickening and then possible action is important if one is going to use it in consultancy. (G)

A matrix also had the capacity to have a negative effect upon the consultants.

I think the matrix can be extremely powerful and sometimes consultants can become polarised in terms of the dynamics that are going on and if one is not working particularly on the dynamics of the group, which one isn't as consultant, they can pick up aspects of what may be going on in the matrix which makes it difficult to work as a consultant. (G)

Obviously none of these factors are conclusive in determining whether a matrix is meaningful and worthwhile. However they do provide a guide to the future practitioner of some potential pitfalls and factors to consider in their planning for a social dreaming matrix.

7 e) The impact of working with a matrix upon consultants' creativity in areas such as writing and group leadership.

This question aims to discover if the work of being a matrix consultant has any impact upon the consultant's creativity. The speculation is that working with dreams and associations in the social dreaming process could increase their spontaneity which would be seen then in increased creativity. Two roles are identified from the data. These are 'Free Thinking Dreamer' and the previously identified 'Creative Artist'. The 'Free Thinking Dreamer' had a flexible and open attitude to dreams – their own and others. There was a capacity to play with associations and look to learning from the dreams for application in life. There was trust in the associative process and the potential to access wisdom from dreams.

Role 11)

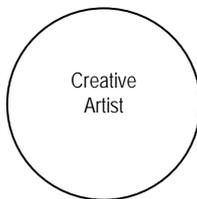


I feel much freer working with dreams in psychotherapy. I have totally abandoned an exclusive focus on Bion's basic assumptions and psychotic regression. I have even – very rarely – shared my dreams with psychoanalytic clients. Mostly, I have begun listening to my dreams more carefully and to dream more. This past week after hosting a matrix, I dreamt the idea that I required for a presentation. Prior to the dream I had been

struggling to think of what I wanted to say about this, and the dream arrived 2 days before a critical meeting with a co-presenter. (A)

It has not increased my writing volume but I do find myself doing much more synthesising than criticising. It seems that I see connections in all sorts of contexts. For example, I am studying the work of Rene Girard, who has written on culture and violence and I see how dreaming relates to culture and may be a way to overcome violence. (C)

The 'Creative Artist' enjoyed their capacity to be expressive and revelled in their capacity for creative thinking and living.



Enhanced it. (E)

All I can say is that I think it's a medium for me where I can swim with my creativity and it's marvellous and I like it from that point of view. I think that social dreaming is a way to surprise the soul. It is constant surprise from whatever your associations might be or dreams might be and I suppose that's in a way the essence of spontaneity, the surprise bit. (G)

The effect on me was to encourage me in my creativity. (H)

I think if you set out to be creative it's rotten, it doesn't work, I think it just happens. (B)

I tend to feel that my creativity has made being a matrix taker a fit for me that I've not experienced in any other context. I suppose in group leadership positions I am probably less judgemental and more accepting of others. (D)

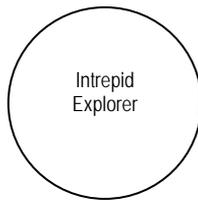
These responses indicate that consultants have experienced an increase in their personal creativity. There is an increased flexibility in relationships with clients and themselves in response to their social dreaming ventures. There is an increase in their level of spontaneity as seen in the progressive roles of 'Free Thinking Dreamer' and 'Creative Thinker'.

Question 7f) Consultants' experience of matrix members during the matrix

My personal experiences of social dreaming have been that strong feelings can be provoked in the relationships between participants of ongoing matrices. These

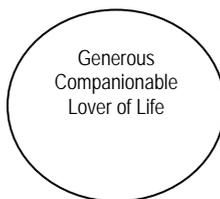
feelings have included the extremes of intimacy and isolation. It is interesting to see if this is an isolated phenomenon or shared by other consultants. Three roles are identified. These are 'Intrepid Explorer', 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' and 'Creative Thinker'.

The 'Intrepid Explorer' highlights the democratic nature of social dreaming. Consultants are not experts but collaborators.



As collaborators in an adventure in which the destination is unknown (A)

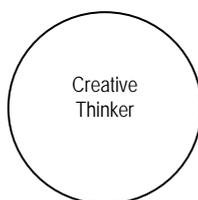
A depth of connection accompanied by feelings of warmth towards participants is experienced by the 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life'.



I have very warm feelings for members of the matrix. They seem to be connected in a profound way to me and to one another. We often say that we have learned a great deal, although we cannot say exactly what it is (a rather embarrassing state of affairs) (C)

To give the process time to work. To participate as they see fit. (D)

Some consultants experience participants being 'Creative Thinkers' with them.



Present in conscious, pre-conscious and unconscious ways without the negative experiences of group technologies in which the interpersonal and group realms overpower the ability to be and think together. (E)

Even those who pretend not to dream often begin to and grasp at the fascination of the reality the dreams lead to and/or include; people often see for the very first time that there is another way of looking at and working with dreams than the traditional psychoanalytic one (F)

These responses describe the role relationships between participants and in some cases between the consultant and participants. The progressive roles of 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life', 'Intrepid Explorer' and 'Creative Thinker'

demonstrate the collaborative nature of the relationships as well as the opportunity to think together in creative ways. These roles in which spontaneity is high are all contributing to the developing matrix of dreams, associations and connections.

8.8 Hypothesis 3: If reactive forces predominate in the immediate social system it becomes restrictive and the spontaneity of participants is reduced.

Question 8a) What reservations do you have about using social dreaming?

As shown from the participants' data the social dreaming method can provoke some unpleasant and confronting experiences. This question attempts to explore this area further by investigating consultants' concerns about using social dreaming. Two themes are identified from their responses:

Table 11: Consultants' reservations in using social dreaming

Theme No.	Identified Theme
20	Unsuitable environments
21	Negative effect on participants

Each of these themes will now be discussed.

Theme 20: Unsuitable environments

Responses identified a number of environments which consultants thought would neither be open to using social dreaming nor suited to using the method. These included *'very conservative organisations or social contexts where dreams were seen as 'kooky' or 'way out'*. The notion of dreams could seem far fetched *'when an organisation is in the way of 'act, act, act' rather than 'reflect, act, reflect, act'*. As dreams would be reflection they may be considered to be time wasting and not producing anything on the bottom line. There was a suggestion that *'some people would not understand social dreaming for what it was'*. One consultant hesitated to suggest it to organizations in which there was *'a great deal of internal competitiveness and mistrust'*. Similarly another consultant thought *'social dreaming*

could be used as a means to gain power over people rather than people honestly participating in it’.

These responses are describing social systems which are characterised by reactive forces. For example, the conservative organisation sticks with what is known – the tried and true. This creates a restrictive environment where new thoughts or actions are rejected in favour of the way things have always been done. This reduces participants’ spontaneity as there are limited options for new and progressive ideas to be entertained.

Theme 21: Negative effect on participants

Care is recommended in a group relations context due to *‘the regression experienced by participants where the free association of social dreaming can be frightening’*. One consultant thinks *‘social dreaming has the potential to open up strong feelings that are overwhelming’*. Another consultant observed matrix members *‘having difficult experiences such as being strongly affected by polarisation especially as the group relations were not being worked on’*.

This links in with the first hypothesis of this study which is that there is a relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system of a social dreaming matrix. As shown in Chapter 6 the relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system of the matrix can be both positive and negative. Participants can be uplifted or disturbed by the developing relationships between participants. The result of this is increased or diminished spontaneity.

