Jungians believe that compensation in the service of individuation is the primary transformative function of dreams. Jung (1916a) classifies dreams in three basic categories: reactive, compensatory, and prospective. Reactive dreams simply reproduce an experience that has had a traumatic emotional impact on the psyche. According to Jung, however, most dreams are compensatory. What they compensate is the attitude of the ego in the present. The attitude of the ego is always partial and prejudicial; in the extreme case, it may be utterly defective. Jung defines the ego as identity. That is, the ego is identified with a certain attitude and is disidentified from other, alternative perspectives of which it is, for whatever reason, unconscious. Compensatory dreams challenge the ego to relate to perspectives to which it has previously been unrelated or ineffectively related. The ego may then seriously entertain, evaluate, and either accept or reject these perspectives.

There is no imperative for the ego to integrate these perspectives. What Jung advocates is not uncritical capitulation by the ego to the unconscious but a rational dialogue between the ego and the unconscious. This dialogue is a dialectic in which the thesis of the ego and the antithesis of the unconscious have an opportunity through conversation to produce a synthesis—a new and different relation, a third position that transcends the original two uncommunicative or adversarial positions of the ego and the unconscious. Jung (1916b) calls this the “transcendent function.” Compensatory dreams present for consideration by the ego alternative perspectives that have been repressed, dissociated, or otherwise defensively excluded from consideration, or that have been ignored or neglected, or that are merely undeveloped or unknown. If the ego is receptive rather than defensive, it may then integrate these perspectives. Jung (1916a) says that compensatory dreams “add to the conscious psychological situation of the moment all those aspects which are essential for a totally different point of view” (p. 245).

Prospective dreams are anticipatory dreams. They anticipate some possibility in the future. They are not prophetic, although they may be prognostic. Jung (1916a) says that prospective dreams “are merely an anticipatory combination of probabilities” (p. 255). He cautions against any supposition that a prospective dream “is a kind of psychopomp which, because of its superior knowledge, infallibly guides life in the right direction” (p. 256). Only when the attitude of the ego radically “deviates from the norm” does the compensatory function become “a guiding, prospective function capable of leading the conscious attitude in a quite different direction which is much better than the previous one” (p. 257).

Jung's definition of the unconscious (as essentially purposive) is different from Freud's. The unconscious functions as if it were an intelligent, creative agent with a compensatory or prospective intentionality. It actively selects certain especially apt images to serve a quite specific purpose. This is what Jung means by the autonomy of the unconscious. According to Jung, the purpose of the vast majority of dreams is a compensatory or prospective rectification of the attitude of the ego by the autonomous unconscious, which, as it were, intelligently and creatively presents to the ego alternative perspectives for consideration. Freud (1900) asserts that all dreams, without exception, are “a (disguised) fulfillment of a (suppressed or repressed) wish” (p. 160). For Freud, dreams are essentially wish-fulfilling, or id-wishing; for Jung, they are primarily ego-compensating. In contrast to Freud, who asks what instinctual (usually sexual) wish has been fulfilled, Jung asks what ego attitude has been compensated.

Freud tends to interpret dreams on what Jung calls the objective level. That is, he interprets the images in dreams as indirect references, or wishful allusions, to objects in external reality. Jung interprets dreams mainly on what he calls the subjective level.
Jung, the images in dreams are mostly reflections of the Internal reality of the subject—dramatizations and personifications of aspects of the psyche of the dreamer. As Jung (1916a) says:

The whole dream-work is essentially subjective, and a dream is a theatre in which the dreamer is himself the scene, the player, the prompter, the producer, the author, the public, and the critic. This simple truth forms the basis for a conception of the dream's meaning which I have called interpretation on the subjective level. Such an interpretation, as the term implies, conceives all the figures in the dream as personified features of the dreamer's own personality [p. 266].

This conception of the dream as a drama is similar to what Fairbairn (1944) means by “state of affairs” dreams. In contrast to Freud, Fairbairn believes that “dreams are essentially, not wish-fulfillments, but dramatizations” of situations in internal reality (p. 99). He maintains that the figures in dreams personify either aspects of the ego or internal objects and that dreams dramatize dynamic relations between them. As an example, Fairbairn (1931) presents a case in which the dreamer tended “to personify various aspects of her psyche” (p. 216), and he says that the dreams “in which these personifications figured thus provided the scenes of a moving drama” (p. 217). Both Jung and Fairbairn agree that dreams are basically dramatizations and personifications of a certain subjective state of affairs. They also agree that dreams are not essentially wish-fulfilling. They differ only in that Jung also believes that dreams are primarily ego-compensating. That is, Fairbairn regards dreams as an actual representation of a state of affairs in internal reality; Jung regards them also as a potential rectification of that state of affairs.

