

Narrative Construction of Self in Dreamwork Experiences

ROSEANN R. TAN-MANSUKHANI
De La Salle University, Manila

This study looked into the application of narrative in the study of the self. Specifically it described the self-construction of dreamers in the narratives of their dreamwork experience, the temporal movement and the reflexivity of the constructed self, and the impact of their dreamwork experience. Twelve female college students were interviewed to obtain a total of 24 dreamwork narratives. Narrative analysis was used to analyze the structure and content of the dreamwork narratives. Results reveal that the dreamers' constructed self is relational and self-valuing, has the reflexive capacity for self-assessment and insights. The progressive narrative was predominant in showing the goal-based temporal movement of the self, and change occurred in the waking lives of the dreamers as an effect of the dreamwork experience.

The narrative approach to understanding human action has recently become popular in several areas of psychological research such as cognition and memory (Bruner, 1990; Howard, 1991), personality development (Coles, 1989; K.J. Gergen & Gergen, 1986; McAdams, 1985, 1993; Sarbin, 1986), meaning of illness (e.g., Viney and Bousfield, 1991), studies of self (e.g., Mishler, 1986; Riessman, 1990; Shoemaker, 1991), and psychotherapy (Angus & Hardtke, 1994; Spence, 1982). Some psychologists (Bruner, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1988; Sarbin, 1986; Spence, 1982) adhere to the notion that narrative allows human beings to make meaning out of their experiences by providing coherence to human actions and events to form an understanding of a meaningful life.

"Narrative" is understood loosely as an equivalent to the term "story," which refers to the narration of events in one's life (Polkinghorne, 1988). Spence (1982) distinguished between "historical truth" which is what has actually happened and "narrative truth," a story about what has happened; thus, "a well-constructed story possesses a kind of narrative truth" (p. 21). Using the narrative as a "root metaphor for psychology," Sarbin (1986) proposed that a person's life or periods of it can be interpreted as a story. Stories order experience, give coherence, and meaning to events (McAdams,

1993) and life (Spence, 1982), and provide a sense of history and of the future (Crites, 1986).

Crites (1986) supports the notion that "being a self entails a story" (p. 162); as such, the construction of self requires a narrative structure. This structure consists of narrative features including setting, initiating event, goal, action, outcome, and ending (Mandler & Johnson, 1977; Stein, 1982), which are sequentially arranged into a beginning, middle, and end configuration (Polkinghorne, 1991). Apart from these features, a prototypical story includes a protagonist, a predicament, resolution attempts, the outcome, the reactions of the protagonist to the situation, and the causal relationships of these elements (Stein & Policastro, 1984).

The narrative of the self provides the organization of temporal experiences into a coherent, meaningful whole. The organizing principle of the narrative allows one to logically connect the events, and arrange them as relevant to a goal that one has established (K.J. Gergen & Gergen, 1983, 1986). The movement of the self in relation to the goal states or valued endpoints can be viewed in terms of the prototypical narrative forms proposed by Gergen and Gergen. These prototypical narrative forms include the progressive, regressive, and stability narratives. The progressive narrative shows the linking of events where the protagonist steadily progresses toward a goal. The regressive narrative is one where the movement of the protagonist is away from the goal. The stability narrative shows the protagonist as basically unchanged with respect to the valued endpoint. The prototypical narrative forms pertain to the arrangement of events in relation to the achievement of a particular goal state and have been applied to the analysis of a story's plot (e.g., Strickland, 1994).

The construction of the self requires a reflexive capacity that allows one to actively participate in the reconstruction of one's view of herself (K. J. Gergen & Gergen, 1983). The reflexive self that can recollect the past is able to situate these experiences in the present, so that the self can actively project itself into the future (Crites, 1986). The self as narrator, the "I," constructs a story in which the narrative figure, the "me," is the protagonist (Sarbin, 1986; Strickland, 1994). The reflexivity of the self as the "I" involves the evaluation of experiences by questioning one's actions or cognitions (Angus & Hardtke, 1994) to reveal the quality of mind and the attitude of the narrator (Riessman, 1990); thus, the "narrative truth" (Spence, 1982) of the self can emerge.