In one consultant’s opinion *‘some people were not suited for social dreaming’*. These people were described as having *‘strong issues about their own identity or about individual identity’*. The consultant believed that *‘social dreaming threatens notions of personal identity and that through the process of connections to the dreams that the boundaries become dissolved in one sense and that this threatens Western concepts of individuals and boundaries’*. They also identified a tendency toward seeing dreams as an individual possession. Some people were described as *‘unable to make the shift from viewing dreams as a personal possession to thinking about a dream as a way of sharing and making meaning’*.

Here we see the potential potency of reactive forces within a social dreaming matrix. If a participant perceives a dream they have as their personal possession this contributes towards a restrictive immediate social system. For example, the role of 'Withholding Isolate' as identified in Chapter 6 is a role that significantly impacts upon the developing matrix and subsequently the possible learning.

No problems

One consultant believed that if the method was followed then there would be no problems. Interestingly the analysis of the participants' data does not support this view as all participants interviewed experienced reduced spontaneity which affected their capacity to engage with the task. This is a very significant point for this study and will be discussed in further detail in the summary of this chapter

Question 8b: What do you think social dreaming needs to develop further?

Suggestions about things that would assist social dreaming to develop further included greater collaboration between people using social dreaming, the formulation of a stated problem, linking into organisational long term planning and more practice.

The path to greater collaboration is suggested as being for '*all the people hosting matrices need to dialogue with each other and with Gordon Lawrence. Symbiont Technologies was developed to create a format for this to happen and notifies people of its trade marking of social dreaming for that purpose. We suggest only that people who do this work acknowledge Gordon's role in its creation by referencing the trademark, and encourage them to share data developed so that we can make it available to others*'. (A)

Linking social dreaming to a stated problem or planning is important to one consultant who has '*a hypothesis that it works best when there is a stated problem or issue before a group*' (C). Similarly another consultant says '*I think it needs to be woven into the real workings of groups perhaps as part of how organizations do their long term planning or visioning*' (D). And then, quite simply '*more practice*' (E) is suggested.

Question 8c) If you let your imagination go where do you think social dreaming could be used?

In what environments could the social dreaming method be fruitfully used? This question aims to find out the visions consultants have for the future of social dreaming. The responses have been summarised in Table 12.

Table 12: Potential uses for social dreaming

Environments for social dreaming	Purpose
United Nations	Dream future of the world
Different cultures	Conflict resolution
University faculties Future research conferences Prisons Anywhere	Not stated
Symbiont Technologies (not for profit American company)	Spread social dreaming so people realise it is part of living
TV program	Encourage people to be aware of their social dreams and share them
Organisational development	To free up thinking and feelings and creativity and illumine problems

Question 8d): Where do you think I should go from here?

Question 8e): What do you think would be a good outcome for this research?

These questions were asked for suggestions that would guide this research and they are summarised in the following:

Table 13: Suggestions to guide this research

Suggestion
Sketch the history of social dreaming...via Lawrence's descriptions of who he has worked with over the years.
Review scientific literature on the use of dreams in problem solving... particularly

links to abstract reasoning
Link research to what is in the literature regarding how organizations currently work on creativity.
I would like to see how social dreaming can be shown to be much more “ordinary” in human life.
I should hope that the various efforts have been shown to be generally similar in their outcomes and effect of participants, and I would like to hear of interesting and creative variations.
More people would know about Social Dreaming, and those reading your work will recognise the importance of a multilogue taking place between all the people doing this work which allows us to preserve Gordon Lawrence’s unique contribution to groups and organizational life.
An understanding of the similarities and differences in how various takers think about SD

Length of time of a matrix

One consultant found that the shortness of workshops meant that social dreaming was just an ‘appetizer’ and wished that especially in-house events could be held weekly for a couple of months.

Socio-emotional role

There seems to be another category of role to describe a type of functioning that lies somewhere in between a social and psychodramatic role. This type of role includes the social aspects of a role, for example midwife, which has an accepted understanding within the broader social system as to its function. However, this function is not expressed in the usual way. The ‘Dream Midwife’ is assisting in the birthing of the dreams rather than the more commonly expected birthing of a baby. The consultant is not trained as a midwife however their functioning is drawing upon the social expectations and understanding associated with the work. A midwife helps in the birth of a baby. In this case the consultant is assisting in the delivery of dreams and associations which contributes to a “new life” being born in the form of new learning or understanding. This role can be described as a “socio-emotional” role – it has components of the social and the psychodramatic but is neither one nor the other.

8.9 Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to extend and expand the understanding of the work of the consultant to a social dreaming matrix. This has been done through exploring the experiences of eight people who have taken up this work. Consultants have been asked a set of questions relating to the key elements of social dreaming – the dreams, associations and connections. These questions have focused upon consultants’ experiences as well as their perceptions of participants’ experiences and behaviours. The consultants’ interview data has been analysed into themes and role descriptions and these results have been presented in this chapter. The main findings of this chapter are:

- a. Roles that the consultants take up
- b. Themes and roles from consultants’ perceptions of participants
- c. Themes from consultants experiences of social dreaming
- d. The future of social dreaming as seen by consultants
- e. Primary finding from this study

a) Roles that the consultants take up

The data analysis has revealed ten roles that consultants take up when they are working with a social dreaming matrix. These are presented in the following table:

Table 14: Summary of roles consultants take up in their work

Role No.	Role description	Dreams & associations	Difficulties	State of mind	Task & role	Matrix & group
1.	Relaxed Welcoming Host	X	X			
2.	Coherent Objective Educator	X	X			
3.	Patient Alert Witness	X	X			X
4.	Clear Thinking Systems Analyst	X			X	X
5.	Dream Weaver	X	X		X	X
6.	Focused Active Listener			X	X	
7.	Mindful Open Learner			X		
8.	Creative Thinker			X		
9.	Dream Midwife				X	X
10.	Orchestra Conductor				X	

The roles that consultants enact at the beginning of a matrix in regard to participants presenting their dreams are Roles 1 – 4. These include welcoming and educating participants in how to ‘do’ social dreaming. Once this is done consultants stand back to give participants room to engage in the process of sharing dreams with each other. Roles 2 – 4 are also enacted by consultants as they work to assist participants in associating to the dreams. These roles also have an educative impetus regarding associations whilst maintaining a suitable distance for participants to experience the process of sharing dreams and associations. The ‘Dream Weaver’ is a role that is central to achieving the primary task of the consultant.

The states of mind that consultants aimed to achieve are represented in roles 6 - 8. These are ‘Focussed Active Listener’, ‘Mindful Open Learner’ and ‘Creative Thinker’. The task and role as perceived by consultants for their work was achieved through four roles. Two are the previously mentioned roles of ‘Clear Thinking Systems Analyst’ and ‘Focused Active Listener’. Two new roles are ‘Dream Midwife’ and ‘Orchestra Conductor’.

It is evident from the identification of roles and the related discussion that the roles do not exist in isolation. Relationships are evident between many of the roles. For example, the ‘Patient Alert Witness’ collaborates with the ‘Dream Midwife’ to observe the natural process of having and sharing dreams yet intervene when extra assistance is required. The ‘Objective Systems Analyst’ informs the ‘Orchestra Conductor’ when something is awry in the functioning of the immediate social system that upsets the rhythm and balance of the developing matrix. The working relationships between these roles give the consultant a depth and breadth to their work.

