

#13 Social Dreaming Matrix: Covid-19 – a year on. Notes from 10th June 2021

SDM 13 – 10 June 2021

Dreams: 10

Associations: 42

Themes and Hypothesis

This matrix felt very heavy. What are the best ways to be in nature and society

Fear of the future – of a less human future, fear of change, fear of doing things differently,

Fear of contamination – hybrids, cuckoos in the nest; Skin- contamination areas

Many metaphors around tigers

The eye of the tiger

tiger connected with India – Movie about tiger hunters – in India they have to have a mask behind their head so that tigers do not attack from behind

Movie The Life of Pi – identity, doubles – the tiger was himself

Icon of Tiger- Tiger = Covid, something violent from nature.

Cat or tiger; real or not? Is the virus real or not?

Men and women – a separation, unconnected – in bed with a man and a baby tiger – distracted from sex by the tiger- matrix also got distracted by the non-dangerous tiger and carried away with tiger metaphor. Libido avoided in the matrix – no creative life.

Imprisonment – what is the nature of freedom? Wanting to be free but also afraid of being free- not wanting to be in chaos and complexity- being cautious: one step forward, two steps back- the life we have had over the last year and a half

Boundaries / Masks – what is behind the mask? We are all wearing masks- ‘I want to have no face’... free from masks, without identity, without race relations

Robots – AI movie- dreamer crying with sons about abandonment for being different.

Opportunities for some – being split up; coming in through the back door; flights now available – those who can fly away from the situation

Reality versus alternative realities- Alice in Wonderland- smoking pot; being where you are supposed to be and at the same time, not where you are supposed to be.

Family through men: fathers and sons.

Female leadership as violent; domineering – Red Queen ‘Off with their heads’; Tiger mothers – pushy mothers. Dreamer felt awkward, exposed.. hiding from female therapist (leader).

Versus women together, being adventurous, full of warmth but again also possibly vicious, playing manipulative games.

Massive uncertainty – we are still in a transition situation in UK- restrictions may or may not change on 21st June- but we don’t know what will happen yet because of Delta variant from India.

Dreams and Associations:

D1: I was in a crowded pub that had just re-opened, pub full of women and very few men. Felt uncomfortable, wanted to get close to the women, but atmosphere felt superficial. Tried to move chairs and women around to talk to each other. Dream went into slow motion like a chess game. I felt very unconnected. Woke up and thought of zoom matrix with its little boxes- like a chess board.

D2: I was with a large group- my family and friends, going into a big house for an event. I was in the midst of family and friends and realised I was in the house of my therapist. The group was going to meet therapist's husband. Therapist was there in the background. I was in awkward position of danger of being exposed to her- trying to keep out of her sight as I was where I shouldn't be but where I should be.

D3: I was getting on a plane with my father. We were very excited to be travelling again. Split up on the runway- I had to get on the plane from the back door and he went through the front door. When I got into the plane there was a door inside separating people who came in through different doors. I could hear father's voice on other side of door but couldn't get through the door. Flight took off.

D4: I was part of a family group- not my own family. Father figure and some siblings and some AI. Big decision by the father figure about generations of robots. I was on the side of the people who wanted survival of first generation of robots- more human like. Other siblings wanted the less human robots.

A1: Anxiously trying to be visible and audible. Shuffling vantage points- moving chairs in pub. Moving chairs to watch and reflect.

A2: Dream about flight- brought back memory of being on flight to Cuba when people were allowed to smoke- strong smell came back to me very clearly.

A3: Dream about flight- I was on a flight recently, most stressful situation in a long time- flight was packed, everyone was very close to each other. Face masks and face shields, long flight- very scary.

A4: Robots and AI- reminds me of the movie 'AI'- I remember it as a sad movie, I cried with my sons watching this movie- abandonment, being left, being different.

A5: Looking forward to my first flight in 15 months- excited for smell of inside of aircraft. With/without mask/ front/back. Getting movement back- which I have missed a lot. Looking forward.

