

Dreams Within Conflict

Introduction

Work on a gridlocked or perpetual problem. Help your partner understand the underlying dreams, history, beliefs or values in your position on this issue.

Speaker's Job

Your task is to honestly talk about your feelings and beliefs about your position on this issue. Explore what this position means to you, what the dream might be behind your position. Tell the story of the source of this dream or belief: where it comes from and what it symbolizes. You must be clear and honest. What do you really want on this issue? Why is it important to you? Try to make your partner understand.

Don't argue for nor try to persuade your partner of your point of view. Just explain how you see things. Tell your partner all of your thoughts and feelings that you have about your position on this issue.

You may want to look over the list on the following page for a sample of dreams that people sometimes have (or have lost) that could underlie the position you've taken on this issue.

Listener's Job

Your job here is to make sure your partner feels safe enough to tell you what's behind their position on the issue: their belief, dream or story. Toward this end, you will listen like a friend would listen. Ask the questions that are listed on the next page as sample questions for the dream catcher which draw out their point of view.

Contribute to the climate by suspending judgment and not acting like a judge, but like someone who wants to hear your partner's story and the dream behind the story. Just hear it and don't judge it.

Avoid problem solving. It is much too soon for that. First the opposition of dreams needs to end in order to become one another's friends again. Be interested.

The goal is to move from gridlock to dialogue, and to understand, in depth, their partner's position. Do not argue for your point of view!

"The Dream Catcher" - Sample Questions for the Listener

1. What do you believe about this issue?
2. Is there a story behind this for you?
3. Does this relate to your background in some way?
4. Tell me why this is so important to you?
5. What do you feel about it?
6. What do you wish for?
7. What would be your ideal dream here?
8. What do you need?
9. Is there a deeper purpose or goal in this for you?
10. Does this relate to some belief or value for you?
11. Is there a fear or disaster scenario not having this dream honored?

"The Dreamer" - Sample Dreams for the Speaker

- A sense of freedom
- The experience of peace
- Unity with nature
- Exploring who I am
- Adventure
- A spiritual journey
- Justice
- Honor
- Unity with my past
- Healing
- Knowing my family
- Becoming all i can be
- Having a sense of power
- Dealing with my aging
- Exploring a creative side of myself
- Becoming more powerful
- Getting over past hurts
- Becoming more competent
- Asking God for forgiveness
- Exploring an old part of myself I have lost
- Getting over a personal hang up
- Having a sense of order
- Being able to be productice
- A place and a time to just "be"
- Being able to truly relax
- Reflecting on my life
- Getting my priorities in order
- Finishing something important
- Exploring the physical side of myself
- Being able to compete and win
- Travel
- Quietness
- Atonement
- Building something important
- Ending a chapter of my life
- Saying goodbye to something
- Love

The bottom line

You don't want to have the kind of relationship in which you win and are influential in the relationship but wind up crushing your partner's dream. You want the kind of relationship in which each of you support one another's dreams. If your dreams connect, so much the better.

Imagine two clenched fists (each person's position) in opposition.

Now relax the hands open and from each hand a dove flies. The dove is the dream.

Each dream is very close to the core of the self, and it is fragile. People will easily become defensive if the climate is not accepting.