The invitation for people to tell their life stories provides a vehicle for the sharing of personal constructions (Coles, 1989) because one's identity, its

continuity and modifications can be described in a coherent story (Markus & Nurius, 1986). The act of making meaning out of human experiences is integral to having a sense of unity and purpose in one's life; by telling stories about what happened, an individual gives voice to one's identity (McAdams, 1985). A formal venue for passionately telling stories about the self is psychotherapy where the goal may be to bring out the latent narrative, construct a unifying narrative, or reconstruct past events and future projects into a useful and coherent narrative (Polkinghorne, 1988). The narrative is now acknowledged and given importance in psychotherapy as seen in research (e.g., Angus & Hardtke, 1994; Angus, Levitt, & Hardtke, 1999; Hermans, 1999; Russell & Van Den Broek, 1992). Therapeutic narrative possesses both "historical truth" which is what has actually happened and "narrative truth", a story about what has happened but narrative truth is vital in a well-constructed story (Spence, 1982). Freud himself was a pioneer in the narrative tradition in psychotherapy in his case histories and the construction and reconstruction of the self he facilitated in his patients.

Outside of psychotherapy, people have a need to organize not only conscious experiences but also to make sense of unconscious materials, such as dreams, with the underlying assumption that understanding this nonwaking experience can add to their self-knowledge and self-understanding. In the researcher's experience of being part of a dreamwork group, the narrative was spontaneously used by the dreamer in the process of understanding the dream in a social context. The dreamers used the dream narrative, that is, the dream report, as a springboard to understand its meaning through dream interpretation.

This view of the self as a narrative emphasizes the constructive and interpretative nature of the self (Polkinghorne, 1991), which can be seen at work in the process of dreamwork. The interpretation of a dream involves the weaving of the dream narrative with waking life experiences and the integration of unconscious and conscious experiences. In the process to accommodate the understanding of the dream, the construction and reconstruction of the self need to occur in the dreamer.

While the focus on narratives in dream analysis and psychotherapy is not entirely novel because some studies on dream analysis include stories in the form of case analysis; researchers (e.g., Cempron, 1995; Chi, 1992; Lopez, 1989; Merrill & Cary, 1975), however, hardly used the narratives of the dreamers despite the centrality of the self of the dreamer in dream interpretation. Moreover, the tradition in dream research is to study the dream content (e.g., Hall & Van de Castle, 1966) and correlate it with

variables, such as dreamer's gender and development (e.g., Garfield, 1988), presleep experience (e.g., Breger, Henter, & Lane, 1971; Cartwright, 1974; Cartwright, Bernick, Borowitz, & Kling, 1969; De Koninck & Koulack, 1975), and psychological changes (e.g., Busby & De Koninck, 1980; Melstrom & Cartwright, 1983). The present study, then, will bring the focus back to the narrative of the self in dream analysis to be undertaken in an independent dreamwork outside of the usual context of psychotherapy.

This research seeks to describe the constructed self of the dreamers in the narratives of their dreamwork experiences. Specifically, this study purports to answer the following questions:

1. What is the temporal movement of the constructed self?
2. How reflexive is the constructed self?
3. What is the impact of the dreamwork experience on the dreamers?

METHOD

Participants

Twelve female psychology major students, whose age ranged from 18 to 20, participated in this study. They attended a dreamwork seminar where they learned Jungian dreamwork techniques (Hall, 1983; 1991; Jung, 1974) to independently analyze their own dreams. Each participant was asked to do dreamwork on two dreams, which produced a total of 24 dreamwork narratives.

Design and Procedure

The present study was descriptive, utilizing a phenomenological approach to the study of the narratives of dreamwork experience. The participant's narrative construction of the self was described and delineated in terms of the temporality and reflexivity of the self. The researcher interviewed each participant about their dreamwork experiences. Given that a relatively unstructured approach encourages narratives from the respondents (Mishler, 1986), this study adopted an informal, unstructured yet systematic approach to interviewing. The interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. Narrative analysis was used to analyze the structure and content of the narrative.

The dreamwork narrative consisted of the narration of the dream, the interpretation of the dream, and the participant's experience of doing dreamwork. Coding of the functional categories and content of the dreamwork narratives was done independently by the researcher and two other raters who were trained by the researcher. The narrative coding system was a modification of Liwag's (1993) narrative analysis of children's memories of emotion episodes. The eight categories used in the narrative analysis of this study were: (a) waking life situation, (b) goals, (c) actions, (d) outcomes, (e) further goals, (f) self-assessment, and (g) impact of dreamwork. Each functional category was considered present in the dreamwork narrative if at least one clause referred to the category as defined. The definitions of the eight functional categories and their corresponding content categories are presented below.