Jung solicits associations, but they do not have for him the singular value that they have for Freud. He proposes an additional method. “To understand the dream's meaning,” Jung (1934a) says, “I must stick as close as possible to the dream images” (p. 149). The method is to instruct the dreamer to suppose that Jung has “no idea” what the image means and then to ask the dreamer to describe the image in such a way that, Jung says, “I cannot fail to understand what sort of a thing it is” (pp. 149-150). In contemporary Jungian dream interpretation, “Stick to the image” is a methodological dictum that Hillman (1979) has emphasized. To the extent that Jungians stick to the image, they employ a phenomenological, or imaginal, method. Jungian psychology

is a “fifth” psychoanalytic psychology in addition to the four psychologies that Pine discusses (1990). It includes drives, ego, objects, and self, but, as an imaginal psychology, it emphasizes images.

In contrast to Freud, who believes that the images in a dream mean something (usually something sexual) other than what they seem to mean, Jungians believe that the images mean what they apparently mean. That is, Jungians reject the distinction between manifest content and latent content. Jung (1934a) protests that there is no facade, or disguise, to the dream and that what Freud calls the manifest content is nothing but “the dream itself and contains the whole meaning of the dream” (p. 149). The phenomenological method is a descriptive method that respects the integrity of the specific dream image. In contrast, Freudian dream interpretation is reductionistic. It assumes, Jung (1916a) says, that a dreamer “could just as well have dreamt that he had to open a door with a key, that he was flying in an aeroplane, kissing his mother, etc.” (p. 245). From the Freudian perspective, “all those things could have the same meaning” (p. 245). Jung notes that “the more rigorous adherents of the Freudian school have come to the point of interpreting—to give a gross example—pretty well all oblong objects in dreams as phallic symbols and all round or hollow objects as feminine symbols” (pp. 245-246). He observes that a dreamer “may dream of inserting a key in a lock, or wielding a heavy stick, or of breaking down a door with a battering ram” (p. 246). A strict Freudian might interpret all of these images phallically. Key, stick, and battering ram are, however, qualitatively different images, irredicultively distinctive. They are the images “of choice” that the unconscious on this occasion has selected to serve a specific purpose. That the unconscious of the dreamer “has chosen one of these specific images—it may be the key, the stick, or the battering ram—is also of major significance,” Jung (1964) says. “The real task is to understand why the key has been preferred to the stick, or the stick to the ram” (p. 29). He says that “sometimes this might even lead one to discover that it is not the sexual act at all that is represented, but some quite different psychological point” (p. 29). Rather than translate the dream image, as Freud does, from what it apparently means into what it presumably really means—into instinctual or sexual terms, into what Adler (1916) criticizes as “organ jargon” (p. 176)—Jungians stick to the specific dream image and attempt to define it through a precise phenomenological description. They try to ascertain what the “essence” of the image is—that is, what the image essentially means. Jungians apply what I call the method of phenomenological essentialism.

The Jungian theory and method of dream interpretation are consistent with the revisions that Fosshage so persuasively proposes to the Freudian theory and method. Fosshage argues that the function of dreams is not primarily to fulfill wishes but to regulate, maintain,
develop, restore, or creatively reorganize the internal reality of the dreamer; that the Freudian emphasis on disguise and the manifest-l Latent distinction is untenable; and that phenomenological description and definition of dream images are preferable to a reductionistic translation of them into other terms. Fossighthouse (1987) says, “The primary dream interpretive task from the vantage point of this model is to remain with, as closely as possible, the phenomenology of the dream: to understand the meanings of the particular images and experiences as they are presented in the dream” (p. 32). Or, again, as Jung says, “To understand the dream’s meaning, I must stick as close as possible to the dream images.” Virtually the only differences between Fossighthouse and Jung is that Fossighthouse uses the verb “remain,” while Jung uses the verb “stick.” Both advocate close, phenomenological interpretation by strict adherence to the specific dream images. Fossighthouse would remain with the image; Jung would stick to it.

