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## Dreams of adult people – the first stage of characteristics with the use of Transactional Analysis

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Disillusionment is the void that is created between unfulfilled expectations and reality

Mark Twain

### Abstract

The article is a report from the first stage of the research conducted by the authors and concerning human dreams. The aim of the study was to create a foundation for the characteristics of dreams from the point of view of perceiving the concept of passivity and activating ego states in the light of Transactional Analysis. The analyses were conducted in the qualitative paradigm, showing dream categories and presenting their dominance in particular research groups created in accordance to the participants' sex, age, and the way of conducting the research, which is to constitute the foundation for further characteristics realised in the light of Transactional Analysis.

**Keywords:** dreams, dream categories, happiness.

## Introduction

The aim of the conducted research is characterizing human dreams. The authors decided to answer the question what kind of dream categories can be depicted and what it depends on what people dream about. This study is of a qualitative nature. The authors asked their respondents open questions, asking them to describe dominant dreams. At the same time, the research has an exploratory dimension – it is the first attempt to characterize the research in the light of Transactional Analysis assumptions. It constitutes the first stage of the analysis thanks to which the authors shall be able to use depicted dream categories in further research in order to analyse them quantitatively taking into account their relation with the concept of ego states in functional terms and functioning in passive strategies. Further on, the authors are planning to develop research tools relating to the aforesaid categories and relations. They also use tools developed within the framework of Transactional Analysis – The Questionnaire studying the profile of ego states, i.e. egogram – functional analysis by Z. Łęski (2018, pp. 185–186), which is an adaptation of a tool developed by A. Pierzchała and A. Sarnat-Ciastko (Pierzchała, Sarnat-Ciastko, 2011, pp. 280–281; Pierzchała, 2013, pp. 354–358). The self-evaluation questionnaire by Z. Łęski moves the analysis of functioning in ego states from the structural to functional approach, which seems justified also in the context of the planned research. The second tool developed within the framework of TA, which is planned to be used in the second stage of the research, is the Teaching Reality Questionnaire (Pierzchała, 2013, pp. 344–347). This tool shall be adapted for the needs of the planned research – the range of its analysis shall be extended and transferred from the solely educational ground to the general social ground. The research shall be carried out in a group of adult people.

## Theoretical basis of the research

According to Alina Kałużna-Wielobób (2011, p. 161), “a dream is the concretization of our general desires.” People’s desires let them shape their dreams. Thanks to fulfilling these desires, one fulfils oneself. They may be compared to notions consisting of thoughts, images and experiences. In the opinion of Tadeusz Nowacki, an important trait of dreams is the fact that “they are a land of freedom, manifestation of shock triggered by a sudden interruption of doubtless blissfulness in which dreams are formed” (Nowacki, 2010, p. 34). Each person can feel free in the area of their dreams. Thanks to dreams we can feel blissfulness that everyone attributes a different meaning to. Following the words of T. Nowacki, Barbara Baraniak concludes that dreams “most often concern phe-

nomena and various life situations, enriching the known state, i.e. the former one, and content that seems completely fantastical, as well as connected with reality, illustrates not only “the land of total, integral human freedom,” but also often becomes an impulse for new solutions” (Nowacki, 2010, p. 49 after: Baraniak, 2018, p. 48). Dreams are a source of motivation to take next life steps. They are an inspiration for people that enables them to change something in their lives.

Alfred Adler thinks that dreams can help to feel life balance and stability and make it possible to overcome one’s weaknesses (Adler, 1986, p. 224). Thanks to dreams, a person can feel a bigger and more important sense of their life. Research shows that depending on a developmental stage, dreams carry a certain value with them and diversify as far as their realism and energy resources are concerned (Kałużna-Wielobób, 2011, p. 170).

