

### #3 Social Dreaming Matrix: Covid-19 a year on. Notes from 1st April 21

43 dreamers

17 Dreams, 29 Associations

#### THEMES

The official party line vs actual experience: Idea of not knowing who is going to be helpful and who isn't- can we trust the lawyer? People at health club aren't listening... is it all just a game?

Dependence/distrust of technology: Can't be without laptops and computers etc- information coming back is not helpful and is nightmarish- leading down dark roads. Damned if you do and damned if you don't- can't do without it

Overwhelming anxiety and confusion: 'Anxious' 'Anxiety' Confusion, Fear- uncertainty. Lots of travel in darkness on unfamiliar roads, possibly overrunning the runway. One woman in themes section said there were so many feelings that she couldn't think

Belonging, identity and identity shifting: Theme around belonging and not knowing where to belong. Sense of identity shifting and changing all the time- not knowing where we are heading. Also references to identity and home: several dreams in which dreamers spoke of returning to their hometowns or birthplace- references to Athens and old first developed society- going back to the roots of society and who we are. Somebody said it's not the things around us that are changing but we are also changing... revolves around theme of changing identities and identity work we are doing by returning to our roots and not finding our old selves there. Seeking and travelling towards who we are and who I am that I find myself.- What will we find in Athens? Democracy or the Athens that killed Socrates?

Danger to touching/ What bodies are safe? : Masturbation- other kinds of touch- people carefully touching each other- what will happen in the time of Corona? Eros on its own- life instinct on its own. Dream of car on fire- wanting to rescue but not wanting to stop and touch children on fire. What is a safe way to connect? If we touch each other will we die or violate someone? How can we do that? Man was overweight- disgusted by the body of the other. Robots connect to body image? Another way to depersonalise the body- make it safer to touch? Robots probably can't be contagious.

Violence acted upon the body – BLM black bodies, violence acted upon them- but now white bodies also- what is acted on white bodies. Softer, more of a whisper- much easier to speak about what is done to the black body than the white body- female body. Could only overcome violation by giving lecture on anatomy- making the body an object. Paranoia about vaccine and what it will do to us

Desire to hang onto hope– stars as a way of hanging onto hope. 'Starry starry night'- bittersweet song – night sky and beautiful stars- desire to say sorry- desire for hope also present.

Death and fear of death – everyone was dreaming about death without knowing that all were dreaming the same- German saying about the last thing you wear not having pockets- sharks following boats (ecology has changed)- thrown overboard. Pandemic- ecology has been changed. Interfering with nature- causing ecological disaster

## DREAMS AND ASSOCIATIONS

D1: Flying on plane from London to Athens, night flight, sitting with friend behind two pilots behind cockpit, could see runway lit up brightly. 'OK, about to arrive'. Plane descending too fast, worried about hard landing or crash. Landing was smooth. Worried about speed of plane- might overrun the runway. Finally, plane ground to halt just before the end of runway. Plane intact, we were safe. Bus waiting to take us to terminal. Went into bus. Looked at watch- 11.30pm. Told friend we were 45 minutes late.

D2: Something happening in Athens- couldn't get there. In unidentified city. Big group of people in one apartment. Had contact with other people with code names. Miscommunication and violent communication. Lawyer in group was finding solutions- was supposed to go to Athens but decided not to due to pandemic. Someone else in group said they would go to Athens. Confusion over how it would be possible for you to represent us all by yourself?

D3: Found myself amongst many people I didn't know. Couldn't work out what they were saying. Gradually realised I was in a game- maybe televised. I was trying to work out what was going on and what rules were- getting anxious, trying to join in but not knowing what I was meant to do and how to win. Kept telling myself 'Only a game, doesn't matter'- had an anxiety didn't know the rules.

D4: Exhausting dream- recurring. In health club that I normally go to- in locker room after workout. Realised someone had emptied wallet of credit cards- most worried about BA Amex card (usually use when travelling). Trying to contact card company to cancel or protect account. Went to reception of club- stuff unable or unwilling to help. Got on phone but couldn't get signal or wifi- went outside to find signal. Trying to google customer service details of card company and mind wasn't working or fingers could not type digits. Could not type what I wanted to search for. Eventually typed American Express in but results were pages of ads. Felt deep sense of dread that someone emptying account whilst I was unable to act or alert anyone. No control. Cycle continued until next dream.