The *waking life situation* is the context that the dreamer identifies in relation to her dream. *Goals* refer to any valued state, whether internal or external, that the dreamer desired in connection to the identified waking life concern emphasized by the dream. They can be identified by key words such as want, wish, must do, going to do, have to, to be more of something. *Actions* are coded when these were carried out by the dreamer in relation to the dreamer's goals. *Outcomes* refer to the result of an action performed in relation to the dreamer's goals. The content of the specific outcome was specifically coded based on the modification of K. J. Gergen and M. Gergen's (1986) prototypical narratives, and are as follows: (a) goal success, (b) goal failure, and (c) uncertain. Goal success occurs when the dreamer's action leads to a positive outcome that either achieves the goal or gets closer to achieving it. Goal failure occurs when the dreamer's action leads to a negative outcome that brings her farther away from the goal. Finally, an uncertain narrative occurs when the dreamer's action does not bring her goal success or failure, and her situation remains generally unchanged in relation to the goal. *Further goals* are coded when the presence of further goals are mentioned apart from initial goals. Further goals are identified by the use of future-oriented verbs that refer to the dreamer's intentions and desires such as I will do or I want to do.

Self-assessment is scored as present if the dreamer provided a reflection on the way she views herself, her action, or her past or present situation. The content of specific assessment was coded when the dreamer actively examines or questions previous actions or thought patterns, desires, wishes, or needs in the light of the present situation and its implications on the future.

Impact of dreamwork is coded when the dreamer referred to an effect, whether positive or negative, as a result of her dreamwork experience. The content of the impact of dreamwork mentioned in the narratives is further coded as insights or changes. The insight might be something that the dreamer was already aware of but did not do anything about prior to dreamwork. The insight can also be something that the dreamer was hardly aware of, with key words such as realization, awareness, and insight. Change in the dreamer's behavior or way of thinking regarding herself, her relationship, or her situation after having gone through the dreamwork experience may be positive or negative; these are indicated by key words such as "because of the dream" or "after the dreamwork."

RESULTS

This section is organized based on the categories used in analyzing the narratives, from which the construction of self and its processes will be presented.

Waking life situation

The waking life situation emerged from the dreamers' associations of the dream in relation to their waking life concerns. The waking life situation, thus, provided a context for the analysis of the dream. Coding this category had an agreement of 96%. The contents of the waking life situations were classified into concerns about relationships and the self. Relationship concerns revealed situations of conflict, closeness, and closure that are not mutually exclusive, that is, a dreamwork narrative might contain more than one type of relationship concern. For instance, some participants included both relationship conflicts and closeness in a single narrative.

Relationship conflicts revolved around difficulties in the dreamers' relationships and appeared in seven dreamwork narratives involving the mother, friends, and romantic relationships. Four narratives featured situations about closeness in relationship that showed the dreamer's concern about developing a closer relationship with another, like the mother, friends, and romantic relationship. Closure in relationships pertained to situations where the dreamer has to let go and accept the death of a loved one. Only two narratives contained this type of waking life situation.

The waking life situations about the self depicted self-dissatisfaction in six narratives and self-focus in five narratives. Dissatisfactions with the self involved the dreamer's need to change and to improve an aspect of herself (e.g., to develop assertiveness). Situations where focus on the self is the primary concern of the dreamer involved the need to take care of her own needs, to manage stress, and to make choices for oneself.

Goals

Goals that were connected to the waking life situation were coded. Coders achieved a reliability of 92% in scoring dreamers' goals. The goals in the dreamwork narratives displayed an urgency by the dreamer's use of terms (e.g., "I have to," and "I should"). The contents of the goals were classified into goals related to the self and goals related to relationships. It should be noted that some narratives contained a relationship concern and yet the goal that emerged was related to the self.

The goals related to the self of the dreamers were categorized into self-development and self-care. Self-development goals pertained to improving certain aspects of the self that are not satisfactory to the dreamer (e.g., the desire to be extroverted rather than shy). These are prevalent goals found in 10 narratives (See Table 1). On the other hand, self-care goals, which appeared in five narratives, involved taking care of the dreamers' own needs like having time for oneself, managing emotions, and making decisions.

The goals related to relationships were categorized into improvement of relationships, and closure. Goals about improvement of relationships were found in five narratives that showed the dreamer's desire to enhance the quality of relating with other persons, such as with one's parents, a boyfriend, a friend. Four narratives focused on goals regarding closure in relationships that had a quality of acceptance and letting go of their relationships (e.g., with deceased relatives, and romantic relationships).