Barbara's Three Dreams

When I received Dr. Ipp's presentation on Barbara, I deliberately decided to read immediately only the three dreams and to interpret them without prior recourse to the biography of the patient, the history of the analysis, or the associations of the dreamer. Only after I had interpreted the three dreams did I read the case material. I wanted to conduct a blind phenomenological experiment in Jungian dream interpretation and approach the dream images in pristine condition. I adopted this procedure in the belief that the dream images per se would disclose an enormous amount of valuable data about the dreamer, including diagnostic and prognostic information, defensive strategies and tactics, direct or indirect transference representations, treatment indications, and compensatory or prospective functions.

Dream 1

The first sentence of this dream sets the scene. That Barbara dances with Dan around a fountain at the club immediately establishes a specific, intimately emotional mood. The attitude of the ego is, in a

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word, “romantic” (in contrast, I would conjecture, to a realistic attitude).

The scene shifts to a dinner party. Barbara has cooked dinner for a woman friend and a French chef. Although I assume that the French chef is an actual acquaintance, I also regard this image, on the subjective level, as a personification of an aspect of the psyche of the dreamer. Phenomenologically, what is the essence of a French chef? Necessarily implied in, or entailed by, and collectively projected onto this image is haute cuisine. As a recent New York Times article, an invidious comparison of the English with the French, says so succinctly: “In France, cuisine. In England, food” (Grimes, 1998, p. B9). A French chef is not just a cook; he is a master of the culinary arts, a connoisseur, the epitome of sophistication in taste. That Barbara presumes to cook dinner for a French chef suggests a certain ego inflation—diagnostically, a rather grandiose narcissism.

Barbara has cooked a big white fish. A fish necessarily implies water, and, as Jung (1934b) says, “water is the commonest symbol for the unconscious” (p. 18). Logically, it follows that the image of the fish is a content of the unconscious, an emergent phenomenon from the depths of the psyche of the dreamer. The size (big) suggests that this content is of a rather large order of magnitude; the color (white) suggests that it is without shade or what Jungians would call “shadow” —that is, without any of those unmagable qualities that the ego repudiates as dark, ostensibly negative, or inferior aspects of the psyche. That Barbara is proud of her efforts to cook the fish suggests a certain satisfaction with mere attempts rather than results. Traditionally, pride goes before a fall, and hubris is the tragic flaw of the classic hero.

The French chef announces that the fish is still frozen in the middle. In spite of her proud efforts, Barbara has served an uncooked or incompletely cooked fish. Long before Lévi-Strauss, Jung (1984) employed the image of the raw and the cooked: “The unconscious seizes upon the cooking procedure as a symbol of creation, transformation” (p. 332) He says, “Things go in raw and come out new, transformed” (p. 332). A raw content of the unconscious cannot be metabolized; it has to be cooked. In this instance, the fish goes in frozen and comes out not “well-done” but “half-baked,” not thoroughly transformed. The content of the unconscious has not been properly processed, and therefore it cannot be “swallowed” or “stomached.” It is inedible. As symbolic “food for thought” (or food for feeling), it cannot be digested and assimilated by any of the aspects of the psyche at this inner dinner party. A competent cook would, of course, thaw a

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frozen fish before trying to cook it. This ego, however, is apparently inept in this respect; it evidently has little or no capacity to test
reality. Apparently, before serving the fish, Barbara does not check it to be certain that it is done (or done well enough). Barbara may be at dinner, but she is also "out to lunch." In addition, anyone who realistically hoped to impress a French chef would cook only a fresh fish, never a frozen fish. It is simply a fact, of course, that this content of the unconscious is not fresh but frozen. In spite of all efforts, this content (perhaps an emotional content) remains frigid and is therefore indigestible and unassimilable by the ego or any other aspect of the psyche.