Preparing for conducting the research in question, the authors of the paper carried out the analysis of professional literature. Publications by A. Kałużna-Wielobób are particularly significant to the matter in question. In one of her articles entitled “The functions of dreams from the point of view of secondary school female students, female university students and middle-aged women” (2011, p. 162) she draws the readers’ attention to a significant difference between a dream seen as a goal or as a fantasy. John C. Maxwell (2014, p. 72) notices the same thing and divides dreamers into two groups: “fantasists” and “builders of dreams.” Fantasists are characterized by the fact that they count on luck that should help them achieve their goal. They also have exorbitant expectations and try to minimize the worth of their work as much as possible. Moreover, fantasists often use pretexts, look for excuses and isolate from people surrounding them. They also have one more feature: they prefer to wait and not to act as they are afraid of taking a risk. They prefer to shoulder responsibility to others. It is worth noticing that such an approach to realising one’s dreams is close to the understanding of passivity in Transactional Analysis. It is understood as lack of acting or acting that is not directed towards any goal in a situation one has to take a decision facing a problem. Passivity is also defined as an attempt to shoulder responsibility for one’s lack of ability to handle a problem to one’s surroundings (Stewart, Joines, 2009, pp. 173–177). The so-called “builders of dreams” constitute a second category distinguished by J.C. Maxwell. They are disciplined and focused not much on the goal but on the way to achieving it. They think critically. They always go out of their way to achieve their goal. They generate a lot of energy, which favours group work. Builders of dreams take full responsibility for their actions and they are not afraid to take a risk (Maxwell, 2014, p. 72). Duccio Demetrio (2006, pp. 141–142) approached the matter of human dreams in a similar way as he thinks that dreams are nothing else but a certain projection of a human being, illustrating and showing their very own future. The author emphasizes that a vision is constantly waiting to be realized

by a given dreamer. However, it goes without saying that a path one has to cover in order to realise certain dreams often has to be linked with overcoming numerous adversities of everyday life. Thus, D. Demetrio emphasises how important one's mobilisation on the way to achieve a given goal is. Kazimierz Obuchowski believes that while fulfilling our dreams "[...] we do not expect anything from anyone. We do it for ourselves, but not as an act of proving oneself or emphasising our value. That would be egoistic. We do so as we should behave like that. And it is the only reason. The only reason to live" (Obuchowski, 1993, p. 181). This sentence illustrates well how important dreams are or should be in every person's life.

Another research inspiration is a publication by Małgorzata Piasecka (2020, p. 180), who, in a metaphorical and meaningful way tried to "show a transition from perceiving dreams as utopia to understanding them as heterotopia." On the other hand, Agnieszka Majewska-Kafarowska (2012, pp. 43–51) in her work asks a question whether dreams are subject to categorization of time in the context of age, mainly focusing on characterizing dreams of older people. Olga Czerniawska presents a similar approach. Writing about dreams she addresses their specificity in older people. She quotes a key sentence in her discussion: "One is not old as long as dreams win over complaints and regrets" (2010, p. 107). The author claims that this sentence carries a message that simultaneously emphasizes that human dreams are "[...] a desire, thought, something pleasant, desirable, good, nice, fantastic." These words definitely make us believe that the concept of dreams is associated above all with something very positive, giving people a hefty doze of hope for "better future," something that everyone strives to achieve.

Taking into account the aforesaid inspirations and appreciating the value of dreams for every person, the authors of this publication made an attempt to develop a categorization of human dreams taking into account the respondents' age and sex. Additionally, during their research a new variable turned out to be significant, namely the way the research was conducted to obtain the respondents' declarations, which is also characterized below. The research constituted the first stage of exploration. In the future, the authors plan on dream analysis in connection with the concepts drawn from Transactional Analysis, including the concept of passivity and cathexis of ego states.

## **Methodology of own research**

The leading topic of the research conducted by the authors is human dreams categorisation. 106 people took part in the research, including 86 women and

20 men of different age. The analyses conducted were to give answers to two research problems:

P1. What are the differences between women's and men's dreams?

P2. What are the differences in the respondents' dreams taking into account their age?