Actions

The actions performed by dreamers that addressed their goals were coded and there was 86% agreement among the coders. Whereas most narratives contained actions, four dreamwork narratives were coded as having no action mentioned by the dreamers. The content of the actions were categorized into communication, social interaction, self-assertion, change of feelings, time for self and others, work, and rest. Actions were further classified as direct and indirect actions in relation to the goals. Direct actions pertained to carrying out the intentions, desires, or needs expressed in the

goals and to bring them closer to achieving the mentioned goals. Indirect actions were performed but did not directly assist in achieving the goals but addressed them in a roundabout manner (e.g., dreamer spent time in a quiet place in relation to the goal of developing positive ways of dealing with problems). More direct actions were performed and can be found in 18 narratives, spread across the types of goals, which are self-development, self-care, improvement of relationships, and relationship closure. On the other hand, indirect actions found in two narratives, were carried out for self-development only. Narratives with no actions performed were related to self-development, improvement of relationships, and relationship closure (see Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison of Frequencies of Goal and Action in Dreamwork Narratives

Goal	Action			Total number of goals
	Direct	Indirect	No action	
Self-development	7	2	1	10
Self-care	6	—	—	6
Improvement of relationship	3	—	1	4
Relationship closure	2	—	2	4
Total number of actions	18	2	4	24

The comparison of goals and actions revealed the kinds of goals that could be acted upon readily by the dreamer. Although self-development goals were prevalent, indirect actions and the lack of action as well as direct actions were found in the narratives. On the other hand, the participants were able to directly act upon self-care goals. In contrast to goals about the self, the relationship goals of improvement and closure elicited either direct action or the lack of action.

Outcomes

Coders determined whether dreamers mentioned outcomes that were direct results of the actions performed, and these outcomes were coded in terms of success, failure, or uncertainty. Coders achieved a reliability of 86% in scoring outcomes. Out of 10 narratives that did not include outcomes, five narratives mentioned actions but without corresponding outcomes

whereas five narratives did not contain outcomes because of the absence of action. In the 14 narratives where dreamers mentioned outcomes, 13 outcomes were successful outcomes whereas one outcome was uncertain about the result of the action. The contents of successful outcomes were categorized into dreamer's positive feelings as a result of the action, improvement of relationship, and positive feedback. An outcome involving self-development was coded as uncertain (e.g., the dreamer couldn't say that she has completely changed, that is, achieved her goal.).

Further Goals

Further goals were mentioned by the dreamers after the initial goals have been acted upon and a desire for continuing action is required to address the initial goals. Coders identified further goals and reached an agreement of 92% in scoring further goals mentioned by the dreamers. An absence of further goals was found in 19 narratives. Only five dreamwork narratives included further goals that involve the self in terms of self-care and self-development.

Temporal Movement of the Self

The temporal movement of the self was seen in the goal-based movement in the dreamwork narratives. This was examined by comparing all the narratives across the goal-based components of waking life situations, goals, actions, outcomes, and further goals. The goal-based components were organized based on the waking life situations (see Table 2). Furthermore, the temporal movement towards the goal state or evaluative endpoint was also studied using the narrative prototypes (Gergen & Gergen, 1986).

When the relationship conflict is the waking life situation in the dreamwork narratives, all types of goals are used to begin the temporal movement of the self, namely: (a) self-development, (b) self-care, (c) improvement of relationship, and (d) closure in relationship. All these goals in the context of relationship conflict are also acted upon by the dreamers in either relationship-focused or self-focused behavior.

In the context of relationship closeness, goals on self-development and improvement of relationship are made at the starting point of the movement of the self. However, neither self-development nor relationship improvement goals can assure the movement toward the goal state through performance of a related action. The context of closure in relationship is connected with dealing with the death of loved ones. The goals that arise from this waking life situation are desires for closure and self-development, both of which do not facilitate corresponding actions.

Table 2. Comparison of Goal-Based Components Across Dreamwork Narratives

Waking life situation	Goal	Action	Outcome	Further goal
Relationship conflict	Relationship improvement	Communication improvement	Relationship improvement	Self-care
	Relationship improvement	Social interaction	Relationship improvement	—
	Closure	Change of feelings	Relationship improvement	—
	Closure	Communication	Relationship improvement	—
	Self-development	Communication	Positive feedback	—
	Self-development	Work	—	—
	Self-care	Time for self and others	—	—
	Self-care	Rest	—	Self-care
Relationship Closeness	Self-care	Change of feelings	Relationship improvement	—
	Self-development	—	—	—
	Self-development	Change of feelings	Relationship improvement	—
	Relationship improvement	—	—	—
Relationship Closure	Relationship improvement	Communication	Positive feelings	—
	Closure and Self-development	—	—	—
Self-dissatisfaction	Closure	—	—	—
	Self-development	Self-assertion	Positive feelings	Further self-development
	Self-development	Self-assertion	—	—
	Self-development	Self-assertion	—	—
	Self-development	Self-assertion	Positive feedback	—
	Self-development	Social interaction	Self-improvement	—
	Self-development	Rest	Positive feelings	Self-care
Self-focus	Self-care	Time for self and others	Positive feelings	—
	Self-care	Social interaction	Relationship improvement	—
	Self-care	Work	—	Self-care

In the contexts related to the self such as dissatisfactions with aspects of the self and focus on the self, there is a consistent correspondence between the waking life situations and the goals that arise from them. With self-dissatisfactions, the goals are all self-development with related actions performed whereas the self-focus context brings about self-care goals that are also acted upon by the dreamers.