Assoc to all dreams was D5: In a plane- flying too low. Emergency landing in mall in city in Ontario (where I grew up) in parking lot. Chaos. Frightened. Kept reassuring us that it was OK- Upgraded seat from D10-H9. False sense of security, being told it was OK.

D6: One of a team of three but could not picture other two people- needed to have certain credentials. Needed to set standards- could not shift on certain standards- in other areas

as long as we engaged people no standards required. Kept moving forward and never got to any outcome.

D7: At beginning of pandemic- living in suburbia- didn't know where or with whom. Knew that everyone in suburbia dreamt every night about death. Knew that no-one else knew that they were all dreaming the same thing. Technology allowed everyone to read the things they had dreamt the previous night- so finally established that all were dreaming the same thing. They were a community having the same thoughts, dreams, nightmares at the same time and this felt hopeful, but also nightmarish because replaying dreams every day could make them become reality. Started seeing familiar faces (not family or close friends). Tried to prevent them from reading their dreams but could not.

A1: Childhood expression I never really understood 'It's all Greek to me'. (English expression if things are not understandable- but when I was a child, cousin was Greek, so to me the expression meant something about getting together with family and having wonderful food and dance.). Associate to Athens and being in game where you do not understand what is happening but that you go ahead as best you can. Game show- not understanding. Young self would not even understand the language we use today about Google and ads etc.

A2: Dream about suburbia and dream about death- reminded me of 'The Palace of Dreams'- dangerous prophetic dreams, government trying to decipher dreams- dreaming a subversive act. Something scary about sameness of dreams.

D8: Group of people- friends or patients, couldn't see which. Carefully touching each other. Very dark. I wondered what would happen in Corona time, will newborn babies get a vaccine as a standard procedure in the future?

(Hadn't heard from a friend for some months- yesterday contacted me to say his business had gone down during the pandemic. Then planned to meet)[Text Wrapping Break]D9: Dreamt that from a train station emerging into sunlight with friend, in park, warm, relaxed.

D10: In a room with a man who is overweight- very unattractive. Man asked me to undress. Armchair in the room. He put a cushion on the arm with a rubber structure of a vulva. Man asked me to sit naked on the vulva to masturbate- it is a horrible act of violence, I am forced to do it, have no way out, and must do it to survive. I decide to look at the structure and deconstruct the object and I start to do an anatomy lesson of it- I realise each part of vulva is made of different dark colours.

D11: In a priory in Cork city. Priest there who is very respected, and a father figure evicted me from prayer group and set another member of the group up as belonging to the group while I was not. Told that I wasn't thinking Catholic enough. Felt a mixture of shame as well as a certain choice in me leaving as I was not going to be silenced or go along with a narrative which felt difficult for me.

A3: Black rubber- release of a report denying institutional racism. Report is a way to keep black people subjugated and force them to comply. Report has been mocked people of colour but it is an official report.

D12: Being evicted- about to fly on a plane. Everyone running to gate- no order. Woman protecting two men who should not fly legally. Woman blocks me and tries to say I have no right to go onto the plane and that I should give space to those two men. I try to run faster to get to the gate. Strange situation- no hostess or steward regulating who can and cannot come on the plane. Had to fight to get in. Reminds me about doubts re: vaccination but you need to do this to fly.

A4: Theme of 'what rules are we following?' 'why are we suffering deprivation?' Confusion about what to do next. Some hope- hard to express "I'm sorry".

D13: Two robots at a campfire. One was very stiff and rusty and was complaining. Only had a little bit of WD40 left. He said, 'I can 3d print a new part as there is no more WD40 to be found.' Empty tins on rubbish heaps. Looked up to stars and noticed not all stars go round in tracks.

D14: Travelling at night with my son, due to lockdown he could not get his driving license so he was driving without a driving license. In a place close to where I was brought up- rural part of South Africa. Not sure where we were driving to. Driving around a dark bend. Cars standing in the road and burning- an accident has just happened. Felt so much fear- told son to be careful and not to stop in case this wasn't an accident but a dangerous setup with people who wanted to stop us and mug us. Swerving between the cars. Passed the cars and little children running around in the road burning, alight with fire. Dreadful- felt that we had to stop but also that we couldn't stop. Dreadful dream.

A5: Population being mugged. Difficult to express 'sorry'.