A6: Women together in pub- when I heard that I felt sense of [?] about dynamic among women. Wanting women to get together- sense of warmth. Women together can be so warm, but if not can be so vicious- like a chess game. Dynamic reflected in second dream, and when third dream came I was thinking of the men being separated.

A7: Aircraft in the old days- separation. In the old days, the non smokers were the minority. I remember feeling self conscious to be one of the few people needing non smoking seats.

A8: Woman with family- at therapists' house. Fear around therapist catching something. Fear of connecting/reflecting. Movement, but what are we doing- how are we connecting? Idea of separation between men and women seems to be a theme today.

A9: We try to find labels- older/younger (older/newer robots) smoker/non smokers. What does it mean?

A10: Remembering separation of smokers and non smokers on planes- not really a separation as non smokers would be sitting behind smokers. A named boundary but not a boundary- associated with dream of being on plane, danger with masks and visors. Invisible barriers- are you safe from the virus?

A11: Generational cleavages- father on other side of plane. Therapists- visitors. Generations of AI. Youngest ones are most human- something strikes me as odd about that.

D5: In archaic old house/cave. In bed with a man and a wild animal. Animal turns out to be a baby tiger. I play with tiger to keep it distracted and hold its jaws as one does with dogs to prevent being accidentally bitten. Tiger is very cute and playing along. I realise two things- I am not paying any attention to the man I am in bed with, and the baby tiger probably has a mother. Wake up thinking of Calvin and Hobbes comics- human and play, dialogues between Calvin and transitional object- stuffed animal.

D6: Tiger was stalking a newly built neighbourhood. Mother was complaining about it being a nuisance. Later we see the tiger with a domestic cat. I thought it was going to attack the cat, and cat was stupid to get close to tiger. Grabbed large branch and whacked tiger against side of head. I was upset- why did I do that? I don't know what the tiger has done- just saw it and presumed something was wrong. Felt very angry.

A12: Tigers- made me remember bizarre series 'Tiger King'.

A13: Catching a tiger by its tail

A14: 'The tiger who came to tea'

A15: 'Bitten' by a tiger- what that might mean.

A16: Winnie the Pooh and Tigger. Power bloc from East- The Asian Tigers.

A17: Tigers seem to have been domesticated. 'Tyger, tyger burning bright...'

A18: Tiger/symmetry, association to first dream- chess. Just watched series called 'Hunters' about Nazis and new final solution, set in 70s- lots of smoking. Talk about corn syrup as a way to plant a virus inside people. Ends with Japanese man sitting inside two sets of twins, told that he is the face of tomorrow (connects with Tiger Bloc in East).

D7: Sitting in a local park on a sunny evening, heat was still there but sun going quickly. Watching young people- 18-30, listening to music, smoking weed. Relaxing feeling- didn't want to leave but could feel things getting cooler, grass I was sitting on getting damp and then so wet that it was coming through my jeans. Reluctant to get up and move, couldn't work out what was keeping me there. Woke up.

A19: 'The Life of Pi'- about Indian boy caught on small boat with tiger and wild animals. Illusions he experiences on his journey. Wondered what 'pi' was about- pi is golden ratio.

A20: Series 'Hunters'- shows violence visited on Nazis by Jewish Nazi hunters, thinking of Middle East and a friend of mine flying to Israel- so much security, but now we have the pandemic. So many tests on aircraft.

A21: Chess- 'Alice in Wonderland'- people polarised against each other in a game. Israel/Palestine.

A22: Movie- 'Three Identical Strangers'- identical triplets separated at birth in experiment in US in 60s and 70s.

A23: 'I was where I shouldn't be but where I should be'- one step forward, two steps back. The path we're on becoming more humanistic. Are we going to [?] or let our tigers out?