The temporal movement of the self was shown in relation to the goal state or evaluative endpoint in the dreamwork narratives. Did the constructed self as the protagonist move closer to her goal through her own action and its outcome? With the narrative prototypes postulated by K. J. Gergen and M. Gergen (1986), the dreamwork narratives were categorized into progressive narrative where the protagonist steadily moves toward a goal or stability narrative where the protagonist remains basically unchanged in relation to the goal. No dreamwork narrative was classified as a regressive narrative where the protagonist is shown as moving away from the goal.

The basis for evaluating the progression or stability of the narratives is the presence or absence of certain goal-based components and their combinations. Actions are generally an indication of a progressive narrative. Conversely, an absence of action points to a stability narrative. However, action alone without the combination of outcome or change does not produce a progressive narrative and the absence of action but with the presence of change does not necessarily indicate a stability narrative.

The analysis of the goal-based components of the dreamwork narratives led to an additional category of partial progressive narrative, which is a variation of the progressive narrative. This additional narrative prototype emerged from the analysis of the dreamwork narratives based on the distinction made between a definite progressive narrative that includes an action in combination with an outcome or a change and a partial progressive narrative that lacks includes an outcome or change despite the presence of an action or a further goal.

Nineteen dreamwork narratives followed the pattern of the progressive narrative. All of these progressive narratives included actions as well as outcomes and changes except for two progressive narratives that did not have actions but included changes in the dreamers. These narratives are contextualized in the closure regarding the death of the dreamers' loved ones.

The two partial progressive dreamwork narratives focused on waking life situations involving relationship conflict and self-focus. Although the contexts of these partial progressive narratives were different, their goals of

self-care are the same. The actions that were performed to address the goals were directly opposite to each other, namely work and rest but the further goals in both narratives indicate the same need for self-care.

There were three stability dreamwork narratives that involved relationship contexts. Two waking life situations involved closeness in relationships but with different goals of self-development and improvement of relationship. Both narratives did not have actions that responded to the goals. Nevertheless, the other stability narrative concerning conflict in relationship with a self-development goal included an action and an outcome. The action was indirect such that the dreamer did not get any closer to the goal state.

Reflexivity of the self

The dreamwork narratives showed the reflexive capacity in constructing the self through the self-assessment expressed by the dreamers in their narratives. The self-assessment of the dreamers involved reflecting about the past to draw out unsatisfying aspects about themselves or their situations and evaluating its effects on their present lives. They expressed the need to change the status quo of the self, in the present, in terms of characteristics or behavior patterns, and how they could project changes in the future.

Self-assessment was present in all the narratives and it obtained a coding reliability of 89%. The contents of the self-assessment in the dreamwork narratives were categorized as: the dreamer's personal characteristics, relationships, roles, and problems. Dreamers examined their personal characteristics in terms of how they perceived themselves (e.g., as a doormat), their habitual ways of thinking (e.g., strong need for assurance in a relationship"), and work habits. Dreamers also assessed the self about their relationships with parents and relatives, romantic interests, and friends. Assessment of the self in terms of their roles showed the dreamers in a positive sense as a good daughter, family member, girlfriend, and friend. The self was also examined about their reactions to problems or pressing situations that they experienced and the changes in their view of these situations.

Impact of the Dreamwork Experience

The impact of the dreamwork experience on the dreamer focused on the insights and changes in the self that were present in the dreamwork narratives. Coders determined the insights and changes mentioned by the

dreamer that were the result of the dreamwork experience. Coders reached 88% agreement in scoring insights and 82% agreement in scoring changes. Insights were present in all the dreamwork narratives whereas changes were not mentioned in five narratives.

Twenty-two insights were about themselves whereas three insights were about other people. One dreamwork narrative contained two insights concerning the self and other people. Insights about the self in the dreamwork narratives consisted of awareness of feelings, awareness of undesirable characteristics, valuation of relationships, self-affirmation, and the needs of the self. Insights about one's needs involved addressing and changing characteristics, attitude, thinking, and behavior. Insights about other people allowed dreamers to understand the behavior of the people they relate with, and to become aware of the support that significant others could offer to the dreamer.

Changes mentioned in the dreamwork narratives involved the self in relation to the waking life situations. Eighteen dreamwork narratives included changes that happened to the dreamers after the dreamwork experience, 13 of which were external changes and 5 of which were internal changes. External changes pertained to these behavior changes: (a) self-expression, (b) self-correction, (c) social interaction, (d) acceptance, and (e) work. On the other hand, internal changes pertained to the shift in the way they perceived themselves or their situations, in terms of having mental clarity, positive feelings, and confidence after undergoing the dreamwork experience.

