Unfolding Of the Dream Instrument:
A Summary for Resident Workshop (Fall 2007)

My reply to your questions about reading in advance of the workshop: for your forwarding to the residents:

1. My first dream book, The New Interpretation of Dreams (1997), is probably too difficult, because I had to assemble for myself all the different angles of the dream instrument: Freud, Jung, the existentialists, a biological search theory, Winnicott, and, most important, Levi-Strauss's orchestral score of how all mythology fits together, concerning what to conjoin (fruitful), and what to disjoin (deadly), as the paradigm for a new interpretation of dreams.

2. My second dream book, The Practical Use of Dreams and the Human Comedy (2000), may look daunting, but its core is profoundly simple: the first 50 chapters are simple variations of what is summarized in Chapter 49, The Dream Door, and Chapter 50, The Dream in Two Dimensions is a Metaphor, An Exaggeration, About An Emergency, which comes down to one word: mismatch. In one sentence, the dreamer reruns his route from the daytime, and discovers his movement is mismatched with the field he is running it on. In other words, the figure does not fit the ground. I would recommend this book for each resident, unless she or he already has it, and to read pages 306-310 to get the core of it. This is the x-ray of psychiatry. For how the dream door becomes the so-called door in the sky of all mythology and religion: see my dream of the Au Sable Cathedral on pages 128-130.

3. My third dream book in progress, Metaphysical Illness, has discovered how the single sentence, or even a single, anchoring word, can take us deeply into the core disorientation of the patient, because these striking sentences, or words, are fractals, i.e. self-similar on every scale of time and space. They refer to the exchange between the interior and exterior world going wrong: for example, giving too much for what you get back, which builds up rage. I have attached my Chapter 1, Freud's Gift, for the residents to begin getting some technical clarity about how to work up a dream specimen.

We will work on three cases, an hour each, on dvd, together, to teach you how to proceed with such a workup. If any further reading from me is needed, my web site is http://psychiatry.wisc.edu/gustafson.

Looking forward to our work together.

Very best regards, Jim Gustafson.

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Thank you so much for all your work to arrange our beautiful symposium in Spring Green, and for your email reflecting upon it. As I reflected upon how we were working with the three dream texts, I could also see Freud's Gift in it, and Jung's also, but, more strikingly, the force of a single detail emerging on all scales, temporal and spatial, of the patient's life, like the bifurcation of a single vein in a leaf, which is self-similar to the bifurcation in the entire leaf, which is self-similar to the branch, which is . . . to the array of a limb, . . . which is . . . to the tree itself, which is . . . to the grove of trees, which is . . . to all trees,
which is . . . In all three cases, both the self-similarity from a single detail, of the mis-match, i.e. the diagnosis, but also of the treatment, a single detail of a different match, with the potential to arise on the larger scales. In other words, the fractal, biological structure of the pathology, and of the well-being, side by side before us.

So, we were following the biological design, for ill and for well, quite similar to Cecil Balmond’s designs in engineering/architecture (Informal, 2002). Balmond summarizes his array of designs in a couple of sentences, which could also characterize our work on Friday:

The informal is opportunistic, an approach to design that **seizes a local moment and makes something of it** . . . Ideas are not based on principles of rigid hierarchy but on **intense explorations of the immediate**. (p. 220, 2002)

Please forward this to the residents, with my thanks for their/your vigorous participation.
Sincerely yours, Jim Gustafson