



Somnium Divina

Unlike in Jungian analytic work, in which oftentimes, through associations and amplification, we wish to understand a dream, in contemplative practice our task is to have an experience of the dream: an encounter and a relationship with divine mystery.

The object of Somnium Divina , or sacred dream work, is to consider how God's nighttime presence might be speaking to us through the dream.

We begin from the deep belief that the spirit dwells within us, and that our life's task is to be curious about our inner lives, and to be curious about divine presence in us.

Ideally we work in community when using a dream as sacred text (Somnium Divina). You can also do this practice alone by recording yourself reading the dream aloud and playing it back, or you can ask someone to read it aloud for you.

PREPARATIO

We begin by expecting the Divine to speak to us. Therefore, have a journal and pen near your bed.

Prepare for nighttime: read Scripture or sacred writings, or do a Nightly Examen, if that is your practice. Nothing else: lights out.

Upon awakening: consider the work of the dark, and write in your journal. Do this before reading or listening to anything, as it will interrupt the language of the psyche.

Whatever you remember, write it down. Don't force Psyche's work. Even if you don't remember anything, your task is to create a log. If you remember nothing, or nothing articulate, put the date on your page, and write that down.



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THE FOUR MOVEMENTS OF LECTIO:

Encountering the Somnium Divina (the sacred dream)

① **Lectio (Reading the Dream)**

- The dream is spoken aloud slowly, perhaps more than once by another person. If you are alone, you may wish to record yourself reading the dream and listen to it at various times.
- Listen as if hearing a sacred text, sensing its cadence, textures, and silences.

② **Meditatio (Reflection on the Dream)**

- Name a single image, phrase, or moment that resonates for you—without analysis or comment.
- This is the “chewing over” stage, letting an image or phrase turn in the soul.

③ **Oratio (Prayerful Response)**

- Responses arise as prayer, dialogue, or blessing—directed to the dream itself or to one of its figures.
- These words are offerings and the opening of a conversation with God.

④ **Contemplatio (Resting in Mystery)**

- Silence follows, deep and unhurried.
- No further speech or analysis—only sitting in the presence of God.