The research was conducted in the form of open questions offering the respondents an opportunity to form their answers about their dreams the way they liked. These responses were subsequently categorized and imported into the programme ATLAS.ti 8, which let the authors create the so-called "word clouds" illustrating the frequency with which particular key words occurred. Thanks to this approach, it was possible to determine differences among chosen variables.

Due to the current pandemic of Covid-19, the collection of data in a traditional way was seriously limited. Taking this into account, the authors also decided to use an online questionnaire system. The questionnaire system Lime Survey developed at Jan Dlugosz University in Czestochowa was implemented to that aim. It was supposed to broaden the range of research respondents and obtain as much verified and credible data as possible. However, while analysing all the results collected, the authors noticed certain intriguing differences in the respondents' answers linked with the way the data was collected. Due to that fact, the authors decided to study the results obtained both with the help of solely traditional questionnaires and those coming from online questionnaires more thoroughly. The authors decided to take into account the conclusions drawn and place them in their paper, emphasizing that it is only an additional variable.

## **Analysis of research results**

### **Categories of human dreams**

First of all, all the respondents' answers were analysed. Based on the analysed written material, common features of the responses were singled out and dream categories were defined.

Creating the questionnaire, the authors took into account 13 categories of human dreams, pointing to the following dream areas: material (a new car, house/ lottery win/ lots of money), travelling, career (studies/ job), professional development, relations with one's partner, health, children's future, passion, one's own future, happiness, peace (free time/ feeling of calmness, peace), animal/ pet, change of reality.



biggest number of the respondents' utterances, which constitutes 32% of all the answers. Thus, it is worth marking the most characteristic responses in this area. Let us give an example of one respondent's answer: *To be happy and free. To have a beautiful house full of safety and love...* People dream of being able to say that they are happy. However, everyone understands the concept of "happiness" in a different way. For some, "happiness" is health or having a family, for others it might be connected with fulfilling their material needs such as having a house, a car or distant travels. For one of the respondents happiness is *Happy future, above all*. On the basis of the conducted research, it is not always possible to determine whether the respondents had in mind material or immaterial categories of happiness. Certainly, this area would be worth a more thorough analysis. To realise the aims of this study it was important to catch the very first thought accompanying a given respondent in connection with the concept of happiness.

Later on, the respondents pointed to the following categories of dreams: "family", "health", "life", "work", "travels", "children", "love" and "money". It could be assumed that everything contributes to the happiness of the charges. Dreams about "family" were pronounced by 28 male and female respondents, which constitutes 26% of the sample in question. One of the respondents talked about his dream in the following way: *So I can provide myself and my family with everything they need to be happy. Not only financially, but supporting them in their actions*. It is worth paying attention to the fact that in case of this respondent happiness has both a psychological (support for family members) and typically material (financial) dimension. Another respondent dreams about her family in this way: *Let my children and grandchildren to be healthy and happy*. In case of this respondent, it can be noticed that her dream about the family is combined with other dream categories, i.e. health and happiness. It demonstrates that these dream categories overlap and frequently have something in common.

Dreams about "health" were uttered by 20 people, who constitute 19% of the sample. The words of one respondent dreaming about health go as follows: *Let my whole family be healthy and happy*, which once again shows ambiguity in the dominating dream category, i.e. "happiness". In this case, happiness is directly associated by the respondent with the physical state of one's body. The charge in question dreamed not only about health for herself, but also for other family members. Only then should she be happy. The next respondent's answer is similar: "Health for myself and my family." The woman shall be happy provided that both she and her family are healthy.

14 respondents pronounced dreams about life, which constitutes 13%. One of the respondents said: *To have a house at the lake and peace and quiet*. Life in peace would make that person's life desirable, happy existence they dream

about. Similarly to the analysis performed above, once again dream categories merge and demonstrate pursuit of happiness.

