

Who Knows What Dreams May Come?  
*Developing the Capacity to Listen Analytically*

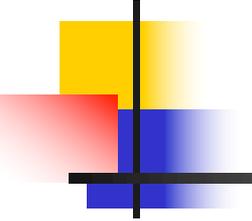
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James L. Poulton, Ph.D.

IPI Videoconference

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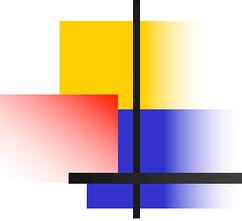
[jloulton@mac.com](mailto:jloulton@mac.com)



# Bion's (1965) Theory of Mind

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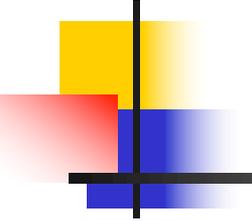
- Conscious mind:
  - Contents (thoughts, memories, emotions, dreams) are finite, bounded, limited
- Unconscious mind:
  - Without boundary, number, discrimination or categorization (Symingtons, 1996)
  - Infinite possibilities
- Alpha function:
  - Edits, simplifies, selects, distills, distorts the boundarylessness of the unconscious



# In-Session Dreams

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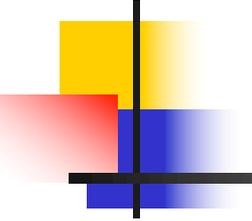
- Distort the unconscious
- Cannot represent all possible permutations of meaning
- Still, they are meaningful and relevant, and they reveal unacknowledged aspects of the patient and the interactions between therapist and patient



# Preparations for Dreaming I

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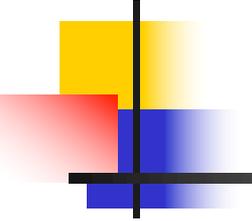
- Parsons (2007) When listening for unconscious elements in interactions with patients:
  - The therapist brings free-floating attention to himself/herself as he/she does to the patient
  - Without agenda
  - Without censorship



# Listening *For* vs. Listening *In*

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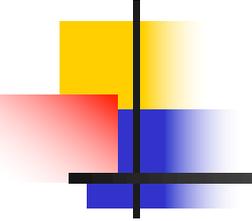
- Listening for:
  - The therapist scans the patient's material for confirmation or disconfirmation of an already stated interpretation
- Listening in:
  - Requires the therapist to abandon agenda, desire or plan to learn what he/she *does not already know* from what is present but unconscious



# Preparation for Dreaming II

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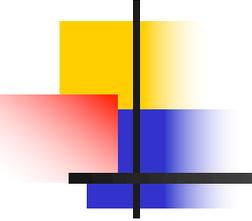
- Ogden (1997a)
  - “Our use of reveries requires tolerance of the experience of being adrift”
- To dream, we must forego the security of thinking thoughts we have already formulated



# Preparation for Dreaming III

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- Creating the *internal* frame
  - Parsons (2007): symbolism, fantasy, transference and unconscious meaning are given central roles
  - Jacobs (1991): watch for, and analyze, the inevitable enactments in which we participate
  - Ogden (1997b): become “unconsciously receptive to being made use of in playing a variety of roles in the unconscious life of the analysand”



# Preparation for Dreaming IV

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- Creating the *external* frame
  - Set expectations for how each party will behave within and outside of the session
  - Set expectations that time boundaries and financial agreements will be observed
  - A shared observance of the session as “separated from ordinary life as it institutionalizes a unique contractual as well as communicative arrangement between two participants” (Modell, 1989)

## References:

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