The differences for consultants in working with a social dreaming matrix and a group are represented in role descriptions. Roles that are described as being specific to social dreaming are ‘Dream Midwife’, ‘Dream Weaver’, ‘Clear Thinking Systems Analyst’ and ‘Patient Alert Witness’. While the ‘Clear Thinking Systems Analyst’ and ‘Patient Alert Witness’ are also relevant to working with groups the focus of their attention is different. The ‘Clear Thinking Systems Analyst’ works with the dreams and not the

dreamers. The ‘Patient Alert Witness’ is observing the development of the matrix of dreams, associations and connections not the dynamics of the group.

Some consultants find that their creativity is enhanced through their work with a social dreaming matrix. This is expressed in the roles of ‘Free Thinking Dreamer’ and ‘Creative Thinker’.

The progressive roles identified demonstrate the motivation of the consultants to continuously work to facilitate the development of the matrix of dreams and associations. All of these progressive roles show that the consultants are maintaining their spontaneity and in doing so they are contributing to the effectiveness of the social dreaming method. The progressive roles enacted are also oriented to enhancing the spontaneity of participants so they are able to engage with the social dreaming method and process. This maintenance of both participants’ and consultants’ spontaneity ensures that the social dreaming matrix continues to develop so that connections and learning can be gained about the broader social system.

b) Themes and roles from consultants’ perceptions of participants

The difficulties encountered by consultants in the sharing of dreams and associations by participants are analysed into five themes that are summarised in the following table:

Table 15: Consultants’ observations of difficulties that prevent participants sharing dreams and associations

Theme No.	Difficulties in sharing dreams
10	Living in the past – bringing old responses to the new situation
11	Dream poverty – scant supply of dreams
12	Dream anxiety – does my dream measure up?
	Difficulties in sharing associations
13	Preoccupation with interpretations of dreams
14	Taking time to learn how

The responses that consultants made to overcome these difficulties included three previously identified roles – ‘Relaxed Welcoming Host’, ‘Coherent Objective Educator’, ‘Patient Alert Witness’ and one new role – ‘Dream Weaver’. Through enacting these roles consultants actively tried to address the difficulties which they observed that were obstructing the development of the matrix.

c) Themes from consultants’ experiences

Analysis of the consultants’ purpose for social dreaming matrices revealed one theme and several individual comments. The theme was to facilitate learning about the organisation. This is consistent with the primary task of social dreaming. Individual responses to this question included building stronger relationships between participants of an organisation. One person had no aims and another varied their aims depending on the context of each matrix.

Gains observed by consultants from participation in a social dreaming matrix are analysed into two themes. Themes are also identified from consultants’ views to the purpose of a social dreaming matrix and how they know a matrix is working well. These are summarised in Table 16.

Table 16: Consultants’ experiences of social dreaming

Theme No.	Purpose of social dreaming matrix
15	Facilitate learning about the organisation
	Gains made from social dreaming matrices
16	Learning about the organisation
17	Strengthening relationships between participants
	When a matrix is working well
18	The matrix of dreams, associations and connections to the broader social system is prominent and evolving
	Good experiences from a social dreaming matrix
19	Ability to apply learning from the social dreaming matrix

Analysis of the data reveals that when the matrix is working well the matrix of dreams, associations and connections to the broader social system is in the foreground and evolving.

The gains experienced by participants are analysed into role descriptions. Five roles are described by consultants and these are 'Intrepid Explorer', 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life', 'Creative Thinker', 'Clear Thinking Systems Analyst' and 'Action Focused Learner'.

Participants experienced a sense of the value of working together for a collective rather than individual outcome. Social dreaming method lends itself very well to this as the issues raised are generated from the dreams and subsequent associations of participants. This is in contrast to other group experiences where the focus of the work may come from outside of the group. For example, in a group based on the analysis of individual dreams there may be certain meanings already attached to what emerges in the dreams and the group learns how to 'decode' the dreams based on this framework. In social dreaming each participant has contributed their dreams and associations so they have a personal interest in the connections that emerge. They know that their contributions are contributing to the outcome.

d) The future of social dreaming

A range of environments are seen as being suitable for the use of social dreaming as previously presented. Reservations about using social dreaming were analysed into two themes:

Table 17: Consultants' reservations in using social dreaming

Theme No.	Identified Theme
20	Unsuitable environments
21	Negative effect on participants

In summary, the results presented in this chapter have demonstrated that consultants enact a range of progressive roles in their work. In these roles they complete secondary tasks that support achievement of the primary task. The enactment of these

roles demonstrates the consultants are endeavouring to maintain their spontaneity i.e. they do not enact coping or fragmenting roles.

The themes identified from the consultants' perceptions of participants' experiences demonstrate difficulties encountered by participants within the social dreaming process. At these times their spontaneity is reduced as seen in the reduction of their capacity to share dreams and associations. These results have also been demonstrated in Chapter 6 in the analysis of the participants' data where a number of coping and fragmenting roles are identified. The consultants respond to these situations with progressive roles. They aim to assist the participants to participate more fully in the social dreaming matrix through increasing their spontaneity.

These results provide evidence to support the second hypothesis of this study which is that for social dreaming to be effective, consultants as well as participants need to maintain their spontaneity.

e) Primary finding from this study

In Chapters 6 and 7 the members of the matrix spoke about their feelings about what enhanced and reduced their spontaneity. Some spoke about how they felt about sharing their dreams. It is evident from members' experiences that the developing roles and role relationships (the immediate social system) do impact upon their capacity to participate in the social dreaming process. Spontaneity is both enhanced and reduced by these experiences. The primary finding of this study is that the developing immediate social system does matter and does effect how members contribute to the matrix of dreams, associations and connections.

However, the consultants neither identify the group dynamics as playing a part in the social dreaming process nor seem to attend to them. One view expressed is that a good matrix doesn't have group dynamics, another that if the method is followed there would be no problems. There is much in the consultants' data saying that a social dreaming matrix is different from group relations work. A strong desire is evident to divorce matrix functioning from any group dynamics. When things go awry in the social dreaming matrix consultants attempt to address these difficulties by enacting different roles. All of these roles are focused upon facilitating the sharing of

dreams and associations. It is as if denial of the presence of the group dynamics can make them magically disappear and make it possible to focus solely and purely upon the primary task and the broader social system.

The view is expressed that if one keeps working with the matrix then any issues arising within the immediate social system will be worked through in the dreams and associations. The evidence from the participants' analysis in this study shows that this does not actually happen. The experiences of matrix participants also show that it is not possible to continuously work with and/or relate only to the matrix. The immediate social system is simultaneously impacting upon participants' capacity to do this. Sometimes the matrix is in the foreground of participants' awareness while at others the immediate social system is. This study has shown that when the immediate social system is figural in participants' awareness their spontaneity is either enhanced (by motivating and progressive forces) or reduced (by reactive and restrictive forces).

An inconsistency is apparent between matrix participants' experiences and consultants' perceptions of their work in a social dreaming matrix. It is important therefore to consider why this inconsistency might be happening. Several thoughts come to mind. Given that the social dreaming method is relatively new it is likely that there is a strong desire for the method to work and also to give it a chance to work as initially conceptualised. This may mean that there is a degree of idealism in how consultants approach their work. There may be a fear of being contaminated by other methodologies about groups and leadership so the solution is to exclude thinking about them.