Barbara is embarrassed by this state of affairs. She reacts with a psychotic style that, in regressive sequence, demonstrates the defensive strategies and tactics that she characterologically employs. Initially, the ego reacts with borderline anger and aggression. Barbara wants to take the fish from the French chef and "nuke" it in the microwave. There is no evidence in the dream to indicate that the French chef has been critical. He does not complain; he merely announces the fact that the fish is still frozen in the middle. The ego, however, immediately reaches critical mass and produces a chain reaction of explosive radiation. This is an example of what Redfearn (1992) calls an "exploding self." In this respect, the microwave symbolically attains the status of a nuclear reactor with what Eigen (1986) calls a "psychotic core" that is utterly out of control. Apparently, this ego unrealistically expects the French chef and the other aspects of the psyche to swallow and stomach, in a pretense of polite silence, any indigestible and unassimilable contents that it serves. This is all a fantasy that Barbara momentarily entertains but does not execute. Instead, the ego reacts passively and magically. Finally, Barbara just stands there, wants to disappear, wishes that she were invisible. The ego reacts defensively with a desperate desire simply to vanish in utter denial of the situation, as Barbara says she often felt like doing as a child.

A more normal adult with an ego that was not so romantic—so grandiosely narcissistic, borderline, passive, and magical—but that was more realistic would be responsive rather than reactive, receptive rather than defensive, and would, in a word, improvise. She might put the fish back into the oven and cook it until it was done. She might, with a sense of humor, throw away the fish and telephone for Chinese. Or she might do the obvious and consult the expert, the French chef, who might offer a creative solution to the problem. (A Jungian might suggest that Barbara conduct an exercise in "active imagination," an imaginal dialogue, on the subjective level, between the ego and the French chef as a personification of an aspect of the unconscious. Barbara would regard the French chef in the dream as if he were a real person and would ask the image for whatever advice and assistance it could offer. As it is, however, I would not recommend active imagination, for Barbara does not seem to me yet to have an ego with the capacity to engage the image in serious, nondefensive conversation.)

At this point, the prognosis does not seem to me very optimistic for a truly effective relation between the patient and the analyst, much less between the ego and unconscious. The French chef is not a direct transference representation of the analyst, but, as an indirect transference representation, the image does suggest several predictable projections by the ego of the dreamer onto the analyst (or manipulative projective identifications into the analyst). If I were the analyst, I would infer from this dream that Barbara would narcissistically regard herself as my equal if not my superior, that she would be competitively presumptuous in an effort to impress me, and that she would "cook up" and "serve up" various unconscious contents, frozen rather than fresh images, that would be difficult if not impossible for me to digest and assimilate analytically. There is potential for transformation and individuation in Barbara, for in the dream she does aspire to be a great cook. Currently, however, her reach exceeds her grasp of the culinary arts. This aspiration is, at present, not a profitability but just a pretension, a narcissistic conceit that may, in the future, become an actual capacity. Ultimately, of course, a sense of equality (or even superiority) in relation to the analyst may be perfectly realistic and absolutely necessary. In this respect, von Franz (1979) says that "it can happen—and it is not at all rare—that a patient grows beyond one, that is, progresses further in the inner process than one has gone oneself" (p. 280). In such an instance, the patient is finally, really and truly, superior to the analyst.

As for treatment indications, the dream demonstrates that, if the analyst were to offer any interpretation, even the most moderate observation about these unconscious contents, Barbara would immediately regard it as severe, judgmental criticism and would react to it with narcissistic, borderline anger and aggression and then with regressively passive and magical disappearance and invisibility. The dream indicates that, at this point, the analyst should treat Barbara primarily with a sensitively empathic silence that respects this resistance and that swallows and stomachs, or "contains," these unmetabolizable contents until she is eventually in a position to process them. In this respect, Searles (1967) notes that "silence between persons is not necessarily a gulf, a void, but may be a tangibly richer communion than any words could constitute" (pp. 26-27). A Jungian would regard this dream as negatively, or reductively, compensatory. That is, the purpose of the dream is deflationary.
The indication is that—not now but later in the treatment—the analyst should address Barbara the fact that she suffers from an inflation of the ego but that she has within her, in her own unconscious, a valuable imaginal, even archetypal resource, a “French chef” who might teach this bad cook to become a great cook, a good cook, or at least a good enough cook, if only she will condescend to learn the culinary arts from a real expert.

I would predict from this dream that Barbara had an emotionally frigid mother who was a bad cook, with no competence or interest in the kitchen, and who neither nourished nor initiated her daughter into that vitally important function. A daughter with such a mother would never have developed the ability to cook, serve, swallow, stomach, digest, and assimilate symbolic food. As a result, Barbara suffers from a symbolic (cooking and) eating disorder.

