



ISPSO 34th Annual Meeting, Copenhagen 3rd - 9th July 2017: Dreams always take place: Spaces, Places, Rooms, and Furniture, inside and around us

**PARALLEL PAPERS V**  
**SUNDAY 9<sup>th</sup> JULY 930-1045**  
**ROOM IV - 7.0.22**

**Brigid Nossal & Wendy Harding**  
*The 'Dream Keepers': exploring the conscious and unconscious interplay between dreams, dreamers and reality in the creation of an educational institute.*

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E pluribus unum

Wikipedia definitions:

- Out of many, one
- No one knows
- One, from many

This paper will explore the conscious and unconscious exchange of dreams and dynamics that occurred between the founders (the 'dream keepers') and the local and global community of practice in the process of establishing the National Institute of Organisational Dynamics Australia (NIODA) as a centre of excellence in the field of systems psychodynamics. It will examine the place and role of the dream in making manifest an idea.

NIODA was both created and resides predominantly in cyberspace and the collective imagination of its dreamers. This dimension will also be considered in the paper.

Much like a thought finding a thinker, the Institute began as a kind of Dream Thought or Myth (Bion, 1970): first, in the minds of its founders, then within the community of practice and then more recently in the NIODA students. We use this idea of the Dream to consider a kind of co-existence or cycling back between dream thinking and the more sophisticated development of NIODA as a real institution as it progressed. We wonder about the place of this dream thinking in bringing the institute into existence.

Perhaps this kind of dream thinking exists in what Winnicott (1971) describes as 'potential space', a meeting place between the inner world of fantasy and the outer world of reality. We describe how from early on, NIODA became a container for a collection of dreams both big and small. As 'dream keepers', the founders entered a kind of dance or interplay with both their own dreams and those belonging to individuals largely outside the actual work of establishing the institute. We will describe

a kind of relating and relatedness through this lens of dream keepers and the broader community of dreamers.

We will consider what is generalizable in this exploration and how might the examination of organisational dynamics be influenced by looking through this lens of individual and collective dream manufacturing and maintenance? We hope in this respect to offer something new.

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