For 16 people (i.e. 15% of the studied group), happiness was connected with the category of "work". One of the respondents claimed that *My work is at the same time my greatest passion*. When one's work is one's passion, it is done much more easily and with greater pleasure. As a result, a person is working with better efficiency and enjoys what they do more. People work in different places and have different experiences. Dreaming about work, everyone has got different priorities. For some, it is important what they do and to get fulfilled in what they do, for others their relations with their workmates and boss are the key, whereas for other people a salary is the most important aspect. However, a big number of people dream about all these aspects together. Once their dreams are fulfilled, they are happy. Another example is a respondent's answer as she dreams about *Professional fulfilment and earning a lot of money at the same time*. That dream illustrates well a few aspects of human dreams concerning work.

Dreams about travels were pronounced by 19 respondents, constituting 18% of the studied group. Travels can be trips or longer journeys. One can use different means of transport: a car, plane, bike but one can always travel on foot. While traveling people want to discover new places, explore the world, change the landscape and their surroundings, get to know new people to share ideas or experiences. The aforesaid motifs and forms of travelling are present in the respondents' statements. Thus, one respondent dreams about *Travelling around the world*. This dream is not easy to fulfil, but it is not impossible either. To make that dream come true though, one needs appropriate preparation, a lot of time and the respondent's determination. It would be worth studying and checking how realistic the respondent is about fulfilling this dream. Another example of someone's comment pointing to travel, which is not that distant and easier to organize, is one respondent's dream *About a trip to Bavaria*. The respondent has got a chosen trip destination, she knows where she would like to go. Dreaming about travels one may desire many different things. Yet, one has to pay attention whether these dreams are realistic or are just a form of fantasy (Kałużna-Wielobób, 2010, p. 5).

Another dream contributing to one's happiness is the desire to have children, which was declared by 13 respondents constituting 12% of the group. Many dream about setting a family. There is a worldly trend that once a couple is married, they shall try to have a child. Yet, it is more and more popular to have children before getting married. One of the respondents dreams about *Staring a family (having children)*. Analysing this dream it could be guessed that the respondent waits for it to be fulfilled. It can be assumed that she is not married currently. On the other hand, another respondent comments on her dream in

such a way: *Enlarging my family, at that moment it is my biggest dream to have our dreamed about, much awaited baby that is in my womb.* The respondent is waiting for delivery, has a husband and cannot wait when her baby comes into this world.

The next category is dreaming about love, declared by 10 respondents constituting 9% of the sample group. Love is a feeling that everyone needs. Thanks to love one can love. One can offer this feeling to one's partner, but also to oneself, one's family, friends or animals. Love is not only loving another person. It is also the feeling of care, a strong bond, safety when the other person is around. One of the respondents described a dream in her comment which is *Meeting a person that will stay with me forever. Creating a happy relationship and family.* It is a dream about love. The respondent would like to form a relationship with a person who shall be present in her life both in good and bad moments. She dreams about a relationship turning into something more serious. Once the relationship is developed, the respondent would like to get married and have children. Another example of dreaming about love is a statement of a respondent who dreams about *Family safety.* This respondent dreams about good and safe family life. Her biggest dream is directed towards others, not herself. Once her dream is fulfilled, she shall be happy. Love in that context appears as the feeling of care towards another person.

The last dream category is money. 10 (9%) of the respondents indicated it. Money is not a goal in itself, but it constitutes a way to fulfilling one's dreams. One of the respondents wants to *Have enough [money] so as not to worry about my family's future.* The respondent would like to provide their family with the sense of material security. It can be concluded they would also like to ensure a good start for their children and their development. Another respondent also dreams about *Ensuring financial support for me and my family.* It can be noticed that while dreaming about money, people want their families to be happy and able to afford more. However, dreaming about money, one can also dream about something material and specific. One respondent is dreaming about *Nissan GTR in my garage.* The dream of that respondent is precisely defined. When he has got enough money, he will buy himself the car and will be a happy person.