A high value is placed upon the learning to be gained from the dreams about the broader social system. There is a strong desire to separate the dreams from the dreamers. This may be due to a desire to keep things as simple as possible by focusing upon the outputs rather than the people who delivered them. The consultants are all well motivated to continually focus and refocus upon the dreams and associations as per their commitment to working with the primary task. The secondary findings from this study show that there are secondary tasks for consultants to complete to support the achievement of the primary task. Again, these are all oriented to working with the dreams, associations and connections and not to the dynamics between dreamers and

consultants in producing these. In the light of this study this is a restrictive solution as it has been shown that the capacity of participants to contribute dreams and associations fluctuates markedly in response to each other and the consultants.

I agree that the primary task of social dreaming is to stay focused upon the dreams and not the dreamers but unless there is some understanding and acknowledgement of the members developing role relationships there will be a negative impact upon the dreamers and the matrices themselves. I do not think it is necessary to work on the group dynamics directly but think it is useful to acknowledge them so people can attend to the primary task.

Another reason for the exclusion of the immediate social system may be that there is no useful framework at present which can be drawn upon to include experiences of the immediate social system in relationship to the social dreaming matrix. Clearly the matrix is not the place for individual or group therapy. I suggest that there is no way to think about the dreamer at present within social dreaming methodology. This could contribute to the restrictive solutions of keeping them out of awareness by saying they are not important and that their dynamics need not be acknowledged.

Chapter 9: Vitality in Social Dreaming

“Spontaneity functions only in the moment of its emergence just as, metaphorically speaking, light is turned on in a room, and all parts of it become distinct. When the light was turned off in a room, the basic structure remained the same, but a fundamental quality had disappeared” (Moreno 1946/1985, p86)

9.1 Introduction

As the light illuminates a room so too does vitality fill a person or group with life. This energy enlivens basic human structure and functioning. In this chapter elements of vitality are discussed from a Morenian perspective. The case studies and interview data reported here demonstrate the relationship between vitality of participants and consultants and the contribution of dreams, associations and connections to a social dreaming matrix. The purpose of this in-depth exploration of vitality is threefold. The first is to extend understanding of vitality as a form of spontaneity. The second purpose is to make explicit how vitality is expressed in relation to six elements of spontaneity within the social dreaming method. The six different elements of vitality that will be discussed are:

- 1) Vitality as a form of spontaneity
- 2) Vitality as energy
- 3) Vitality and immediacy
- 4) Vitality and warm up
- 5) Vitality and reflection
- 6) Vitality as a dimension of leadership

These will be discussed and supportive quotes from the participants’ and consultants’ interviews will be provided. These discussions of the different aspects of vitality are then linked to the three hypotheses of this study.

9.2 Vitality as a form of spontaneity

The Morenian philosophies of spontaneity, creativity, the moment, and theories of role and interaction are referred to by most psychodramatists as a rationale for their work (Yablonsky and Enneis, 1956 p149 cited by Kellermann 1992 p34). However,

Moreno did not attend to the consistent validation of his system so although his theories are useful to explain many clinical situations they fail to provide a uniform and comprehensive theoretical structure (Kellermann 1992). While there is a rich history of descriptive studies demonstrating the use of Morenian theory there has been little research into the theory itself (McVea 2009). There is some light on the horizon seen by J.L Moreno's son, Jonathan Moreno who has observed, particularly in Europe, a number of younger psychologists and physicians who are committed to the theoretical enrichment of psychodrama (Moreno cited in Kellermann 1992 p8). Nonetheless more than 60 years after Moreno first wrote of it, a coherent theory of spontaneity is still in the developmental stage (McVea 2009).

Vitality is one of four forms of spontaneity identified by Moreno (1946/1985). Originally named as dramatic quality by Moreno (1946/1985) this form of spontaneity is conceptualised as the quality which gives newness and vivacity to feelings, actions and verbal utterances. It contributes towards a vivacious and vigorous psychological appearance and has been found to be of practical importance in energizing and unifying the self (Moreno 1946/1985 p 90).

More recent terms used to describe dramatic quality include being energized (Nicholas 1984) and vitality (Clayton and Carter 2004).

9.3 Vitality as energy

As energy, spontaneity refers to a psychological state of readiness to act (Kipper 2000 p35). The presence of vitality can be ascertained by the energy levels within a group. When a group is "in spontaneity", everything is different from when it is not...one sees flushed faces, full of expression, and people making eye contact...there is motion; it may be subtle or bold, but it makes some sort of coherent sense (Nicholas 1984 p51). This level of activity is illustrated in the case studies. For example, Mark says: *'as soon as somebody shared a dream all of a sudden there was this energy there. And I think everybody felt it, everybody knew that we were on to something here and everybody started to get active in the chair and smile and wave arms around and talk'*. Similarly Erika notes and enjoys these energetic encounters with *'the sense*

that we were all in there with something that was sparking us off against each other and adding to pictures or bringing things back’.

Absence of energy which is represented by apathy and passivity is the opposite of spontaneity (Nicholas 2009). This is evident at the beginning of a matrix session when Mark feels *‘very tired, exhausted almost...during the matrix even coming in sitting down. And as soon as the session started I didn’t really feel there was much energy in the room’*. Similarly Erika experiences times where the interactions are lifeless with a *‘sense of things going into a black hole rather than being talked about...it’s like a space, it’s like something drops down a long way in the sense that the immediate feeling is that it’s not making any ripples. It’s not returning, it’s not bouncing back, it’s not doing, it’s not processing’*.

Energy levels fluctuate during the life of a group. During a psychodrama training group Clayton and Carter (2004 p22) hold the conviction that the vitality of the group would continue to come and go during the day and at the end of the day everyone would go away with an increased ability to be vital in daily living.

Fluctuations in energy levels are illustrated in the matrix participants’ experiences. For Erika *‘it (a negative) would only be just about the variations from week to week and how much we made of things as a group’*. The absence of energy leads to some flat experiences for Caitlin when *‘sometimes it just felt there wasn’t a lot of life and it was hard to know why exactly’*. Similarly Mark notes *‘all of a sudden it’d (the energy) just die again, it’d go woof, total silence, everybody just sitting there, looking in front of themselves rather than looking at each other all this sort of stuff. It was really weird’*. He observes energy shifts occurring *‘during the matrix there was not much talk and it was all pretty rigid, people seemed to be very tense. And then afterwards or before people were a lot more relaxed, like the matrix would finish and everybody would just go and chatter on about this and that and the other’*.

9.4 Vitality and immediacy of the present moment

The Morenian theory of spontaneity looks to the quality of responses made in the present moment (Moreno 1946/1985). Being able to respond fully in any situation involves entering into the immediacy of each moment and it is argued that the

presence of vitality enhances this. As a philosophy, the idea of the spontaneous person reflects a way of living and a general outlook on life that values taking advantage of living “in the moment” (Kipper and Hundal 2005 p119). Being in the moment has variously been described as being in ‘the now’ (Consedine 2004) and the ability to experience the world as ‘brand new in each moment’ (Carter 1994). When vitality is present it adds to the immediacy of a response made in a situation.