A24: Questioning of boundaries, animals, humans, robots, fathers and sons, patients and therapists- questions of boundaries

D8: I was walking where I used to work with a colleague. Passed a group of houses which looked like beautiful Georgian houses recently restored. 'That's the new Pentonville Prison'. Didn't look like a prison but saw a plaque on the wall. Went into the prison, about to be given a presentation or do some consultancy. Like a house- entrance hall had a bar, receptionist behind bar, people drinking beer- they were prisoners/ Governor appeared and asked what we were doing. 'Ah yes I remember now, you should have come earlier.' Governor dressed very smartly. Door led into dark territory in house, people came out of glass door- they were prisoners too. Some had beer. Colleagues came in to watch presentation- wearing sporting jackets. Pulled out beer glass under jacket. Why should it be in a house? All usual distinctions were now in question.

A25: Animals/robots- thinking about hybrid experience.

A26: Dream about prison reminded me of dream last week- walking through deserted street. Blue light, no sound, no one around. Suddenly heard voice up close. Colleague standing on a tall ladder. Took ourselves through the window of a house. House occupied by students- curious and want to join them. They let us in through broken window. Sleeping bags- everyone is asleep. Feels like a prison.

A27: Tiger- [Tipu's tiger] automaton in V&A museum taken from India after Sultan who had had it made was defeated. Meaning of artefacts changes. Originally it was made to demonstrate hatred of East India Company. Now it is in Britain, it demonstrates supremacy of British forces over native people. Listening to radio this morning, hearing discussion about whether Boris Johnson should go for a swim in Cornwall to demonstrate masculinity. Demonstrative- preoccupation/concern with what this will look like- demonstrates strength to putative enemies.

A28: Themes of tigers and chess- lovely little book published some time ago 'Chess for Tigers'- playing person opposite, not just position. About politics, legal but dirty tricks on chessboard. Parallel to things played out by politicians and people in power today.

A29: 20 years ago, walking down hallways of Parliament, towards terrace on Thames, champagne reception about 'New ways of working'. Surprised at seeing swastikas on paintings on hallway to realise they were old Indian sun symbols- on such prominent display- surprised.

A30: Partial solar eclipse today.

A31: Asian tigers- Japanese face as face of future- felt fear. Fear of being recognised with my Asian face, living in England. Previously looked at as 'boat people'- inferior. Rising of Asia, face of aggressor. Puzzled as to how to be with others when I want to be 'one of you'. Sometimes I wish I had no face- and just be me blending in with others, rather than being the face of Asia.

A32: 'The Tiger who came to tea'- children's classic, 60s parents, tiger eats all food and drinks all water- father takes it very well and they all go out for sausages. Gentle and welcoming of the tiger- Esso tiger in the tank- adverts- fossil fuels, plane, how the sky has gone back to birds and streets were quieter, cleaner air- more peaceful and cleaner. Lungs- smoking. Trees are lungs. Hybrids- petrol cars to electric.

A33: Struck with theme of person killing tiger without knowing why- domestic cat and tiger are related to millennia- cats have been domesticated to help us, struck that tiger comes and looks at a suburb and is unwittingly killed. What do we need to learn from our instincts?

A34: Asia- once I would be burdened by being seen as 'Asian'- people from South Asia- India, Bangladesh, Pakistan- but here racism in pandemic is against East Asians and Chinese people. Some people mentioning Japan/Asia as the future- felt very complicated about it.

D9: Japanese and ecological- reminded me of a dream, I was in a house with a group of people- a plant I am growing- supposed to be a pepper plant but realise it is a Japanese radish- I saw three little white radishes growing. Person in group said 'If you want them to grow you have to cut them and put them in the soil'. I said 'But if you cut them they will die'. He said 'No, that's the way you do it'. So I cut them and put them into the soil.

A35: Stems cells which allow plants to grow again. You can graft one branch of a plant to another and grow new fruit.

A36: Dreams with prison- made me think of 'Shawshank Redemption' – one prisoner went through tunnel and sewage pipe to escape from the prison.

A37: Concerned with receptionists in prison that didn't look like a prison- behind the bar. Memory went to Leicester Conference and barman who has seen us all come and go. Strange jackets/strait jackets, prisons and types of organisations we currently inhabit- how difficult it is to get out of that type of prison.

