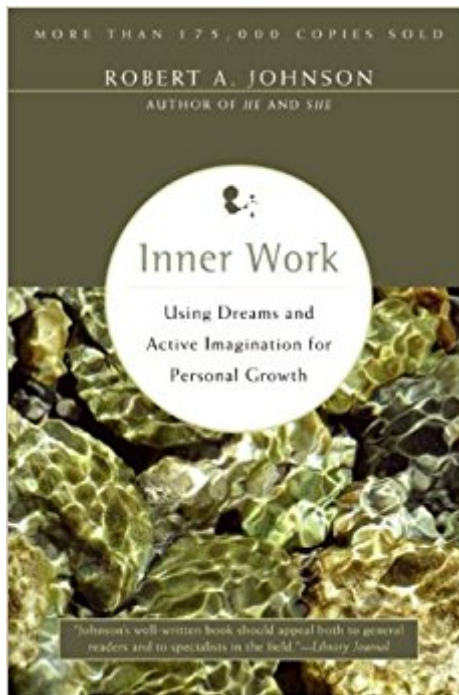


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# Inner Work: Using Dreams And Active Imagination For Personal Growth



## Synopsis

A noted author and Jungian analyst teaches how to use dreams and inner exercises to achieve personal wholeness and a more satisfying life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In this book Johnson introduces a simple four-step method aimed at helping us explore the unconscious. He encourages us to pinpoint the symbols that appear in our dreams and active imaginings; to note our conscious associations to these symbols; meaningfully to personalize what we have accomplished in these first two steps; and finally through rituals to translate the insights gained into memorable conscious experiences. By providing clear instructions, with illustrations, he gives us a feeling for inner work, making it feasible without reliance on formal analysis. Johnson's well-written book should appeal both to general readers and to specialists in the field. Paul D. Huss, Psychology & Clinical Studies Dept., Andover Newton Theological Sch., Newton Centre, Mass. Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Robert A. Johnson, a noted lecturer and Jungian analyst, is also the author of *He, She, We, Inner Work*, *Ecstasy*, *Transformation*, and *Owning Your Own Shadow*.

In my efforts to understand and deal with my child's nightmares, I have found respite in Robert

Johnson's Inner Work. I have trusted his books for some time because he has a gift for using Jungian principles and keeping things simple. By using archetypal comparisons rather than personal anecdotes, his approach to teaching you how to explore dreams is direct and unbiased. He offers an overview of necessary terms and reminds us (quoting from Carl Jung) that "God speaks in dream." This book does not claim to be the ultimate book on dream analysis but it gives you the tools to explore your unconscious in his 4-step to Active Imagination. His approach to understanding symbols empowers you to make your own definitions and associations, rather than telling you what they mean universally, because everyone is different - and that is so the case with my daughter. If you are looking to develop the understanding your mind at sleep, this is a great introduction. I would also suggest *The Nightmare Solution* for other approaches on working out your dreams and *We, He, and She* by Robert Johnson.

If you are a "dream" keeper, this book will lead you into the steps of dream work and active imagination. Johnson a Jungian analyst gives us his own experiences in this transformation of the human spirit. Whatever situation, profession, age, one can experience total life visions through active imagination. This process when developed and used can reveal dimensions of one's life where one has had little glimpses, leading to fruition of a developed unconscious, balanced with the ego and transforming your life, inward and outward. Step by step, from dreams to dream work to active imagination, Johnson will give you the tools to progress in your quest. Starting with the unconscious, working with the ego and bringing them in harmony and balance. An endeavor that is eternal. The unconscious which has a complete life of its own and runs parallel to the ordinary life we live day by day. The unconscious is very influential in our life's decisions and should be treated with respect. There are unknown parts of ourselves which through active imagination can be brought to the surface, looked at and dismissed if one is not ready to examine them. Active imagination enables the conscious and the unconscious parts of ourselves to speak to one another. Moving us to wholeness through evolution and forward with God. A movement to and fro, flowing through our being, building the kingdom of God in the manifestation of the Spirit of God. These challenges require inner growth that can become painful. One has to move away from self to look inward and looking inward will not always give us what we want but it will surely give us what we need to move beyond ourselves. Growth is the only evidence of life but one cannot force growth on oneself or another. "No one can give faith to another". Kierkegaard.

I've read a few books and listened to some CDs on dream interpretation, but Johnson's Inner Work

is the first one to give me real confidence that I can do this myself. The process he outlines does take time -- it isn't a "go with your gut" quick fix -- but it leads to some intense, evocative results. The 4-step process is deceptively simple: Step 1 - Identify key images and your associations to those images; Step 2 - Ask yourself where these images/associations show up in your life; Step 3 - Interpret the dream, and; Step 4 - Complete a ritual around the dream that makes it more concrete in your life. I was amazed at the many associations that came to me with each image as I completed step 1, some of them were relevant and some not, but ALL of them made me think. Step 2, I admit is the most difficult for me, and step 4 probably the most meaningful. Again, this is not for the lazy or faint of heart. You don't just dive into interpretation, and it takes some effort to make the associations Johnson asks us to make in order to arrive at a reasonable interpretation. But it sure is worth it! I've made some interpretations that have just astonished me and moved me. Beyond the mechanics of dream interpretation, the book is incredibly well written. Johnson is a thoughtful, engaging writer who puts words together in a way that we not only understand but enjoy reading.

I've been looking for the basic information on how to APPLY Jung's teachings. This is the seventh (7th!) book I've read of Jung's writings, and the first one by another author on "How to apply Jung to my life." He divides his 220 page book into 2 parts: 1) Dreamwork 2) Active Imagination. Johnson then establishes 4 practical steps for each stage. Also included are basic definitions of archetype, ego, self, animus, anima etc. etc. The author makes these terms very clear. All steps are then demonstrated w/the use of "Sample Dreams" so the reader can see how this all works. Wish I'd come across this book before I read all the others of Jung! But, I have a good background now, so it's ok. Highly recommend this How To book for anyone wanting to put Jung's concepts to work in his/her life.

Excellent discovery and insight about integrating our subconscious with our consciousness. A path "for those who want to be fully awake and living a more thriving and integrated life.

I'm very glad to have discovered this insightful and helpful book. In clear language, Johnson describes the unconscious and how to access it through dream analysis. I've found it an invaluable tool for increasing self-awareness.

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