Barbara associates the big white fish to Catholicism, which is the religion of Dan, her husband. In this respect, Ipp remarks, with no further elaboration, that this topic has been a source of tension in the marriage. She never says whether Barbara has another religion or any spiritual interest at all. Is Barbara a Catholic, a Protestant, a Jew, an atheist, an agnostic, or what? As a recent article in the New York Times reports, the fish is a Christian symbol that can excite considerable conflict and even involve the American Civil Liberties Union in legal controversy over the Constitutional issue of separation of church and state (Goodstein, 1998). Jung (1951) wrote a book that includes an extensive discussion of the fish as a symbol in Christianity, in a variety of other religions, and in alchemy. With additional information about the association that Barbara provides, a Jungian might interpret the big white fish as an unconscious content that epitomizes a specific religious or spiritual conflict in the psyche of the dreamer.

Ipp also mentions that Barbara associates the cooking theme in the dream to a cookbook that she had given as a birthday present to Jacques, the French chef. In retrospect, Barbara regrets the gesture because it seems a sheer absurdity to give a cookbook to a French chef. This association confirms the diagnosis of a preposterously presumptuous narcissism. When Ipp suggests to Barbara that the frozen fish might be a representation of emotionally frozen aspects of her self (spontaneity, sexuality, and vitality), Barbara associates the image to several frigidly traumatic experiences both recent and remote. The analysis then proceeds on the assumption that these frozen aspects should be thawed. The dream suggests that they should also be properly cooked, served, eaten, digested, and assimilated, but Ipp and Barbara do not directly address this issue, at least in the case material.

**Dream 2**

The scene of this dream is a journey. The dream is a grand tour on a plush train, which suggests indulgence in luxury, perhaps a holiday or vacation trip. Barbara is traveling with Mark all over Europe. Mark’s mother asks why they are traveling together. This “why” might be a question about whether it is appropriate for Barbara and Mark to be together, or it might be a question about whether there is any particular purpose to this traveling. On the subjective level, the ego of the dreamer and a personification of some other aspect of the psyche are on a journey evidently with no definite destination. The attitude of the ego is that of a tourist. Barbara’s reply that it does not matter that she and Mark are travelling together indicates that appropriateness and purposiveness are not questions this ego takes seriously; they just seem immaterial, and the ego is dismissive of them.

Barbara is able to relate to Mark in the dream because he is nice and polite, he is not being sexual, and he is not trying to win her over. These are the relational terms that the ego apparently prefers. It can relate comfortably to this personification only when that aspect of the psyche conforms to certain expectations about manners and is strictly platonic, neither seductive nor competitive, so that Mark is not the winner and Barbara does not feel that she is a loser.

The first part of the dream begins between Geneva and Lausanne and ends at Cologne. In the history of Europe, Switzerland remains neutral and avoids conflict, while Germany starts World Wars. Phenomenologically, these are the essences that are collectively projected onto these two nations, which can be regarded symbolically as two different “states” of mind. It is perhaps relevant that the platonic behavior of Mark in the dream is similar to the neutral behavior of Switzerland. In this respect, this dream may be about possibilities for peace of mind.

When Mark gets off the train, he leaves behind some of his luggage, and Barbara thinks that maybe Mark has not left after all. I infer that this part of the dream is a symbolic dramatization of a real, external relation that ended in a separation—perhaps a marriage that ended in a divorce—with Mark being the one who left Barbara. I also conclude that Barbara feels that Mark left her with
emotional baggage that enables her to perpetuate a fixation, an erroneously nostalgic fantasy in which she remains in that previous relation with him. If Mark is indeed Barbara's ex-husband, then Mark's mother would be Barbara's ex-mother-in-law. An ex-mother-in-law who asks why Barbara and Mark are traveling together might be posing to the ego, for critical reflection, a serious question as to whether such a relation is legal, licit, or legitimate.

Later in the dream, Barbara sees Mark returning through the fog. Mark is a rather literal image of the return of the repressed. Atmospheric conditions are phenomena with essences that are symbolic of states of consciousness. In this respect, Barbara's psyche is "in a fog," a state of unconsciousness that can occasion misperceptions of reality and projections onto it. As Mark gets closer to Barbara, she sees that it is really Dan. The ego demonstrates that it has a capacity for sight, or insight, and for the retraction of a projection. Then, however, with a shock of recognition, Barbara awakens and shouts that she does not believe it. The reversal evidently traumatizes the ego into utter incredulity and denial. Barbara either cannot or will not believe her own eyes.

