

# When You Daydream

My project started from a curious personal experience. Since I was a kid, whenever I was in a ride and looked out the window, I imagined a favourite video game character of mine running in parallel to me while doing parkour off of various obstacles. A few years ago, I saw an online post that described the same daydream, and thousands of others in the comments were writing: "I do that too!"; though the specifics varied greatly from person to person. These people had no relation, no common demographic - they were from all over the world. I set out to discover more about these "collective" recurring daydreams; what other shared archetypes were there? What could explain having the same recurring daydream shared with others completely different from each other?

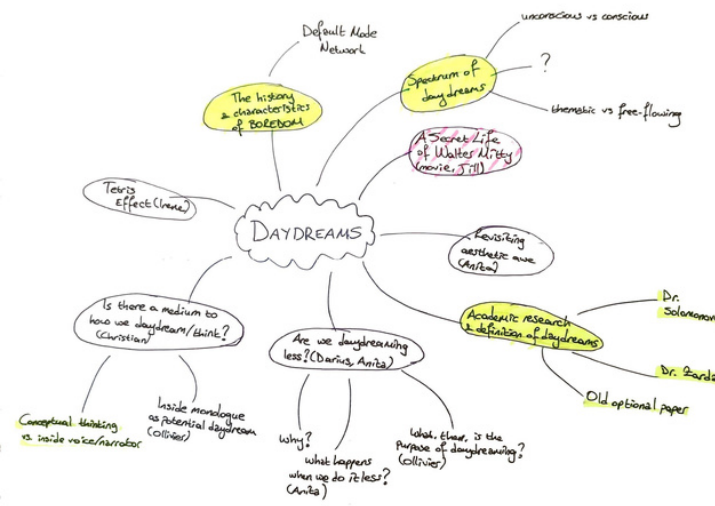
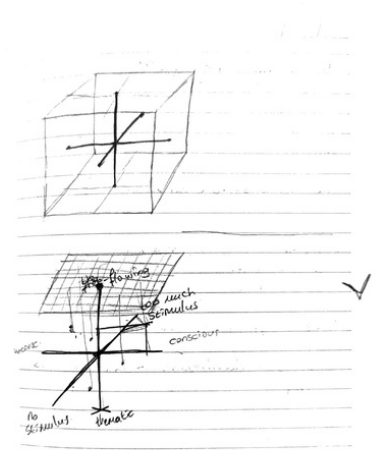
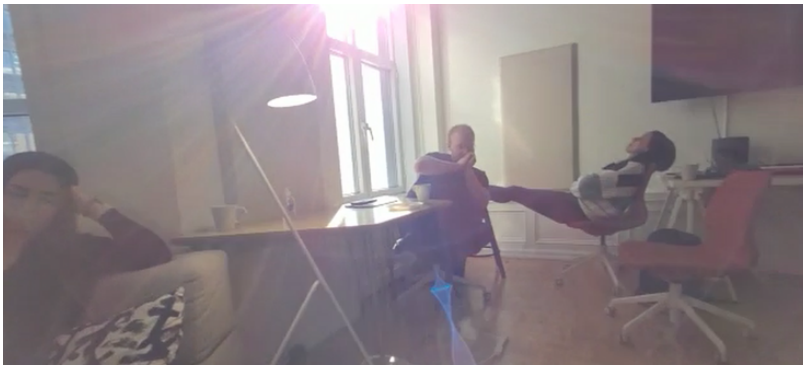
It quickly became clear that some more fundamental questions about daydreams first: What *are* daydreams? Why do we daydream? When do we daydream? Can we daydream on command or does it have happen naturally?

These questions led to a branching of exploration: we talked about boredom, fantasies, our constant drive to be productive, what we look like when we're daydreaming... In the end, I am left with more questions than answers, and I can't wait to continue to explore them all.

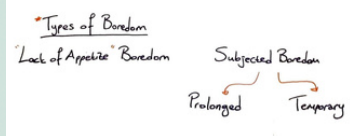
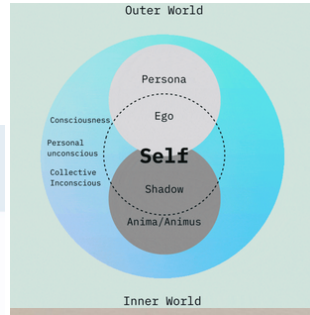
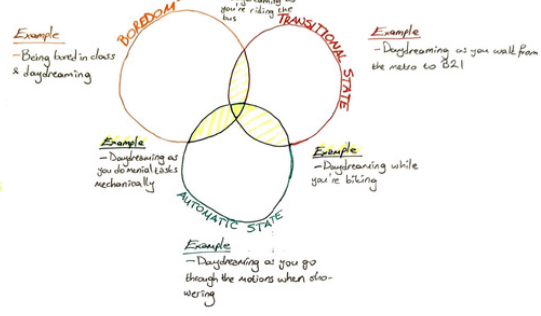
## Some Thoughts....

Although dream and sleep research has uncovered much about why and how we dream when we sleep, the dreams that belong to daylight has had a lot less academic attention to its workings. We are still unsure what purpose daydreaming plays in our lives? Is it simply just practicing our imagination? Is it a way to alleviate our boredom when nothing else is available? Or is it much more important, almost a micro-dose of dreaming that occurs when the brain is sorting out the day's events. We still don't know and I'm excited to look further into these possibilities in the future.

Most interesting about this project was finding out the variety of daydreams people have, and the conditions in which they have them. Some people fidget, some close their eyes while some look around, some only daydream narratively (imagining a possible conversation) whereas others are more visual (such as my "running man" daydream). Some people don't daydream at all.



## When do we tend to DAYDREAM?



- Vacant eyes - fixed but unfocused, looking off into the distance
  - Repeated blinking ?
  - Tilted head
  - Light fidgeting - slow, subtle, rhythmic
  - Gaze unfocused on the speaker - head might turn around towards who's speaking but eyes don't stay focused on the person
  - Lowered eyelids
  - Relaxed posture
  - Gaze often downwards instead of up
  - Subtle movements to indicate they're listening at appropriate moments while gaze mostly remaining unfocused - nodding, smiling
  - Eyes wandering sideways and downwards while the head is stable - no other movement noted
- Edited Nov 18, 2022

**DAYDREAM EXERCISE #1**

- Open eyes = |||      Looked around: ||||
- Closed eyes = |||      Productivity: ###
- Mixed = |||
- Fidget = ###

