

## **Experiential Dreamwork Certification Program Syllabus (Updated Sept. 2024)**

A hybrid LIVE (20 CE hours) and homestudy (10 CE hours) online course

Upon completion of this program, you will be able to work with your own dreams and the dreams of others with confidence. You will have the tools to work one-on-one and in groups. And you will be able to help those who suffer from trauma-related nightmares. This course is a companion to Dr. Leslie Ellis' recent book, *A Clinician's Guide to Dream Therapy* but goes beyond the material in the book to include personal and group dreamwork, and an explanation and chance to practice a variety of dream exploration techniques.

### **Instructor: Dr. Leslie Ellis**

Dr. Ellis is a world expert in the clinical use of dreams, with a specialty in working with PTSD nightmares. She has a PhD in Clinical Psychology from the Chicago School of Professional Psychology and a Masters in Counselling Psychology from Pacifica Graduate Institute. She is past president of The International Focusing Institute and has more than 20 years' experience in clinical practice. She has taught a focusing certification program to therapists for more than 10 years, and is currently offering online instruction in dreamwork and nightmare treatment to therapists and anyone interested in cultivating inner life through dreamwork, focusing and active imagination. She is the author of *A Clinician's Guide to Dream Therapy* (Routledge, 2019), as well as numerous papers and book chapters on focusing and embodied, experiential dreamwork. She has also taught and delivered talks worldwide.

### **Online Instruction includes the following courses:**

Dreamwork for Yourself  
Dreamwork Demystified, the clinical use of dreams, part 1\*  
Diving Deep, the clinical use of dreams, part 2\*  
Working with Nightmares: A short, focused course\*  
The Fundamentals of Focusing  
Special topics, supervision, class presentations...  
(\*denotes courses approved for CE credit)

### **Live (via zoom) instruction and at-home practice**

Monthly dream class meeting (2.5 hours x 10). You will be provided with a zoom invitation that includes all dates and sessions.

Practice partnership to exchange dream sessions, minimum 1x/month

Optional dream community meetings with Robbyn Peters Bennett

### **Assignments**

Dream journal (for yourself)

Notes from dream practice sessions, including observations, and questions that arise (which you can bring to class sessions)

*Brief presentation, artwork or article on an aspect of dreaming that intrigues you:*

These will be 10-minute sessions presented at one of the last 3 classes.

Options include:

A 'lightning' talk of 5-7 minutes on a dream topic of your choice, plus brief discussion

Sharing of artwork inspired by your dream life

Presentation of a case example or clinical question

If you prefer not to present to the class or need extra time, you can also:

create a very short paper, podcast, video... format is meant to be flexible and fun for you.

### **Required Reading**

Ellis, Leslie. (2019) *A Clinician's Guide to Dream Therapy: Implementing Simple and Effective Dreamwork*. New York & London: Routledge.

Gendlin, E. T. (1978/1981). *Focusing*. New York, NY: Bantam Books

Gendlin, E. T. (1986). *Let Your Body Interpret Your Dreams*. Wilmette, IL: Chiron Publications.

### **Suggested Reading**

Bosnak, R. (1998). *A little course in dreams*. Boston & London: Shambala.

Aizenstat, A. (2011). *Dream tending: Awakening to the healing power of dreams*. New Orleans: Spring Journal.

Bulkeley, K. (2017). *An Introduction to the Psychology of Dreaming*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.

Malinowski, J. (2021). *The Psychology of Dreaming*: Routledge

### **Course Outline: List of Class Sessions and Homework**

Prior to the start: You will be provided access to the online course material, including Dreamwork for Yourself (DFY) and may want to start using prompts in DFY to track your own dreams.

You can also start reading *A Clinician's Guide to Dream Therapy* by Dr. Leslie Ellis, the main text for the course, or just read the chapters as assigned during the year.

For those new to the embodied practice of Focusing, you may want to read *Focusing* (Gendlin, 1978) and/or take the mini course which is included in your video classes early in this process.

Class 1

#### ***Introductions, orientation***

Introductions – what draws you to dreaming.

Orientation: ethics, confidentiality, overview, q/a

Dreamwork experiential and demo: introduce 'finding help'

Before class: Read Intro, CH 1 & 8: *A Clinician's Guide to Dream Therapy*

Begin Dreamwork for Yourself (self-paced course)

Class 2

#### ***Preparation for dream partner practice***

Before class: read CH 2, 3, 5: *A Clinician's Guide to Dream Therapy*

In class: quick review, q/a of material: Why work with dreams; engaging them

First steps in EXP dreamwork: Explore setting, finding help

Presentation on Common Factors: cover main and optional 'avenues'

le associations, metaphor + preference for experiencing

Explanation of dream partner guidelines.

## Demo

*Between this and all future sessions:* meet dream partner, optional community meeting, readings, online material – at your own pace... this timeline is a suggestion only. At minimum, read relevant chapters or view videos prior to class AND practice with your dream partner(s).