It can be assumed that the dreams of the studied respondents derive from unfulfilled needs. While dreaming people desire something and want their dream to come true. Human dreams contain both material and immaterial needs. They can be directed towards oneself or other people. People want to fulfil their dreams, but they often want a better life not only for themselves. They would like other people around them to have better lives, to be healthy and happy. Most often such dreams are directed towards one's family and friends. It is worth noticing in this place that some dreams can have a form of unfulfilled fantasies, whereas other ones can get more realistic due to human

action. In her book entitled *Dreams of Middle-Aged Women (Marzenia Kobiet w wieku średnim)*, A. Kałużna-Wielobób characterizes day dreaming<sup>2</sup> in the way it is understood by Jerome Singer, and she refers to the words of the aforesaid author showing that “even dreams in the form of fantasy that let us run away from reality and are not linked to any plan of realizing them in real life regard and often demonstrate one’s desires and motifs that are the foundation of future goals and aspirations” (2010, p. 13). The author claims that “A dream is a transitory form between a fantasy and a goal. A dream or its elements can, but do not have to, be taken as a goal which a given person plans to realise. Not all goals, even those concerning important matters for an individual are linked with dreams” (Kałużna-Wielobób, 2010, p. 15). Some of the respondents’ responses suggest that a dream is a fantasy as it is irrational, not always possible to come true. On the other hand, dreams which are goals tell us that a dream can be fulfilled when an individual does everything and strives to make a given dream come true. Then a dream becomes a goal, an area of conscious activity. Yet, it is worth wondering whether every person would do everything to make their dream come true. Jakub B. Bączek (2021, on-line: [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1843021185847242&id=492830027533038](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1843021185847242&id=492830027533038), access: 20.04.2021) writes that “People give up too frequently if the realization of a certain dream requires time.” Paraphrasing this view, it can be noticed that people often tend to give up something that they would have to devote a lot of time to. They lose their motivation to fulfil and realise their dreams if it requires more effort. Taking into account what was said above, it is worth considering what people’s dreams depend on. The authors of this paper decided to single out dream categories taking into account the studied charges’ sex and age.

### **Dreams and the respondents’ sex**

The main category according to which the respondents were categorised is their sex. 106 respondents took part in the research and three of them did not provide information on their sex. The percentage of women participating in the study is 81%, whereas the men constitute 19% of the sample. As it can be seen, the number of men participating in the study is relatively small. However, taking into account the explorative nature of the research in question, the authors decided to present the results taking into account the category of sex. On the other

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<sup>2</sup> Day dreaming – a range of phenomena that can be categorised as day dreaming is huge – beginning with brief, ephemeral associations triggered by external stimuli, via detailed, thorough memories of past events, fantasies processing data from the past into new-type associations, finishing with predicting future events by either weird or creative reorganisation of accumulated information, dreams and hopes (Singer, 1980, p. 18 after: A. Kałużna-Wielobób, 2010, pp. 12–13).





Analysing the male respondents' answers, it can be easily noticed that the dreams of 4 (25%) of them concerned "money". Comparing this with a general view on men described as strong, resourceful breadwinners, one can notice a strong correlation with that. Yet, there arises a question whether dreams associated with money are really motivated by internal needs or an attempt to meet social expectations. Ensuring financial stability for oneself and one's relatives – a response of one male participant confirms the fact that maintaining one's family and providing it with well-being is an important life aspect for a man. However, there are dreams that project "money" in a broader and more detailed meaning, e.g. *3 million win in a lottery and Nissan GTR in my garage*. 5 (20%) of the men pointed to the aspect of "happiness" in their dreams. It can be noticed that men less frequently connect happiness with family than women do as it occurred only in the dreams of 2 (10%) male respondents. The differences in the women's and men's responses can derive from the way both sexes function (Moir, Jessel, 1993). Men's actions are directed towards a goal, whereas women are more emotional and usually have a higher level of empathy. There is still an unanswered question whether these differences derive to a greater extent from different brain structures or social influence, especially upbringing. Analysing the respondents' answers it can be noticed though that for a contemporary man spiritual and material values are important too. 3 (15%) respondents pointed to the aspect of "life" in their dreams – *To live long and happily*. One can risk a statement that "life" in a broader sense of the word has got an emotional colouring to it and is inclined towards empirical values. Dreams of a strictly spiritual nature were chosen by 2 (10%) men. "Love" and "passion" were chosen with the same frequency.