Several matrix consultants make efforts to cultivate a state of mind which is consistent with the immediacy of being present ‘in the moment’. For example, one consultant aims ‘to quote Bion’s use of Eliot – *no memory or desire*’ and another approaches the matrix with ‘*the notion of not going in as far as one can avoid it with preconceptions about what might take place and letting something emerge in each matrix which is fresh and new*’. The effort to ‘*pay attention to what is going on in my body*’ is another example of where a consultant aims to be present to what is emerging at a physical level moment by moment. Yet another example is ‘*I find the phrase to be available for thought to be helpful*’. Similarly, as a matrix participant Erika values the time where ‘*I could just be... concentrate a bit the wrong word but allows a better word...just to just speak, be in that moment and see what happens*’.

When responses are expressed directly in the immediacy of the moment Heath finds ‘*you start getting involved with people that are talking about them (the dreams) and offering them and discussing them, the richness of them is amazing*’.

Christoforou and Kipper 2006 (cited by McVea 2009) found that spontaneity was associated with temporal orientation to the here and now, while spontaneity deficit correlated only with the past, and not the present or future. Spontaneity deficit occurs in situations where spontaneity may be required but is not present (Kipper and Hundal 2005).

An example of spontaneity deficit is seen in Heath’s initial approach to the social dreaming matrix. The concerns he holds ‘*in the earlier part of the matrix were whether people were exercising undue influence, in terms of wanting to push the group in certain ways... to see whether anyone was bullying anyone else*’. These fears arise from past experiences and reduce his willingness to respond fully in the ‘here

and now'. He notes *'when you spend a lot of time in the battlefield you build up some extraordinary strong armour that doesn't allow things to flow through or to come out. I had to find out what was happening from that point of view before I would start offering more than what I was offering'*

Similarly, when discussion becomes oriented to the past rather than the present moment there is a drop in vitality. For example, Caitlin observes *'it would then move into chat, about, oh yes and did you hear about or whatever...somehow that would kill off the life in the matrix, that sort of chat'*.

A warm-up to minimum or lack of spontaneity has been referred to in two contexts within Morenian theory, firstly, in the management of routine functions and secondly, in relation to situations where spontaneity may be required but is not present (McVea, 2009). This second condition has been termed spontaneity deficit by Kipper and Hundal (2005).

The concept of spontaneity deficit is consistent with Moreno's notion of spontaneity being blocked, which he considered produced disequilibrium and anxiety (McVea 2009 p)

Mark has many experiences in which he experiences disequilibrium and anxiety within the matrix *'If I came in without any anxiety I would get anxious within half an hour or so...I think it was just bouncing around the people in the matrix...it's that sort of feeling which is very tense...like the muscles, everything would be rigid, like a statue almost, I wouldn't want to move.* Erika also observes there are restrictive interactions between participants and wonders *'what are the feelings that people can't talk about in that situation?'*

Kipper and Hundal (2005 p119) argue that spontaneity and nonspontaneity represent two separate continua rather than opposite states of mind. From their studies they concluded that spontaneity and nonspontaneity cannot exist at the same time but they can exist within the same person. In the case studies Mark is an example of someone who vacillates frequently between spontaneity and non spontaneity.

9.5 Vitality and warm up

In order to release maximum spontaneity, Blatner (1997 as cited by Goldberg 2009 p365) identifies four preconditions of the warm-up. They are a sense of trust and safety; openness to intuition, images, feelings, and nonrational processes; playfulness; and a movement toward risk-taking and exploration. If these preconditions are fully met it is to be expected then that vitality, as a form of spontaneity, will be enhanced.

Attention to trust and safety are most evident in the cases of Heath and Mark. Heath comes to the social dreaming matrix with concerns about trust and safety in the front of his mind. Once he has established no bullying is occurring he notes *'it goes back to getting a feeling whether you're safe again'* and once clear this is the case *'and then exploring different things'*. The feeling of trust leading to greater confidence in risk-taking and exploration is also strongly illustrated by Mark. When he feels trusting towards fellow participants he is open and generous in sharing his dreams and associations. Alternatively when *'we didn't know how people would react...if I sort of challenged them... I think the trust wasn't there...we weren't all on the same level of trust'* Mark becomes conflicted and frustrated and his trust of other participants is severely reduced resulting in restrictions on his willingness to contribute.

On the other hand an increasing openness to intuition, images, feelings and nonrational processes is illustrated by several of the participants. In fact this is one of the motivations for Erika to attend the social dreaming matrix *'what attracted me to it was that sense that, it was using a less, well you can never use less verbal I guess but a, using more an imagery and other ways to learn about myself in a group and the group itself'*. And as time unfolds she enters into the experience more fully as she *'brought the dreamer part in that sense of dropping away some of the role stuff and the leadership stuff which is my day to day life, work life...bringing much more a spontaneous, just going with whatever...I don't feel responsible for that group at all and it was lovely, just to be there'*.

Similarly, Heath begins to associate to the dreams by *'picking up more what the person meant by a feeling than what they were saying'*. Openness to intuition becomes significant for Caitlin *'had you asked me before I would have said well of*

course you should be able to listen to the intuitive voice but it actually made me feel like you can just do it'.

A movement towards exploration is illustrated when Heath *'thought I would explore being in different spots...I was offering them (the dreams) at different times'*. Risk-taking is evident as Erika *'a few times I actually kicked the group off which is unusual for me'*.

Restricted warm up to spontaneity is evident through identifying the opposite preconditions identified by Blatner required for a warm up to maximum spontaneity. A sense of trust and safety therefore is replaced by mistrust and feeling unsafe. Openness to intuition, images, feelings, and nonrational processes becomes restrictive and repetitive thinking and the exclusion of a depth of feelings and a range of images. There is an overdeveloped value of logical thinking. Instead of playfulness between people there is tension and anxiety. Risk-taking and exploration are inhibited as responses are oriented to addressing anxieties. Limitations are placed on any ventures into unknown territories.

Examples of all of these are found in the participants' case studies. Concerns about bullying are paramount for Heath. Caitlin reflects that she was probably too nice in social dreaming and *'can remember thinking I had censored some dreams, edited bits out that felt too sexual, that for me was the hard struggle'*. Similarly Erika thinks *'it was a while before how did those personal, particularly the dreams that had very personal bits to them, where did that fit? And how would they be used, and then how would we talk about each others personal bits?'*

Erika observes the *'majority of us were a fairly conservative group in what we brought of our emotions to things'*. The range of emotions able to be expressed is limited by the repetitive telling of 'old battle stories' which focus on aggression, attack and defence to the exclusion of other emotions.

Mark had times where he *'really had problems tuning in what others had dreamt...it was just so different or foreign to me that I really had trouble to associate'*.

Caitlin observes the challenge involved in achieving a balance between exploration and avoidance *'I guess that's the line that has to be trod between giving people freedom to explore but not to kind of avoid you know the real, the reason that you're there'*.

9.6 Vitality in reflection

Extroversion can be confused with vitality resulting in activity being valued over listening and reflection (Williams 2002). Similarly, spontaneity should not be confused with impulsivity or simply being active (Nicholas 2009). This is illustrated by Erika *'there's the urgency of telling the dream...and then that sense of what if there was a bit more silence or a bit more staying with? Sometimes I sort of sense, oh no don't go on to another story yet, let's wait and see what happens'*. The value of listening and reflection is also evident in the roles of 'Alert, Patient Witness' and 'Focused, Active Listener' that emerged from the consultants' data.

