

Stratagame Project

What is Fantasy



Aristotele used the term *phantasia* to indicate at the same time a process that generates products similar to external objects and another one that creates contents of purely mental origin. Neuroscience distinguishes the term *Fantasia*, also called *Imagination*, from the processes of *Mental Imagery* production. In fact, with the latter we mean the ability of the subject to mentally represent an object without the related stimuli actually being present in the sensorial and perceptual systems (Paivio, 1971; Kosslyn, 1980; Kosslyn, Ganis, & Thompson, 2006). Instead, *fantasy* or *imagination* can be defined as a set of operations and mental activities involved in creative production.

It can be said, in any case, that the two processes are interrelated. Fantasy is a powerful mind tool that projects us into non-existent worlds where everything is possible.

Children create fantasies that allow them to go beyond their limits. They are aware that it's not reality when they "pretend to" but it's like it is.

Even an adult who fantasizes, has experience and breaks the barriers between past, present and future and lives the illusion of manipulating reality at will.

For Sigmund Freud, fantasy was the way to express dissatisfied needs and desires that otherwise could not emerge. It allows you to activate a divergent thought and a knowledge of alternative reality.

Jung (1948), detaching himself from Freud described a mode of indirect thought, which takes place in images and is moved by unconscious motives. This form of thought is the *fantastic thought* which is present in our dreams and fantasies.

"Imagination is the reproductive or creative activity of the spirit [...] it can be expressed in all the fundamental forms of psychic processes, in thinking, in feeling, in sensory perception and in intuition" (Jung, 1948).

Fantasy is one of the soft skills or "transversal skills" that can be used at work, studying and in everyday life - that need to be continuously strengthened - and need to be combined with one's own technical skills.

This competence can emerge when decisions has to be made, when trying to get out of a difficult situation or when one wants to change something.

A person who has imagination in the working life is a person who uses alternative line of thought and communication and displays new possibilities.

He has the ability to look at a problem from different points of view, to find new, innovative and different solutions, bringing out new personal resources at the same time.

