

**SEX AND DREAMS;
THE LANGUAGE OF
DREAMS**

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Sex and Dreams; The Language of Dreams by Dr. Wilhelm Stekel & James S. van Teslaar

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DR. WILHELM STEKEL & JAMES S. VAN TESLAAR

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THE LANGUAGE OF DREAMS

BY

DR. WILLIAM STEKEL
(VIENNA)

Authorized translation by

JAMES S. VAN TESLAAR, M.D.

(For sale only to Members of the
Medical Profession)



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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

Dr. Wm. Stekel's *Language of Dreams*, of which the first portion is herewith presented to the English reading professional ranks, is intended as a guide to the interpretation of the Unconscious for those who are concerned professionally with nervous disorders. The balance of the work will appear as soon as the demand for it will make itself felt.

The interpretation of dreams has become an indispensable aid. Without the information it yields regarding the operations of man's Unconscious, the rational management of nervous ills is well-nigh inconceivable. The art of dream interpretation has a wider field of application and elsewhere Dr. Stekel himself has applied the revelations of dream analysis to other fields of scientific inquiry. But the present work, *The Language of Dreams*, is devoted almost entirely to correlating the subjects' dreams with the neurotic character traits which confront the psychotherapist, the general practitioner and the specialist alike, and which often baffle their best efforts in the absence of the kind of knowledge revealed through this very art of dream interpretation.

As one of the pioneers in this great work Dr.

Stekel, of course, is well versed in the theoretical implications and in the theories which form the foundation of dream analysis. Nevertheless in his *Language of Dreams* he has kept strictly to the practical task of showing "how the analysis is done." The principles of dream interpretation are not discussed abstractly. They are revealed and outlined briefly in connection with typical illustrative dreams. Throughout the work the emphasis is upon practice. Abstract speculation is reduced to a minimum.

Moreover, in preparing this volume, the author appreciated that it must be made serviceable to many practitioners who have had little or no previous training in this kind of work. The contents are carefully graded, the interpretations proceeding from the simpler dream elements to the more complex, and from the superficial to the deeper layers of symbolization. At the same time the author himself warns us that the whole art of dream analysis is but a recent scientific procedure. Numerous details remain to be worked out. The accepted generalizations, he points out, should be regarded in the light of working hypotheses rather than as final principles, and the consulting psychologist should test them out for himself.

The interpretation of dreams is far from being as easy a task as appears at first glance. There are numerous pitfalls for the unwary. Dream analysis is a task that calls for unusual candor and pa-

tience. To do the work successfully presupposes an immense amount of general knowledge and a broad cultural background. It is an art that involves qualifications of the highest order. Above all, one must be willing to go through a rigorous mental discipline in order to approach the task of dream interpretation without any preconceived bias and without the handicap of subtle emotional resistances.

But after one has schooled himself to the task the results are most gratifying. Properly carried out the analysis of dreams reveals depths of the human soul hitherto unsuspected. It fortifies our professional endeavours with knowledge of the highest order. To adopt the latest scientific methods thus increasing our professional efficiency and enlarging our capacity for serving our fellow-men is a gratifying achievement.

The psychology and technique of dream interpretation, so skilfully presented by Dr. Stekel in the work of which the present volume is the first portion, constitutes a most important method for getting at the vital facts underlying our mental functions during health and disease.

The time has come for the English reading professional ranks to profit by Dr. Stekel's expert application of psychoanalytic principles. Those who desire to penetrate the riddle of dreams as a means towards increasing their knowledge of human nature as it portrays itself reflected in nervous ills should

find the present work an invaluable aid. The preparation of the English version has been undertaken with that end in view.

VAN TESLAAR

August 10, 1922,
Brookline, Mass.

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