Spontaneity can be present in a person when he is thinking just as well as when he is feeling, when he is at rest just as well as when he is in action (Moreno 1946/1985). For example, a consultant notes *'there were a few people who didn't speak through the whole time but they weren't there in a cynical way, although they didn't speak they were participating'*.

9.7 Vitality as a dimension of leadership

Within the field of leadership development vitality is identified as one of five dimensions in a leadership framework developed by Williams and colleagues. The vitality dimension relates to the life force, the life struggle, relish of competition, and challenge (Williams 2002, p64).

The key role to accompany vitality is identified by Williams (2002) as 'Lover of Life'. The 'Generous Companionable Lover of Life' is a corresponding role from the participants' data analysis. Roles that cluster around the 'Lover of Life' from the consultants' analysis include 'Relaxed Welcoming Host', 'Dream Weaver', 'Dream Midwife' and 'Orchestra Conductor'. These roles are all actively involved in

producing the dreams, associations and connections which bring life to the social dreaming process.

A leadership dilemma underpinning the expression of the role of 'Lover of Life' is identified by Williams (2002 p64) as "How to risk self and others AND protect self and others". This is interesting to consider in the light of the consultants data. The roles which emerge from the consultants' interview data demonstrate a desire for leadership to be provided through non directive methods. This is illustrated by the quotes *'I think the gentlest touch the better' (G)*, *'just waited' (F)*, *'hold back from active involvement' (A)*, *'I didn't want to be intrusive in that...I was feeling my way very much with how much to say and how much to just stay out of the process (H)*.

Interestingly, all four matrix participants also wrestle with this leadership dilemma in some form or another. For example, Mark begins by openly sharing his dreams and associations (risking self), feels unable to take things further for fear of upsetting others (protecting self and others) and then withdraws (protecting self).

Similarly, Erika has a desire to delve deeper into the dreams and associations (to risk self and others) but feels she cannot confront others when she 'has emptiness herself' (protecting self and others). In the absence of a satisfactory resolution she looks to the consultants for leadership *'what else could we have done with that moment? I never said that which I probably when I think about that could have easily said but didn't...my first reaction is that that's a leadership role and I think well so what? That doesn't make any sense but that was my first reaction'*. Erika then works privately to try and achieve the depth of learning she wants (protecting self).

Heath also lives this conflict through the desire to protect himself until he arrives at a sense of confidence *'You could have your own boundaries so that if some of the exploration was done in a way that you could offer something, but you didn't have to offer any more if you didn't want to or you felt uncomfortable with that'*. Caitlin is worried she will be excluded and so protects herself and does not risk herself. These experiences represent different sides of the same coin as concerns about being attacked and being excluded are both focused upon safety.

All participants work to resolve this leadership dilemma. Two participants (Heath and Erika) find some resolution to this conflict and are able to sustain their vitality through generating new responses that enables them to participate to their satisfaction in the matrix. Mark and Caitlin do not resolve this conflict as is demonstrated by a drop in their vitality and increased anxiety and dissatisfaction with themselves and others.

9.8 Summary

In this chapter there has been an in-depth exploration of vitality as one of the key forms of spontaneity. Six elements of vitality have been identified and discussed. These are vitality as a form of spontaneity; energy; immediacy; warm up, reflection and as a dimension of leadership.

Exploration of these areas has illustrated the significance of vitality as a form of spontaneity within the social dreaming method. The presence – or absence – of energy is experienced by participants within a social dreaming matrix. When energy levels are high interactions are lively. When energy levels are low there is apathy and passivity. Fluctuations in energy levels are observed by participants and affect their willingness and ability to interact with each other.

Immediacy is conceptualised as the ability to respond fully in the moment that a situation occurs. The specific ability that was focused on was the cognitive processes which have been described as ‘state of mind’. This refers to the ability to mentally attend to the present moment. Consultants in particular endeavoured to attain a state of mind in which they drop any preconceptions and thoughts from the past or present so they are available to pay attention to and think about the dreams and associations that are being contributed to the developing matrix.

Inability to relate directly in the present moment to current situation is linked to a spontaneity deficit. This is seen in some participants’ responses where negative past experiences and worry about the future detracted from their capacity to contribute fully in the here and now situation.

Experiences of disequilibrium and anxiety also reduced the capacity to participate in the immediate situation. This was due to the resultant uncomfortable feelings which diminished participants' ability to focus and concentrate.

The relationship between vitality and warm up is explored. Preconditions for the release of maximum and also for minimum spontaneity are identified and illustrated from participants' experiences. The presence of the preconditions for the release of maximum spontaneity - namely a sense of trust and safety; openness to intuition, images, feelings, and nonrational processes; playfulness; and a movement toward risk-taking and exploration, participants enacted progressive roles. Alternatively, with the presence of the opposite set of preconditions – mistrust; restrictive and repetitive thinking; an overdeveloped focus on logic; tension and anxiety; inhibition and safety orientation – participants enacted coping and fragmenting roles.

This data analysis demonstrates clearly links between the three hypotheses of this study. The relationship between the individual and the immediate social system of the matrix is evident in the different warm up processes described earlier in this chapter. When participants feel trusting and safe they experience an increased level of spontaneity as seen in the enactment of progressive roles. When there is mistrust and tension they enact coping and fragmenting roles. The presence of these reactive forces causes participants to lose spontaneity as seen in loss of energy, inability to respond in the moment, being caught up in negative experiences from the past and fears of the future. This reduces participants' capacity to contribute to the developing matrix. The matrix itself becomes restricted by censored and delayed sharing of dreams, the inability to attend to associations due to distractions caused by anxieties and fears and consequently withholding of associations.

Alternatively, when vitality is present there are energetic interactions; associations are made immediately and freely; exploration occurs; images and feelings are valued and expressed.

As well as energetic interactions vitality also encompasses listening and reflection. This is evident in the progressive roles enacted by consultants when they use active listening skills which capture a quality of listening which is intense and focused. The

maintenance of consultants' spontaneity therefore includes having the capacity to be both active and reflective as the situation requires. This is seen in the secondary tasks identified in the role analysis. At times the consultant needs to take up an active leadership role such as 'Orchestra Conductor' or 'Dream Midwife'. At other times alert observation is indicated such as in the role of 'Alert Patient Witness'. Both active intervention and active listening contribute towards the achievement of the primary task of making connections between the dreams, associations and the broader social system.

Vitality as a dimension of leadership is enacted in the central role of 'Lover of Life' (Williams 2002). Several roles from the participants and consultants data analysis are similar to or easily cluster around this role. The leadership dilemma associated with this role is identified by Williams as how to risk self and protect self and others. Participants wrestle with this dilemma and vacillate between being adventurous, companionable, overly nice and self-protective.

When the participants' case studies are viewed through the eyes of this leadership dilemma it can be seen that all participants experience difficulty in resolving the conflict. One could argue that the conflict between wanting to risk self and others and also protect self and others is a dynamic common to all groups. However, what is interesting about these results is that they point to the question of where the leadership does actually lie in the social dreaming matrix. The case studies suggest that participants are conflicted about providing leadership as seen in their ambivalent responses to the dilemma. There is a tendency to withdraw and leave difficulties to the consultants to solve – which doesn't appear to happen. The consultants generally prefer to tread gently with their interventions and the roles that they enact are mainly oriented to facilitating the development of the matrix of dreams, associations and connections. For one participant the resolution to this dilemma is a decision to remain self-protective and withdraw from active involvement in the social dreaming matrix. For others there is experimentation with the dilemma throughout the life of their social dreaming experience.