A6: Keep feeling overwhelmingly sad at dreams of lack of control and inevitable loss and death. Almost felt like crying at dream about robots running out of oil- solution was 3D printing.

A7: Sad- sense of shame and confusion. Feeling depth of responsibility about hearing of children on fire. Balancing this with government report about racism not existing. Holding from all of the dreams a sense of just not understanding.

A8: As if the dreams tell us the rules are changing- stars going in tracks but some are fixed... fixed stars are rule changers.

A9: People flying home, running for flights- reminds me of what's happening at the moment- we are trying to search for places to belong- to be. A lot doesn't make sense around this. Going home- might be afraid that plane won't stop at end of runway or won't make the plane. Situation we are in now- where do I belong? Where do I fit? Where do I go? What are the rules even from the government to be understood?

A10: Facing the question of what sort of a home will I be returning to? Athens cradle of democracy? Athens that murdered Socrates? Government report about no institutional racism- also stories about rape culture in independent secondary schools. Can one even trust where one's children will be safe when we emerge post pandemic. Enormous anxiety.

A11: Stars – fixed star association. Robots- time spent in Georgian Bay, Ontario where night skies so beautiful, hoping that someone is there looking at the beautiful sky. Felt sense of belonging. Pure quiet, no technology, no Google. Beautiful things can still happen in some ways but hard to remember.

A12: Science fiction short story- 'Do robots dream of electric sheep?'

A13: Thinking of robots, flights, aeroplanes. Disabled somehow- even machines have functioning suspended/disabled. I felt like this at beginning of pandemic, shielding. Working professionally on this theme- this is how it is when you don't have mobility anymore... no liberty to use your body and all its functions.

A14: Feeling of not being at home. Association of Freud's- not feeling yourself- themes arising in the dreams and associations relate to not feeling at home- more than that; we are not the same as we used to be. Remember myself years ago in different country with different husband- things have changed but we also change. Thoughts are attacked. Don't know myself anymore. A lot of anxiety.

A15: Death and resurrection- two states at once.

A16: Feeling nauseous- almost shaking and can barely breathe. Came two minutes late and cameras were already off- feeling loneliness. A couple of voices that I typically hear I am not hearing today- missing them but don't even know them. A couple of friends arrived late. Who makes and shares the rules? When time changes, how do we know.

D15: Rushing to make a flight but realised I didn't have my laptop. How could I be so irresponsible? Saw four people sitting at glass high top table- all had my brown leather laptop bag. Did one of them take it? They all said no. Flight attendant came and told me we were leaving. Asked her to wait just one minute. Found my laptop and got onto the plane with friends. Very anxiety provoking.

A17: Darkness and stars- Van Gogh 'Starry Night'- Shakespeare sonnet about thinking about love as making him alive but also making him mad- 'as the dark night'. Confusion between love that makes you alive but also the love that makes you mad- times that we are living in are so confusing, maddening and also the life we are living and enjoying.

A18: Association to the airplane: German saying 'The last thing you wear won't have any pockets'- you can't take anything with you on the other side.

A19: Laptop- my laptop is my anchor.

A20: Expression about pockets/going to the other side- old labour song 'Which side are you on'

D16: Aeroplanes, laptops and technology- shaman... thinking of dream about Irish West Atlantic figure who lived simply but shamanic-ly, envisioned Ireland and what it could be –

I was with him in simple cottage. He was holding my hand while we were looking at the stars. Association of travelling and technology and dream space- something about presence of Aborigine, denial of Aborigine.

A22: David Gilmour song- 'On an Island'- persistent through whole matrix 'We lay side by side between the moon and the tide... sharing a dream on an island'

D17: Sitting on a rock, there is an island behind me. I can see a terrible storm coming, very scary storm. Have to jump in the water quickly to go back to the island. As I go into the water I want to use my feet to push myself out. Feel some seaweed in my toes and realise that rather than rocks and seaweed they are heads of dead people- I can feel their hair. Realise I have to put myself in plank position, current is strong, if I fight the current I won't survive. Important to let myself go with the current so as not to exhaust myself by fighting it.

A23: Reminds me of a father from Chicago on vacation with three sons on Florida coast. Two of the three children got caught in riptide. Father rushed out to save them- saved the children but father died.