A38: House of mirrors- navigating and trying to get out.

A39: Linking with Margaret Rioch's paper 'All we like sheep'. Sleepwalked into being imprisoned in our homes. Faces hiding behind masks so we can't tell what faces people have. Being seen or not seen. Triggered movie 'V for Vendetta'- uprising community all wore same mask- not sure who was behind the mask.

D10: Flood in a big house- running through water with friends and family- suddenly came into the room which was a mine. Saw water coming from wall, started to dig the wall and saw a man in a completely dark room, locked without windows or doors- he looked like a beggar, miserable and poor. I wanted to help him to leave that room and that state- he didn't want to leave the room. After that, I came to a graveyard. I was holding a coffin- I think he was in the

coffin. I was on a road to carry him, some huge birds held big rocks and threw them at me. Imprisoned parts of us/our societies.

A40: Sisyphus- rolling around a rock with big bird gnawing him- might have my Greek mythology mixed up.

A41: Previous mention of sheep- 'Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep'- basis for movie 'Blade Runner'. Has to do with lots of things we have been talking about.

A42: Recognising this is the time to blur boundaries between men and machine- in love- boundaries between private and professional lives.

Dream Reflection Dialogue:

Contaminated air and smoke- distinguishing between smokers and non smokers if we all share the same air. If we sit behind someone smoking on a plane we will also breathe the same air. Contamination- protection, masks, what air are we breathing?

Facets of boundaries- permeable or impermeable boundaries appearing- eg. Your face isn't a boundary but then becomes one. Ones you don't want to be there but you bump up against

Mask or mirror- imprisonment and transformation between us and society.

Tigers and Chess- playing the person opposite. We focus on how, if the other person is right- how might we live together?

Skin- the ultimate boundary between self and everything else. In Chinese medicine- metal element relating to lungs. Skin also needs to breathe. When functioning well it allows things out and in. Maybe that is something we are all missing in a number of different ways.

Mind keeps going back to youngsters sitting on hillside smoking weed. We have been in constant pressure/ fight/flight whilst imprisoned in our own spaces- very difficult for a lot of people. Capacity to step out of that, not to be right or wrong, to step into liminal spaces is so important at the moment.

Reminds me of this group also.

Something around theme of experience of the last year forcing one to question the boundaries. Difficulty of wearing masks- if we don't wear them all the time, a challenge of Zoom therapy is that they can no longer assume masks that people wear eg. clothing, where they work- what the patient is able to see. Difficult for people starting out to meet this challenge because mask is no longer available in the way it used to be. What will happen when everyone goes back?

Preoccupied with theme of 'Asian'- feeling disenfranchised, discriminated against, Asian Tigers- problematic, becomes for everyone in the matrix- different parts that are powerful and discriminated against at the same time. How to reconcile/integrate those thoughts?

Lion and tiger both being cats- tiger is a very strong symbol connected with Asia. Lion symbol of British Empire. Thought of Tarot Card 'The Strength' - woman struggling with lion. Territorial conflict and struggle- binary/extreme aspect, not quite clear to me yet.

Part of situation in UK- Covid-19 mutation from India which is very strong in the UK. Europe will have 'green pass' because situation is better there. Not always boundaries, but freedom- as a paradox.

G7 meeting in Cornwall- Biden and others coming in. Long term agenda- what position to take with China. Reminds me of movie 'Life of Pi' - not knowing where collaboration is- where each others strong suits are.

Thinking about weed and need to numb pain/anesthetise something that might be really quite painful.

THEME OF HUMANS AND NATURES. RELATION.

Theme of growth- dream with three radishes being cut back. What is growth?

Radishes are supposed to grow in the earth. Made me think of 'being where you are supposed to be, but not' ... confusion around what is our earth?

What are differences? Sibling rivalry. Three siblings in a family can be so different. We are talking about a family here- Asia and England.

English-ness of this Matrix. Interesting that the word 'Asia' comes up in these matrices.