The range of different qualities identified and discussed in this chapter contributes to the experience and expression of vitality. Vitality is shown to be a significant factor for both participants and consultants in the social dreaming process.

Chapter 10: Concluding Remarks

The concluding remarks consist of three sections. These are:

- 1) Findings from this study
- 2) Limitations of the study
- 3) Recommendations for future areas of study

10.1: Findings from this study

The major area of exploration of this study has been the spontaneity of participants and consultants in the social dreaming method. Three hypotheses have been explored in relation to this. Findings from the study have demonstrated that there is a relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system of the social dreaming matrix. Analysis of participants' interviews has shown that individual spontaneity is influenced – both by being enhanced and reduced - by the roles that they perceive other participants to be enacting.

This study has shown that the hypotheses are linked. Just as the dreams and associations interweave to form connections so too do the threads of the three hypotheses. The relationship between individual and the developing role relationships of other participants in this matrix influences their responses. Their resultant level of spontaneity influences their participation in the social dreaming matrix which in turn influences the effectiveness of the social dreaming matrix as seen in the sharing of dreams and associations and the ability to participate. A positive relationship between individual spontaneity and the immediate social system is seen when progressive roles are enacted. Conversely, a negative relationship is seen when coping and fragmenting roles are enacted. When this occurs reactive forces are dominant in the relationships and participation is characterized by responses aimed at alleviating anxiety and fears. The focus of attention then moves away from the developing matrix of dreams, associations and connections as participants become preoccupied with their concerns about the other participants responses. Capacity to work on the primary task of social dreaming is reduced so subsequently then is the effectiveness of the social dreaming method.

The primary finding from this study is that the developing immediate social system does influence the developing matrix of dreams, associations and connections. This is clearly evidenced in the analysis of participants' interview data. The impact of the immediate social system cannot be denied or lost. While attention to the primary task is clearly essential to progress a social dreaming matrix the immediate social system cannot be ignored as an integral element of the social dreaming process.

Following on from the findings of this study the question then arises of what a consultant can do to help matrix members overcome the impact of the immediate social system upon their participation. Acknowledging that it happens is an obvious place to start. Providing an opportunity to reflect upon participation and communicate experiences can also be useful. The provision of this structure also serves to validate participants' experiences as belonging within the process itself rather than something that has to be taken away and worked on in isolation.

It could be useful to develop ways to link participants' experiences to the work and learning from the matrix. There could be directed reflection to assist participants to think about their experiences within the context of the matrix. For example, what roles did you warm up to during this session? How do these roles link to the themes of the dreams and associations that have been shared?

For the consultants it may be useful to think about the concept of the immediate social system as a way to progress their work with a matrix. I suggest this reconceptualisation can provide a useful framework for consultants to think about group dynamics. It provides a fresh way to consider the interpersonal dynamics whilst still remaining connected to the social dreaming methodology. It creates a bigger system in which the dreamer is not split off from their dreams. The future development of the method may be enhanced through extending thinking about the two social systems within social dreaming - the dreamer is then held within the immediate social system in relationship to the broader social system from which learning is sought.

Exploration of the spontaneity of the consultants has also found a number of secondary tasks that they undertake to facilitate the development of the social

dreaming matrix. These tasks play a pivotal part in facilitating achievement of the primary task. These secondary tasks are completed to enable learning about the broader social system. The effectiveness of social dreaming then is enhanced through the consultants enacting a range of progressive roles i.e. maintaining their ability to respond in a variety of ways. Consultants identify the emergence of coping roles in participants in response to anxieties. They respond by enacting progressive roles which facilitate the development of spontaneity of participants i.e. assist them to warm up to roles from which they are able to participate fully in building the matrix of dreams associations and connections.

One form of spontaneity, namely vitality, has been explored from a number of perspectives. These include the presence and efficacy of vitality as energy as well as reflection; vitality as created through responding in the immediate moment a situation occurs; the reduction of vitality through a spontaneity deficit; pre conditions that enhance or diminish warm up to vitality and vitality as a dimension of leadership. These aspects of vitality have all been illustrated with data from participants and consultants analysis. Findings from this exploration are that the presence of vitality in participants and consultants impacts both the immediate social system as well as the matrix of dreams, associations and connections. When vitality is present the role relationships are characterized by progressive forces such as companionable creative sharing and thinking. These progressive forces are directed towards the developing matrix which contains a diverse range of dreams and associations. Conversely, when vitality is absent or reduced the role relationships are restrictive and the development of the matrix sluggish and limited. At these times the immediate social system is in the foreground and the matrix falls into the background. This is seen in preoccupation with other participants' responses and efforts being directed mainly to alleviating the reactive forces arising from anxieties and fears.

If the difficulties arising in the social system are not addressed it can result in isolation of a participant or adversely affect participation. This has implications for the application of the social dreaming method. When reactive forces predominate there is the potential for people to experience exclusion or isolation from the immediate social system and also from the social dreaming matrix if they are not able to contribute their dreams and associations.

10.2 Limitations of the study

There are a small number of respondents in this study. While there has been the opportunity for in-depth exploration the findings are not able to be applied to a wider population. Another limitation is that all participants were from the same matrix - this may have been a matrix with its own unique dynamics which will not occur in other settings. There is not the opportunity to have a cross sectional view of participants' experiences across a range of different matrices which could more confidently support the findings of this study. It is recommended that this study be replicated in the future with participants of different matrices.

It was challenging for the researcher to explore the social dreaming matrix to which she had consulted. In particular this related to analysing the matrix participants' data. While all researchers are affected by the interviews they do and the resulting data in some way this personal connection added another layer of impact. The researcher found herself entering into mental conversations with the person about their responses due to her knowledge and previous interactions with them in the matrix. At times this served as a distraction from working objectively with the data.

The consultants email interviews are limited by the restricted nature of the written word. Written words do not convey the depth of emotion or range of thought that a person communicates with their verbal responses. In the email interview it is not possible to follow up nonverbal cues or things that are said with particular emphasis. This limits the depth of exploration available to the researcher. A deeper understanding of the significance of the experiences for the interviewee and subsequently for the study may well have been missed. In future studies the researcher would aim to include telephone interviews to accompany an email questionnaire where the interviewee is unable to be interviewed in person.

10.3 Recommendations for future areas of study

The little that has been written about difficulties arising in the immediate social system suggests that these are worked through in the matrix of dreams, associations and connections (Lawrence, 2004; Ross, 1994). Perhaps it is a bit optimistic to expect that the dreams and/or the process of dreaming will always resolve difficulties that arise in

social dreaming when you consider the range of complex and challenging experiences that have been identified from the literature.

What is the evidence that could be used to decide this one way or another? There would need to be studies that explore the relationship between the developing immediate social system and the matrix of dreams and associations. Two areas come to mind. The first is whether the learning of the broader social system is meaningful or limited. The second is whether the immediate social system is open and progressive so that a range of data is contributed to the matrix.