A24: Rocks and islands- Simon and Garfunkel song, "I Am a Rock"- 'a rock feels no pain and an island never cries'

A25: Heads in water- slaves transported in ships- if one became sick or ill they would be thrown overboard and disposed of. What happened with report which came out yesterday. Feels like overthrowing and disposal of black people. Not White people doing the throwing over: Report commissioned by government but led by a BAME group of people- they are doing the overthrowing.

A26: Recently watched lecture- explained slave trade influencing ecology- sharks following ships

A27: Pattern of entanglements of individual and intimate situations and historical legacies that we are entangled with as individuals in society. Also seeing sense of anxiety present in so many dreams. In many dreams things are OK in the end- anxiety but threat does not fulfil itself. Witnessing fear, threats and danger and still somehow being safe.

A28: In Christian world today is Maundy Thursday- day of last supper where Christ bathed feet of his disciples. Rock was Peter, Iscariot was betrayer- crucifixion. Some pain in recollections. Hearing dreams and association feeling much of the pain that's being expressed in the matrix today.

A29: Today is 1st April- April fool's day. Sense of what we believe in terms of what anchors us. Living in uncertainty regarding steadfast and old beliefs which anchored us previously- things we doubt and don't feel sure of anymore. Distrusting- being fooled by traditional beliefs.

## **DREAM REFLECTIONS DIALOGUE**

Struggling to detect themes but flooded with feelings. Sadness, loss, fear, difference, outsider, pain, injustice

Loss of control, mourning- grief cycle. Common thread of travel- going to different places or being in different places. Sadness or fear- fear of new unknown. Whether we as a society are in a place of complacency. Looking back at Brexit and US elections- things seemed too vanilla for many years and now political and pandemic related things are happening globally- cataclysmic changes.

(Bad connection) Theme of islander occurred many times- made me thinking about ... island... Greek island, Athens- speaking Greek- reminded me that in Western European culture, on the island where Hippocrates was people used to go to... each one would have their own dream under the umbrella of belonging to that island... connects to powerful image of everyone having to dream the same dream- very different from the possibility to go somewhere to dream. Connects to element of survival, part of what we are facing now, anxiety- can we all survive?

Thinking of tasks many dreamers had- references to mystical. Shamanic... major crisis gives birth in everyone's minds... being by yourself or only with your family for a while gives space for reflection and you feel you have to come out of the crisis with something- there is a task there.

Felt that matrix was going very fast at the beginning- heart beating very fast, then started to slow down. Not enough space for us to share all our dreams. I wish things were slower and more silences and reflection spaces between dreams.

Theme about travelling in the dark- several dreams in which dreamers spoke of returning to their hometowns or birthplace- to where they were in previous stages of their lives. References to Athens and old first developed society- going back to the roots of society and who we are. Somebody said it's not the things around us that are changing but we are also changing... revolves around theme of changing identities and identity work we are doing by returning to our roots and not finding our old selves there. Seeking and travelling towards who we are.

Shamanic- April fool's day- fool in some theories is the person who speaks the truth against the current. Structural systemic gaslighting- the fool is the person who notices, like the kid in the Emperor's New Clothes. Heads underfoot in the sea- people have forgotten the history of all the people thrown overboard who now inconveniently float underneath your feet. On April Fool's Day- society prefers the funny fool rather than the truth telling fool.

Dreams are like a truth telling fool- absurdity of dream- our thinking doesn't inhibit.

Reminded of story of Cassandra from Greece- beautiful woman courted by Apollo and granted gift of prophesy. Found it so attractive that she went to bed with him but then rejected his advances and was doomed to the fate that no one would listen to or believe her prophesies.

Things have changed so quickly in the last year. Maybe we are just wondering how to digest it. It is faster than us- we are still robots compared with what is happening around us. Denial? Something not to forget? Masturbation issue didn't come back- horrible issue- how do we think about what has happened to us? Maybe we need different thinking skills to capture the enormous intensive things that have happened to us in the last few months.

Robots- robotic elements. Some of the fool in those dreams- felt humorous about some of the characters that began to emerge in conversation. WD40 could be a character from Star Wars- as could 3D. Dreams about low flying, being moved from D10 to H9. (D10 is a Tavistock programme). Would never be able to get intimate with or close to these characters. Robotic existence during this lockdown. Daily routine rather than life.

Masturbation dream- being forced to masturbate- we are all forced to take in Google and digital information, technology.

**Blog compiled by Coreene Archer, Patricia Kummel, Michelle May and Emily Kyte**