- Class 3      **Science of Dreaming/Embodying the dream**  
Before class: Read Chapters 4, 10  
Begin *Dreamwork for Yourself* (self-paced course)  
Science of dreaming: What is the purpose of dreaming?  
Present: Being a dream element, and introduce focusing  
Debrief partnerships  
Dreamwork demo
- Class 4      **Navigating the 'Dream Divide'**  
Before class: Read Chapters 6-7  
Read *Focusing*, take the Focusing Fundamental online class  
Presentation: navigating the dream divide  
Exercise: Experimenting with dream- and self-centric approaches  
Demo this as well if time.
- Class 5      **Dreaming the Dream Onward, Active Imagination, Art**  
Before class: Read CH 9  
Intro to Embodied Imagination: Being a Dream Element  
Dream Art session  
Practice exercise in class and/or demo  
\*Bring art materials to class
- Class 6      **Working with Disturbing Dreams, Part One**  
Before class: Read CH 11  
Discussion of nightmares: treatment, safety, suicide link, kinds of nightmares, etc.;  
Dreamwork demo (if time)
- Class 7      **Working with Dreams in Groups**  
Before class: Read CH 12  
Begin reading *Let Your Body Interpret Your Dreams*  
Presentation of dream group process: Modified Ullman method  
Dream group experiential  
Presentations begin
- Class 8      **Nightmares: Understanding Aetiology and Treatment**  
Before class, watch: Short Course in Nightmare Treatment  
View Dream Salon Talk on Nightmares  
Presentation: Nightmares and the Nervous System  
Review Nightmare Relief and demo this process  
Presentations
- Class 9      **Big Dreams and Clinical Considerations**  
Before class: Read CH 13, 14  
Finish *Let Your Body Interpret Your Dreams*  
In class: Memory reconsolidation: transforming dreams/memories  
Presentations

Class 10      **Final Class Meeting**  
Dream group process  
Final student presentations  
Review Certification checklist  
Group closing: reflect on most profound dreamwork, changes in how your  
Dreams or dream practice... next steps.

**Course assignments:**

**Certification** will be based on attendance at 10 live sessions (all or most, and listen to recordings of missed sessions), completion of course online material and reading, completing at least 10 practice sessions with your partner/group (please keep a brief log of date, names and a few process notes), a final brief presentation, and completion of the exit survey.

**Make-up or extra supervision sessions:** You are welcome to schedule these with me (at my student rate of \$160USD/hour) at any time, either individually or with a practice group. These sessions are for direct supervision of your dreamwork, for 1:1 dreamwork sessions to enhance your learning, and/or to make up for missed material.

**Pricing.** This course includes access to a valuable suite of online training courses, including Experiential Dreamwork training I & II, Dreamwork for Yourself, an Introduction to Focusing, and a Short Course in Nightmare Treatment (more than \$1,000 value).

**The certification track** is \$2205, which reflects a \$183.75 discount for paying in full in advance (deposit is included in this price). Monthly payment option is \$183.75/month for 12 months. In addition, a non-refundable \$183.75 *deposit is due upon registration, and is required to secure your spot in the class.* Prices are in USD and include 5% GST. Pricing in CAD is available upon request for Canadians only.

**Refund policy:** full refund up to 3 months prior to start date, 50% until one month prior to start date, and non-refundable after that. A limited number of scholarship spots are available for those with large currency differentials or limited means.

Special topics may be added and additional on topics of interest that may include co-creative dreamwork, lucid dreaming, big dreams – or any dream-related topic of interest to the group.

**For those requiring CE credit**

You must attend the live sessions with video on, complete short quizzes on the online material and complete the exit survey. More CE information will be provided separately. CE credits have been approved from the Canadian Counselling Association, and APA.

If you miss more than 2 live sessions, CE credits cannot be awarded (partial credit is not allowed). For CE credit for video material, you must complete the quizzes. You also need to complete the evaluation at the end of the course. Note there is an administration fee of \$120 for the 30 CE credits.

*Information on Continuing Education Credit for Health Professionals*

- *CE credits for psychologists are provided by the Spiritual Competency Academy (SCA) which is co-sponsoring this program. The Spiritual Competency Academy is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. Spiritual Competency Academy maintains responsibility for this program and its content.*
- *The California Board of Behavioral Sciences accepts CE credits for LCSW, LPCC,*

*LEP, and LMFT license renewal for programs offered by approved sponsors of CE by the American Psychological Association.*

- *LCSW, LPCC, LEP, and LMFTs, and other mental health professionals from states other than California need to check with their state licensing board as to whether or not they accept programs offered by approved sponsors of CE by the American Psychological Association.*
  - *SCA is approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing (BRN Provider CEP16887) for licensed nurses in California. RNs must retain their certificate of attendance for 4 years after the course concludes.*
  - *For questions about receiving your Certificate of Attendance, contact Dr. Leslie Ellis, [leslie@drleslieellis.com](mailto:leslie@drleslieellis.com).*
- For questions about CE, contact Spiritual Competency*