This dream confirms the diagnosis from the previous dream. Mark is a mere extension of Barbara; in the dream, he strictly conforms to the preferences of the ego. The ego desexualizes Mark in order to relate comfortably—that is, narcissistically—to him. The image of baggage suggests separation-individuation issues that this ego has yet to resolve. For this ego to individuate, it must eventually separate from any sentimental fantasies that it still entertains about an ideal Mark who is radically out of character with the real Mark, and it must acknowledge that Mark has departed, never to return. At this point, the attitude of the ego remains romantic rather than realistic.

Again, there is no direct transference representation of the analyst. If Mark is an indirect transference representation, however, the analyst might anticipate that Barbara would have the attitude of a mere tourist who considers analysis a luxury, not a real necessity, with no purposive sense that the journey would terminate at any particular destination.

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In this scenario, the analysis would be a process parallel to the dream and would stop abruptly, not end with effective closure. The projection would be a fantasy that the analyst, like Mark, would not only leave Barbara but also leave her with emotional baggage that she would then sentimentally misconstrue as evidence that there had really been no termination. This dream indicates just how important it would be for this particular analytic process eventually to conclude with a sense of real finality. Freud believed that it was difficult if not impossible to analyze a narcissist because such a patient ostensibly had no capacity to form an effective transference. That the Mark in the dream is a mere extension of Barbara, or of what she ideally prefers a companion to be, suggests that she would project this same idealization onto the analyst. This projection would be a transference, but it would be a narcissistic transference, with all the difficulty that such an unrealistic relation to the analyst entails.

The dream indicates that the analyst should treat Barbara with strict "Swiss" analytic neutrality. That is, the analyst should simply adopt a nice, polite, platonic approach in order to accompany her on the analytic journey. At this point, Barbara would tend to resist any interpretation incompatible with the narcissistic attitude of the ego as a seductive, competitive attempt to win her over. What is contraindicated is any suggestive attempt by the analyst to allure, entice, or otherwise unduly influence her.

This dream is more prognostically optimistic than the previous dream. Barbara effectively tests reality when she recognizes that it is Dan, not Mark, who emerges from the fog of unconsciousness. The ego demonstrates that it has the capacity to rectify a misperception. As Barbara awakens from the dream, however, the ego protests in disbelief. No sooner has the ego retracted a projection than it suddenly—and regressively—attempts to reinstate it. This ego is conservative, even reactionary. In this instance, denial is the defensive strategy and tactic. For Barbara, reality is evidently still too traumatic for the emergent, compensatory function of the dream to have a permanent, transformative effect on the narcissistic attitude of the ego. This ego is unable to tolerate and then integrate the alternative perspective that the unconscious presents for consideration. What is apparently impossible in the present may, of course, be possible in the future. In this respect, there may be prospective function to this dream.

The case material confirms that Barbara was indeed married to Mark and divorced by him. Ipp interprets the incredulity that Barbara

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exhibits when she recognizes that Mark, her ex-husband, is really Dan, her husband, as evidence that Barbara is still unconsciously attached to rather than consciously separated from Mark. Barbara denies to Ipp that the reversal of Mark into Dan is a disappointment to her. Rather, she insists that the dominant emotion is a fear that Dan could become Mark or someone (sexually and competitively) like Mark. As Ipp comments, "Maybe but maybe not." The dream does not say that Dan might become Mark; it unambiguously states
that Mark becomes Dan. The disbelief that the ego registers at this reversal suggests that Barbara does indeed project onto Mark a romantically narcissistic (nonsexual, noncompetitive) ideal image of a husband—an image that the real Mark is inadequate to or incommensurable with. In the dream, Barbara feels “okay” about Mark because he does not attempt to win her over. In the associations to the dream, however, she acknowledges that “he had more winning ways about him”—ways of relating that were pleasing to her (perhaps more pleasing than some other ways that Dan has about him).