Comparing the women's and men's dreams, both many similarities and differences can be noticed. Regardless of their sex, people dream about happiness. In both groups one can find dreams relating to family, life and love. Dreams concerning health, children and education were picked by the women. On the other hand, men mentioned God, passion and money. The women's dreams are more directed outwards, e.g. focusing on family. The men more often long for something more personal, focusing on themselves.

### **Dreams and the respondents' age**

The second category that differentiated the respondents is their age. 106 participants were divided into three age groups. The first one contains people up to the age of 30.





spondents. The dream about something not necessarily connected with their own person. The analysis of particular utterances points to the fact that the adjective “my” is most often associated with the respondents’ families, e.g. *Health for my whole family is most important now*. It is also worth emphasizing that this age group is characterized by dreams of a spiritual, religious nature. The respondents mentioned their need of close contact with God and engagement in faith – *My dream is living in peace with myself and my conscience. For me it means fulfilling God’s will in my life [...]*. The frequency of these utterances is not very high but noticeable. It is possible that the “mid-life” stage directs people towards reflections of an existential and mystical nature. People in this age group are at that stage of their life when one analyses their progress and doubts all decisions.

The last age category was created for people over 50. Unfortunately, this group constitutes nearly 10% of the respondents, thus this analysis should be treated as a preliminary one and should be subject to further research. Due to that fact, numerical and percentage values were not taken into account below.



Figure 6

Dreams of the respondents over 50 (n = 10)

Source: own research.

Invariably, the biggest number of dreams concerned happiness. The second place in this age category was occupied by health. It is a value that the respondents in this age group consider the most crucial one. Good health favours longevity and that was the focus of these dreams – *My dream is to enjoy health and live long*. Other choices concerned family and children, followed by grandchildren. It shows that one’s family and broadly understood the closest ones are very important at this life stage. Dreams regarding children and grandchildren are

justified by the fact that there is a time in the life of people over fifty when their children leave their family home and grandchildren are born. This age group stands out with its dream concerning safety. The respondents dream about their family's safety – *I would like my family to be healthy, happy, safe, loved, respected and always together*. The feeling of safety can be disturbed due to the fact that children leave their family home. The respondents somehow lose control over the functioning of their closest family members, and reality they have functioned in changes as well. Such changes in life are often accompanied by fear and anxiety concerning unknown future – one's own and one's family members' who start their independent life. An additional aspect strengthening the need for safety may be the fact that the questionnaire was conducted during the world pandemic. The state of threat lasting for a longer period of time might have considerably contributed to that strong need for safety. It should be noticed that there is lack of any dreams pertaining to one's professional career. It can be linked with the fact that after the age of 50 there one approaches the end of their professional activity and there is time for retirement. One has more time for oneself and more willingly chooses places they have not seen yet. Some respondents demonstrated their desire to travel and to go sightseeing. Looking at the word cloud created from the dreams of the respondents over 50, one can also notice a few concepts regarding the development of one's manual skills – “drawing” and “painting”. The time when children leave their family home favours developing one's interests and improving the skills one had no time for earlier.

Concluding the analysis of dreams from the point of view of the respondents' age, it can be stated that the majority of the respondents simply dreams about happiness. The dreams occurring in all age groups concerned “health”, “family” and “travels”. The group of the youngest participants stood out with their dreams about love. Young people look for partners and want to start a family. On the other hand, the group of the oldest participants was characterized by their dreams about safety. With age comes the time when one begins to appreciate places where they feel safe and that is what they want for themselves and their family members.

### **The way of collecting data and its significance for the results obtained**

The last category of research selected as an additional variable is the one indicating differences in the respondents' responses deriving from the way data was collected. Below one can see the differences between responses given in traditional questionnaires and those collected in the internet questionnaire system.



Figure 7

The respondents' dreams chosen in traditional questionnaires (n=45)

Source: own research.