The Constructed Self in the Dreamwork Narratives

The dreamwork narratives revealed a constructed self that was relational and self-valuing. The relational aspect of the constructed self gave value to and acted upon goals that improved the quality of relationships (e.g., with parents, friends, and partners) whereas the self-valuing self also contributed to improvement of relationships but it also sought goals related to personal growth (e.g., self-development, self-care). The self in the dreamwork narratives was constructed as an active agent because it usually initiated action that enabled itself to reach its goal regardless of a stated outcome in the narrative. The chosen action was generally direct in addressing the goal where it was possible, and it involved either an overt act (e.g., social interaction) or a covert act (e.g., change of feelings or attitude).

Apart from being active, the participants organized the self-narrative as a progressive narrative, hence, a self that is capable of change in its movement towards a goal. The self was reflexive because it undertook self-assessment in both positive (e.g., a good daughter) and negative terms (e.g., as a doormat) and connected the present self with the past and future. The self was also insightful as it showed the capacity to have a deeper understanding of their waking life situations.

DISCUSSION

The beginning of self-construction in the dreamwork narratives occurs in the narration of the dream and the identification of the waking life situation. The dream itself serves to facilitate the dreamer into the process of making meaning whereas the waking life situation is the ground from which the goal-based movement of the self may start. In terms of the narrative structure (Mandler & Johnson, 1977; Stein, 1982), the dream itself serves as the initiating event, and the waking life situation of the dreamer is setting of the story. Failure to connect the dream with a waking life situation will render the dream meaningless, and the narrative cannot move forward, thus, a coherent self cannot be constructed.

The waking life situations in the dreamwork narratives were concerns about relationships and the self. These concerns represent the needs and frustrations of the dreamer in her identity (e.g., self-dissatisfaction, and self-focus) and in encounters with others (e.g., relationship conflict, closeness, and closure). James (1890) posited that needs or motives organize and direct the self. In the dreamer's narrative of her dreamwork experience, the waking life situation reflects her needs and, thus, guides her self-construction. The two basic motives of human existence, which are striving for self-enhancement and the longing for contact/union with somebody or something else (Hermans, 1999), or their equivalent in Bakan's (1966) agency and communion, correspond to the dreamer's waking life situation of relationship and self concerns. Herman's term of self-enhancement includes self-maintenance and self-expansion whereas Bakan's term of agency refers to the striving to assert, protect, and expand the self as an autonomous, powerful individual. In contrast, the longing for contact/union with somebody (Herman, 1999) is similar to the striving to relate with others with intimacy (Bakan, 1966).

Temporal Movement of the Constructed Self

Once the waking life situation is identified in the process of dreamwork, the dreamer invariably sets a goal to change or at least improve the waking life situation. The importance of the goal is supported by the presence of goals mentioned in all the dreamwork narratives. The goal serves as the evaluative endpoint to assess if the constructed self is able to temporally organize events that will yield meaning. The goals of the constructed self address the motives of self-enhancement through self-expansion (e.g., self-development) and self-maintenance (e.g., self-care), and longing for contact/union (e.g., relationship and closure).

The temporal movement of the self can be seen by looking at the prototypical narrative forms. When the dreamers performed actions to attain their goals, successful outcomes of these actions result in a progressive narrative. Similarly, the presence of a change as an impact of the dreamwork experience despite the absence of actions and outcomes in the narrative was also categorized as a progressive narrative because this configuration shows that a covert act that is performed may not have been considered as an overt action but the change in the dreamer also serves as an outcome that addresses the goal state.

Most of the dreamwork narratives in this study belong to the progressive prototype of narrative where the protagonist moves steadily toward the goal state (Gergen & Gergen, 1986). The prevalence of progressive narratives shows that given a single episode such as the dreamwork experience, the self is constructed as actively moving from one state to another. The premovement state is provided by the context of the dreamer's waking life situation, which is not a satisfactory state for the dreamer. In a self-analysis such as an independent dreamwork, a temporal movement of progression towards the goal shows an active self-construction that is capable of change. Whether the change fulfills specific needs such as self-enhancement or communion, the goal of change itself is valued in endeavors of personal growth. Hence, a meaningful self is constructed in the form of a progressive dreamwork narrative.

However, a few narratives that did not include actions, outcomes, nor change as an impact of dreamwork fall under the stability narrative where the protagonist remains unchanged in relation to the goal (Gergen & Gergen, 1986). When the self does not temporally move towards the goal state, there is a sense of being rooted to the past or the present. In psychological terms, this is a sense of being stuck in old, habitual, and unproductive ways of the

self. Hence, the stability dreamwork narrative indicates that the constructed self is passive and, thus, unable to fulfill the basic needs of self-enhancement and communion.