It would need to be ascertained that difficulties experienced by participants in the immediate social system are resolved through the development of the matrix of dreams, associations and connections over the life of a social dreaming venture. If studies show that the work of the matrix does not resolve issues in the immediate social system then the matrix cannot be relied upon as the only means to resolve these. Further evidence would be if studies showed that unresolved issues in the immediate social system limit the development of the matrix and that over time this continues to be the case.

There are different ways this could be explored. One approach could be to interview each participant midway through and at the end of a social dreaming venture. Questions could explore their experiences of the immediate social system midway through the experience and establish any difficulties that they are experiencing within the relationships and in the primary task of sharing dreams and associations. Questions at the end could explore whether these were resolved as the matrix developed.

Another method of exploration could be a concise reflection sheet given to participants at the end of each session in which they note issues/difficulties that they are experiencing in sharing dreams or associations. Consultants could record their observations of the connections that emerge from the sharing of the dreams and associations. At the end these could be collated and compared. Of course, the fact that participants and consultants are regularly reflecting upon their experiences may bring difficulties into their awareness in a way that wouldn't have happened otherwise and would alter their participation.

An independent observer could record participants' involvement and the developing relationships as well as the developing themes of the dreams and associations. Developments in the immediate social system could be compared to explorations within the matrix to see if there are similar themes.

Sessions could be audio or video recorded and analysed to see the developments over time of the immediate social system and the matrix. Is there a greater expansiveness or depth of learning achieved or is there restricted learning about the broader social system?

Consultants could keep journals of their experiences and observations of the developing immediate social system and the themes of the matrix. While they cannot know participants inner experiences they are in the position of being outside of the immediate social system and the matrix in so far as they are not contributing their dreams and associations. This objective space could enable them to reflect on whether connections to the broader social system are made and whether they see development of the immediate social system being related to this.

Two matrices could be run - one include space for reflections on the developing social system and one not. The matrix with the reflective spaces could focus on identifying any emerging difficulties in the social system. Participants could then be interviewed to see if there are differences in how these difficulties unfold and in the outcomes. Do participants of the social dreaming matrix without reflective spaces find that the matrix does enable the working through of issues in the immediate social system that affects their spontaneity? Does the inclusion of reflective spaces result in a more flexible and progressive social system and subsequently a greater depth to the matrix itself? A difficulty in this approach in the comparison of two matrices is that it is not a given that there will be difficulties arising in all social systems.

The amount of learning gained could be explored including the depth and range of exploration that is made available to each matrix from the perspective of participants and consultants. Limitations that are experienced can be identified and thought about in relationship to the social system.

Participants could be interviewed at the end of a social dreaming matrix and asked if the developing matrix has assisted in the working through of any difficulties that they experienced in the immediate social system. They could be asked to keep journals of their experiences so they have clear recollections of these.

To summarise, there are a variety of methods that might be used to explore systematically and objectively the relationship between the work and process of social dreaming and the system dynamics present that support or interfere with this. This study has demonstrated that spontaneity is one factor which influences two systems – the immediate social system and the matrix of dreams and associations - that exist within social dreaming.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire used in semi-structured interviews with participants of social dreaming matrix

1) Demographics

- a) Professional background
- b) Current role

2) Matrix logistics

- a) How many matrices have you participated in?
- b) What context were they in?
- c) What was the purpose of each matrix?
- d) What sort of people were in the matrices?
- e) What motivated you to participate in social dreaming?

3) Presenting dreams

- a) What was your experience in bringing dreams and presenting them in the matrix?
- b) What obstacles, if any, did you experience to being able to present your own dreams?
- c) What assisted you to present your dreams?

4) Making associations

- a) What was your experience of making associations and connections to dreams presented in the matrix?
- b) What difficulties did you experience in associating to dreams in the matrix?
- c) What assisted you to freely associate to dreams presented in the matrix?
- d) What state of mind are you attempting to achieve when in a matrix?

5) Matrix experiences

- a) What was different in your experience of being a group member to a matrix member?
- b) What is your experience of other matrix members during the matrix?

- c) Tell me about a good matrix experience and then a difficult one.
- d) What did you gain from being in the matrix? What were the three most important things for you?
- e) What learning have you gained from the matrix?
- f) How have you applied that learning?
- g) How has being a matrix member affected your creativity? e.g. writing, art, management

6) The future of social dreaming

- a) What problems do you see in social dreaming?
- b) What do you think social dreaming needs to develop further?
- c) If you let your imagination go where do you think social dreaming could be used?
- d) Where do you think I should go from here?
- e) What do you think would be a good outcome from this research?

Appendix B: Questionnaire used with social dreaming consultants

1) Demographics

- a) Age
- b) Professional background
- c) Current role

2) Matrix logistics

- a) How many matrices have you consulted to?
- b) What context were they in?
- c) What sort of people were in the matrix?

3) Presenting dreams

- a) What do you see is the role of the consultant with regard to members presenting dreams?
- b) What difficulties have you encountered that prevent dreams being presented?
- c) What have you done to overcome these difficulties?

4) Making associations

- a) What do you see is the role of the consultant in matrix members making associations?
- b) What difficulties have you encountered in matrix members making associations?
- c) What have you done to overcome these difficulties?

5) a) What state of mind are you attempting to achieve when consulting to a matrix?

- b) What do you see as the task and role of the consultant to a matrix?

6) Consultants' experiences of a specific social dreaming matrix

- a) Think about one specific matrix – what were your aims in running it?
- b) How was it different from other matrices?
- c) What did you gain from it? Can you mention the three most important things?

- d) What do you think matrix members gained from it?
- e) Overall in your experience what are the main things that members have gained?
- f) What effect have you noticed of matrix participation on members' creativity?

7) Consultants' reflections and observations of their experiences as a consultant

- a) What is different to being consultant to a group and consultant to a matrix?
- b) What is happening in the matrix that helps you to know it is working as a matrix?
- c) Tell me about a good matrix experience and then a terrible one
- d) How has being a matrix consultant affected your creativity in areas such as writing, group leadership?
- e) What is your experience of matrix members during the matrix?

8) The future of social dreaming

- a) What reservations do you have about using social dreaming?
- b) What do you think social dreaming needs to develop further?
- c) If you let your imagination go where do you think social dreaming could be used?
- d) Where do you think I should go from here?
- e) What do you think would be a good outcome for this research?

26th October 2000

Ms Julia Hailes
C/- SGSM
Swinburne University of Technology
Hawthorn Vic 3122

Dear Julia,

We have pleasure in informing you that your application for ethics approval has been considered by the SGSM Ethics Sub-Committee and has been approved.

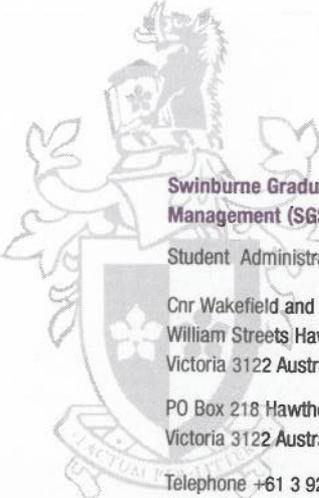
I wish you well in your studies



Professor Susan Long
Chair
SGSM Ethics Sub-Committee

Learning Through Experiences

c.c. Dr John Newton



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