45 people gave their responses with the help of traditional questionnaires, which constitutes 42% of all the data collected. Word clouds were created with ATLAS.ti 8 programme in order to add up and distinguish particular categories of human dreams. In traditional questionnaires two categories stand out very clearly. The first one is "family" that comprises one third of all the responses. Without any doubt, family is something that many people strive for in their lives, something we care for, worry and think about. One respondent's words illustrate it clearly: *Meeting a person that will stay with me forever. Creating a happy relationship and family.* The concept of "happiness" occupies the second place and occurred in the responses 14 times, which constitutes 31% of the questionnaires collected in this way. In many cases both categories intertwine, creating a unity. *My biggest dream is the future. I would like to fall happily in love, which shall lead to a satisfying relationship, marriage, a big wedding and a bunch of children. I desire a happy relationship, family, so that everyone is joyful and feels positive* – this respondent's comment undeniably proves this thesis. Traditional questionnaires were mainly chosen by the people over 30. It is the time in one's life when children become very important and personal dreams turn into a wish of happiness, health and success for one's offspring. One respondent's words illustrate it perfectly: *So that my children have a good life, are healthy and have fantastic families.* 22% of all the respondents whose participation in the research meant completing the traditional questionnaire have dreams of the same category. Looking at the aforesaid responses, it can be noticed that the word "health" occurs very often. It is the next category of human dreams, which oc-

curs as frequently as “children”. The respondents’ answers pointing to the next category of dreams, namely “travelling”, can be characterized by a certain overrepresentation due to the current epidemiological situation. People’s mobility range is currently very limited, they travel more rarely, they spend time at home more frequently. No fewer than 20% of the respondents select dreams concerning travelling. Let us take this example: *I go sightseeing a lot, but I have not been to Dubai yet – it is my dream, My biggest dream is travelling. I would like to visit different corners of the world.* The concept of “life” was chosen by a similar number of the respondents – about 20% of them. The respondents dream about *living to the full, life in peace with oneself and one’s conscience* and also about *life without problems and worries*. The dream categories from the area of professional fulfilment i.e. “work” and “money” occur in the traditional questionnaires very rarely. Both of them constitute only 11% of all the results obtained with this method and similarly to the first two categories, they intertwine, creating one dream: *Finding a job that can offer me professional fulfilment and decent income.*

61 participants were questioned with the help of the electronic questionnaire system. Referring to the whole number of all the questionnaires collected, this result on the percentage scale equals over 57% of the whole. In order to analyse the respondents’ responses in detail, taking into account given dream categories, similarly like in the case of traditional questionnaires, word clouds were created and the following results were obtained.



Figure 8

The respondents’ dreams chosen in online questionnaires (n = 61)

Source: own research.

The dreams pertaining to the respondents' happiness outweigh all the other categories. The concept of happiness is ambiguous, which has been already mentioned in the context of the overall characteristics of dreams. Happiness often depends on circumstances, different for each individual. However, in the case of the participants that took part in the study, this dream is not usually linked with a particular situation. People just want to enjoy life: *Be happy*, which may mean that the respondents offered their comments without thinking too much about the topic. 18 respondents talked about happiness, which constitutes almost one third of all the responses given by this method. On the other hand, 21% of the participants specified that their dream is focused on their family, referring somehow to the first category, i.e. happiness: *To have a happy family*. People under 30 were in the majority of the respondents offering their comments in a digital way, which definitely could be significant for the results obtained. Undoubtedly, it is the stage of human life when one undertakes actions aiming at one's personal satisfaction and professional fulfilment. Thus, the category of "work" is the third most frequently occurring dream in the questionnaires. It was picked by almost 18% of the respondents. It was most frequently described in the following way: *To finish school and have a good job*. The dream occupying the fourth position was health. It related both to the respondents themselves and to their relatives: *Let me and my family be always healthy*. Health as the most desired dream was chosen by 16% of the participants. Precisely the same number of respondents answered that their biggest and the most desired dream is travelling. The respondents very often used the infinitives "be" and "have" in their comments. It proves that people want to be somebody, become somebody, they want to be happy, important to someone, and healthy. The same refers to the word "have". In their answers, the respondents pointed to the desire of possessing both material things: *To have a house with a backyard* and obtaining spiritual values: *To have a happy family*.