Another aspect of the temporal movement of the constructed self can be seen in the further goals in the dreamwork narratives. These were meant to follow up on the actions and outcomes related to the initial goal set by the dreamers. Although most of the dreamwork narratives did not include further goals and simply focused on the initial goals, a few narratives did mention further goals. Specifically, these further goals were oriented to self-enhancement needs, such as self-care and self-development. It is interesting to note that no further goals refer to relationship-based goals or communion needs. For some dreamers, a successful outcome may not have completely resolved or fulfilled the self-enhancement needs underlying the goals they have, hence, the further goals in the narratives are mostly an intention to continue, maintain, or expand the gains they made based on the initial goals to ensure the continuation of the constructed self. Thus, further goals in the dreamwork narratives indicate the necessity of the constructed self to project into the future, that is, to continue the meaning that the self-construction has achieved.

With the presence of further goals, a new narrative prototype, the partial progressive narrative form, emerged in the analysis of the dreamwork narratives. It shows the movement of the self towards the goal state through an action and a further goal albeit the absence of outcome or change stated in the narrative. What makes this narrative a partial progressive is the uncertainty of the outcome of the action. Nonetheless, the partial progressive dreamwork narrative shows the commitment of the constructed self to move towards its goal because the self has the intention to achieve a resolution in the future.

The regressive narrative prototype described by Gergen and Gergen (1986), where the protagonist is shown as moving away from the goal or failing, was not evident in the dreamwork narratives of this study. Perhaps the reason for the absence of the regressive type of dreamwork narrative is due to the nature of the Jungian-based dreamwork technique that the participants used where a dream task component was included that serves to concretize their insights into actions that addressed their waking life situations. Moreover, the nature of the dreamwork as a meaning-making activity somehow guarantees a meaningful self-construction.

Reflexivity of the constructed self

The reflexive capacity of the self can be seen in the participants' self-assessment as well as insights in the dreamwork narratives. These venues for reflexivity allowed the participant as a protagonist to step back from her experiences and make comments about them as a narrator. It is the self as the narrator, the "I" (Sarbin, 1986; Strickland, 1994) that can make claims to an identity in a particular context, and provide the explanation for this identity that draws on the past.

All the dreamwork narratives included self-assessment by the dreamers where they examined the waking life situations that they associated with their dreams. In the course of narrating their dreamwork experience, they evaluated themselves, their experiences, and relationships that contribute to the situations they were in. The dreamers evaluated their personal characteristics that may adversely affect the difficulties encountered in their waking life situations (e.g., being a doormat). They also evaluated positive aspects of themselves such as their roles in their relationships (e.g., a good daughter). Self-assessment, then, covers both negative and positive aspects of the dreamer that affect their waking life situations, and subsequently, will relate to the goals and actions they will choose to take.

Furthermore, it is inevitable in the self-assessment to bring up the link of this present self to the past to explain the present self. The continuity of the self from past to present indicates a strong past-to-present temporal configuration in the dreamers' self-assessment. On the other hand, the self-assessment of some dreamers evaluated their present self in the frame of the future, that is, what will happen to them if they continue their habitual ways of thinking, feeling, relating and behaving. This preoccupation with the future emphasizes a present-to-future temporal configuration where the present self is acknowledged to bear on the future self. The self-assessment in the dreamwork narratives provides support for the idea of Crites (1986) that the present holds the tension of the self that is rooted in the past as well as directed toward the future.

The insights of the dreamers are connected to their self-assessment because the process of evaluating and questioning oneself will lead to a different, if not improved understanding of themselves. All the dreamwork narratives contained insights, and most of the insights were about different aspects of the self such as feelings, undesirable characteristics, and their personal needs, and the desire to address or change them. Similar to self-assessment, the dreamers' insights allowed them, as an "I" to construct a coherent self after integrating their dream material with their waking life.

The constructed self in the dreamwork narratives showed a reflexive capacity to reflect and evaluate oneself. It is able to evaluate and question a number of things: What are my unfulfilled needs? What am I doing that is giving me problems? What are my good points? What do I really want? Am I achieving my goal? The constructed self is able to consider both positive and negative evaluations that facilitate the insights that the dreamer achieves. The reflexivity that produces the insights leads the self to find answers to the questions that were posed in the self-assessment. Also, the reflexivity of the constructed self facilitated the examination of the past to connect to the present as well as to anticipate the future.