**Dream 3**

The scene of this dream is, again, a journey without any definite destination. Barbara is not with Mark traveling in a train on land; she is with a group, friends and family, floating on mats down a river. Emotionally, the scene is reminiscent of the past, summers at a lake, better times than the present, when Barbara was a youth, not an adult. If, as Jung says, water is a symbol of the unconscious, what kind of water, what kind of unconscious, is this? The specific image is not a lake; it is a river. Von Franz (1977) says that the essence of this phenomenon is “the stream of time, the flow of life” (p. 9). In the dream, Barbara is adrift on this stream, on this flow. The ego is not actively paddling a canoe or rowing a boat; it is passively carried along on the current, on a mat. The ego is not alone; it is together, on the same mat, with a certain image of the mother, which, on the subjective level, is a personification of an aspect of the psyche. The dream says that Barbara’s mother “cramps her style.” The image of the mother simply occupies too much space in the psyche of the dreamer. It prevents the ego from symbolically stretching its legs or finding its own position. The ego feels uncomfortable but not angry. That is, the ego acknowledges the states of affairs in the present and actively assumes responsibility for it; it feels that it must do something different.

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in the future (which would be to stretch its legs and find its own position).

The image of the mother is distant but pleasant. This emotional relation is apparently in contrast to how Barbara has previously experienced the mother. The dream says that this is a younger image of the mother, not a frail image. In short, this image of the mother is not old, weak, brittle, or fragile. The ego can relate to the image, break away from it, without anxiously feeling that the image might break. This image of the mother can evidently endure a new and different kind of relation to the ego. Barbara feels that she needs to find her own independence. For her to individuate, she must separate from a certain image of the mother. The ego feels that it can do so in a gentle way at this time, evidently in contrast to a rougher way that it has previously employed in a futile effort to find its own independence from this aspect of the psyche— or, as the dream has already said, to find its own position.

Barbara then looks around and sees her analyst, Ipp, floating on her own mat separate from the group of friends and family. In the dream, the image of Ipp is a direct transference representation, which indicates how Barbara feels her analyst has treated her or perhaps how she expects or prefers her analyst to treat her. The image of Ipp serves the ego as a model of separation from the collective trend that the group epitomizes. Ipp goes her own way. She smiles at Barbara, who then feels reassured—apparently that perhaps she, too, can go her own way. In the dream, the analyst does not interpret but models; Ipp relates empathically and communicates silently, with only a smile that the ego construes as reassurance. On the subjective level, the image of Ipp is also a projection of the inner analyst, an archetypal analytic capacity potentially available to the ego as a valuable resource, if the ego is able effectively to relate to this image from the autonomous unconscious. The dream offers a compensatory (or perhaps prospective) solution to the separation-individuation problem. Barbara finds her own mat, her own position, her own independence, and then floats down the river alongside the image of the mother, together but separate. Finally, Barbara attains peace of mind.

Diagnostically, this dream suggests that Barbara is not the narcissist that she once was—at least in relation to the image of the mother. The prognosis is much more optimistic than in the previous two dreams. The ego is not angrily defensive but gently receptive. There is no evidence of any grandiose inflation of the ego; there is no evidence of narcissistic and borderline defenses or of denial. That Barbara looks

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around and sees Ipp floating on her own mat suggests that the ego now has a capacity for sight—that is, analytic insight into the separation-individuation issue in relation to the image of the mother. The ego is receptively responsive rather than defensively reactive to the compensatory or prospective function of the dream. Barbara is now able actively to internalize a model of analysis through the direct transference representation of Ipp, to begin to appreciate on the subjective level her own internal analytic capacity, and to integrate from the autonomous unconscious an alternative perspective on the previous, dysfunctional attitude of the ego. The dream does not end with Barbara at any definite destination, but it does end with her on her own mat, with her own position and her own
independence, going her own way. Her style is no longer cramped by the image of the mother; Barbara evidently now has plenty of legroom and is able to stretch comfortably to her full length. Barbara is at least now on her own journey on the stream of time, in the flow of life, wherever she may ultimately end up.

Barbara’s three dreams beautifully illustrate the transformative function of the unconscious as it compensates the partial, prejudicial, or defective attitude of the ego. They demonstrate how, over the course of the analysis, Barbara becomes increasingly able to integrate the alternative perspectives that the unconscious presents for consideration. The dreams compensate the dysfunctional attitude of the ego, and, through active participation in the analytic process, Barbara gradually begins to develop a capacity to separate and individuate. This is what a Jungian would mean by compensation in the service of individuation.

References

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