Summarising the above additional analysis of dreams from the point of view of the way the data was collected, certain significant differences can be undoubtedly distinguished. The most popular categories both in the traditional and online questionnaires are the same. These are "happiness" and "family". The number of responses focusing on less frequently represented categories such as "health", "travelling" and "money" does not significantly differ in both cases either. One difference is visible in the categories occupying the third place. In the traditional questionnaires, it is "children" that constitutes one of the most frequently chosen dreams, whereas in the questionnaires completed with the help of the other method this category is not very noticeable. In online questionnaires, the third place is occupied by dreams concerning professional career. The word "work" occurs here twice as often as in the responses of persons offering their comments in the traditional questionnaires. It might be of significance that

using a computer while giving answers might have evoked in the respondents associations with work. At the moment, this conclusion must stay in the area of hypotheses. Yet, it seems that it is worth undertaking this kind of exploration which would reliably display potential differences occurring in the answers of the respondents participating in the research conducted in two ways (here: traditionally and online).

## **Conclusion**

The conducted research made it possible to categorise human dreams. They were divided into 6 categories and characterized by the participants' sex, age and the way of data collection. The research made it possible to elaborate on dream categories occurring in particular research groups. The foreground was occupied by the dream about being happy. If one wants to know what happiness is about, one should try to experience it. Thanks to this experience, one can learn it. Each person defines happiness differently. In Estapé's opinion (2020, p. 99), in order to be happy, people must live their current lives, look into the past with humbleness and forgiveness, and see the source of hope in the future. It shall let them look happily at the world. Happiness is linked with certain permission and consent for changing the way in which one perceives the world. In the category of "happiness" one can equally place categories of different quality, which emerged during the data analysis in this research. It demonstrated that more detailed categories such as dreams of a material nature, passions, professional development, family and health are components of the biggest one, i.e. happiness. Thus, one can wonder whether declarations concerning happiness did not come from people less engaged in the research (with lower motivation to participate in it) or from people who perceive dreams rather as fantasy and do not concentrate on them in any special way.

The presented research constitutes an introduction for further studies based on the assumptions of Transactional Analysis. The authors of the text plan to compare the dream categories, ego states and passive strategies. It can be justified by an assumption that autonomy and a sense of empowerment might to some extent determine a type of preferred dreams and whether one focuses on their realisation or treats them merely as fantasy. Thus, it seems that functioning in the Adult ego state and cathexing the area of the Free Child ego state, especially in the area of Little Professor might cause bigger determination in realizing one's dreams. On the other hand, functioning in passive strategies might make dream fulfilment more difficult. For instance, the overadaptation strategy may be important for the type of declared dreams, and passivity itself may determine whether a given dream is treated by a given respondent like something real and

a goal to achieve. At the moment, these assumptions have to remain hypothetical. Yet it seems legitimate to conduct research based on the paradigm of Transactional Analysis.

In conclusion, the abovementioned research let the authors answer the question what people dream about in a satisfying way. It can be explicitly stated that people want to be simply happy. However, this happiness often manifests itself in different ways.

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## **Marzenia osób dorosłych. Pierwszy etap charakterystyki z wykorzystaniem analizy transakcyjnej**

### **Streszczenie**

Tekst jest raportem z pierwszego etapu badań autorek dotyczących ludzkich marzeń. Celem eksploracji było stworzenie bazy dla charakterystyki marzeń z punktu widzenia koncepcji pasywności oraz uaktywniania stanów Ja w ujęciu analizy transakcyjnej. Przedstawione eksploracje mają charakter jakościowy i wskazują na kategorie marzeń, a także prezentują ich dominację w poszczególnych grupach badawczych wyłonionych ze względu na płeć, wiek czy sposób realizacji badań.

**Słowa kluczowe:** marzenia, kategorie marzeń, szczęście.