Impact of the Dreamwork Experience

A second outcome in the dreamwork narratives may be considered in the impact of the dreamwork experience on the dreamer's life, which was coded in terms of insights and changes. Studies on the use and effectiveness of dreamwork in therapy (e.g., Cempron, 1995; Chi, 1992; Lopez, 1985; Merrill & Cary, 1975) showed varying positive effects on the patients, typical of which is self-awareness. Freud himself utilized dream analysis in therapy with the intention of achieving the therapeutic goals of insight and change. The insights in the dreamwork narratives may be viewed as an extension of the self-assessment that occurred in the process of making meaning out of the dream and one's waking life experiences. However, insights no longer involve an examination of the self. Instead, they allow the dreamer to arrive at a conclusion, that is, a deeper understanding about the self. For the counselees in Chi's study (1992) using dreamwork in counseling, self-actualization was enhanced through the counselees' self-examination and insights.

Dreamers mentioned their insights in terms of awareness, realization, and better understanding. Based on the dream categories of Flowers (1988) according to the insights generated, the dreams in the dreamwork narratives functioned as emphasis, reconceptualization, and confrontation with the self. Emphasis dreams reinforced what the dreamers were aware of and lent them the urgency to address their situations. Reconceptualization dreams allowed the dreamers to see themselves or their situations in a different light. Confrontation dreams showed dreamers what they refused to face about themselves or their situations.

Changes in the dreamers after the dreamwork occurred on two levels: internal and external. Internal changes are not readily observed but easily identified by the dreamers whereas external changes are behavioral and are

easily observed. Internal changes occurred in relation to self-oriented goals such as self-development and self-care. The focus on one's self might facilitate changes that involved mental and emotional states of the dreamer. On the other hand, the external changes in the dreamers after the dreamwork are connected to the goal-based actions performed by the dreamers. Both the internal experience of change and external changes produce a sense of well-being in the dreamer.

The Constructed Self in the Dreamwork Narratives

An important function of narrative is to enable the narrator to develop and maintain a sense of identity. By narrating the experience of doing dreamwork, the dreamers are able to construct a coherent self that is self-valuing and relational. The constructed self that is developed responds to the basic needs or motives of self-enhancement (Hermans, 1999) and communion (Bakan, 1966). The narratives of the dreamer showed an individual who has the capacity to be strong, independent and competent through self-mastery (e.g., assertiveness) and self-care; at the same time, the capacity to enhance intimacy in relationships. The self-construction of the dreamers involves finding meaning through the nurturance of the self and others. The relational aspect of the self-construction seems to contribute to the maintenance of an identity that values social relations and close family ties among Filipinos (Church, Katigbak, & Castañeda, 1984-1985). On the other hand, the self-valuing self hints at a development of an identity that places a priority on self-enhancement. This is not surprising because the process of dreamwork as a self-investigation naturally elicits concerns and needs for the growth of one's self.

The progressive narrative that is used in self-construction implies that the experience of doing dreamwork encourages the self to be an active agent in dealing with difficulties and concerns encountered in the course of daily life. Similar to the studies of Chi (1992) and Cempron (1995) where the counselees' adaptation to their situations occurred through changes brought about by doing dream analysis in counseling, the dreamers in the present study showed a capacity for reflexive self-evaluation and change that underscore the therapeutic nature of the self-analysis of the dreamwork.

The findings of the study have important implications to mental health and general well-being. Just like psychotherapy clients who selectively choose the stories they passionately tell in therapy based on strong affect (Hermans, 1999), the dreamer chooses a dream that has triggered a strong emotion, and it leads to a desire to understand the dream. And the story of

how the dreamer understood the dream provides him a venue to organize his experiences. The very act of telling a story about one's experiences is associated with improved mental health (Pennbaker & Seagal, 1999).

The relational and self-valuing self that is constructed in the dreamwork narratives addresses shows that this meaning construction can give a sense of general well-being to the individual. This self-construction is not surprising as seen in the conceptions of what is psychologically healthy among Filipinos. Church, Katigbak, and Castañeda (1984-1985) found that close family ties, social relations, and self-development are some of the indicators of good psychological health and personality functioning of Filipino students.

Inherent to dreamwork is the opportunity to evaluate and reflect on the past in order to change. This is the usual domain of counseling and psychotherapy. The implication of the results of this study is that narrating one's dreamwork experience even outside the more formal venue of psychotherapy can help construct a self that is positive, therapeutic, and empowered because the individual is able to narrate a story about a protagonist who has the agency to address frustrated needs and difficulties. It is useful, therefore, to engage in the act of telling stories about one's dream and the subsequent dreamwork to a willing listener in ordinary life. The effect of storytelling is, then, two-pronged: in the process of constructing a useful and coherent self, intimacy in relationships can be enhanced and the self-development needs of the self are met.

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