

The Journal of TransPersonal *Psychology*

VOLUME 45, NUMBER 2, 2013

THE JOURNAL OF TRANSPERSONAL PSYCHOLOGY

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EDITOR'S NOTE

As we conclude our 45th year of publication, we are treated to a few returning authors as well as an array of new ones. Building on their 2009 article on the development of questionnaire subscales dealing with spiritual emergency, **Monika Goretzki**, **Michael Thalbourne**, and **Lance Storm** follow up with the development of a 30-item Spiritual Emergency Scale. Co-authors Goretzki and Storm honor and include their colleague Thalbourne who was an integral part of their research but who passed away recently.

Also returning is **Mariana Caplan**, lead author for a 2003 article that focused on "Contemporary Viewpoints on Transpersonal Psychology." In this issue she brings two new authors with her (**Adriana Portillo** and **Lynsie Seely**) to discuss how the long-standing science and philosophy of yoga can be integrated with more modern "western" research and practice, focusing especially on current somatic approaches that address trauma.

Seminal pioneers who have written articles for the Journal over the years since its 1969 inception also appear in the text and references of both returning as well as newer authors.

First time authors with the Journal include two who hail from the UK: **Edward Dale** whose work focuses on the transpersonal Piaget and **Robin Brown** who challenges the "evolutionary paradigm" and calls readers into dialogue. Finally, Native American researcher **Rockey Robbins** teamed up with colleague **Ji Hong** to raise awareness of the kind of contribution that can be made by Native American folk healers.

Book Reviews focus on the inner life. **Chanell Jaramillo** reviews **Jaganath Carrera's** book entitled *Awaken Inside Yoga Meditation*, which highlights and reminds readers about the importance of meditation to complement posture and breathing in the practice as well as teaching of yoga. **Samuel Bendeck Sotillos** offers a review of *Wisdom of the Senses: The untold story of their inner life*, authored by **John Herlihy**, which illuminates the vital importance and centrality of the sixth sense that serves as integrative function for the five physical senses. Finally, **Jay Dufrechou**, familiar to readers from his 2012 "In Memoriam" tribute article to William Braud, concludes the section by offering an essay review of **Keiron Le Grice's** *The Rebirth of the Hero: Mythology as a guide to spiritual transformation* that intertwines his reading of the book with his own experience and visit with the author, providing an integrated insightful journey into the written text.

As always, Books Our Editors are Reading provides a treasure trove for your continuing inquiry.

Onward to 50 years!

MB

Falls Church, VA USA

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DEVELOPMENT OF A SPIRITUAL EMERGENCY SCALE

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ABSTRACT: Goretzki, Thalbourne, and Storm (2009) developed ten questionnaire subscales to measure ten different types of spiritual emergency: (a) Dark Night of the Soul; (b) Awakening of Kundalini; (c) Shamanic Crisis; (d) Peak Experiences; (e) Psychic Opening; (f) Past-Life Experience; (g) Near-Death Experience; (h) Possession States; (i) Activation of the Central Archetype; and (j) Experiences of Close Encounters with UFOs. The authors also developed an Experience of Psychotic Symptoms Scale (EPSS). Each of the 10 subscales correlated significantly and positively with each other, and with the EPSS. A factor analysis indicated a single underlying factor that we labelled "spiritual emergency." Factor-scores and the original 84 items were used to create a 30-item Spiritual Emergency Scale (SES), which was internally reliable and demonstrated good psychometric properties. The SES correlated highly with the EPSS, and SES scores predicted psychotic episode and medication use. The SES appears promising for use as a suitable instrument for researching spiritual emergency and related factors.

KEYWORDS: spiritual emergency, spiritual emergency scale, spirituality, psychosis.

Spiritual emergency is a term coined by Grof and Grof (1985, 1991) and used by transpersonal psychologists to refer to a psychotic-like crisis. Grof and Grof (1991) describe spiritual emergencies as "critical and experientially difficult stages of a profound psychological transformation that involves one's entire being" (p. 31). Such crises can sometimes be spontaneous, and can be precipitated by *spiritual* (e.g., mystical, paranormal, meditative) experiences that cannot be readily integrated into the person's psychological framework. A related term, *spiritual emergence*, is also credited to the Grofs who define it as "the movement of an individual to a more expanded way of being that involves enhanced emotional and psychosomatic health, greater freedom of personal choices, and a sense of deeper connection with other people, nature, and the cosmos" (Grof & Grof, 1991, p. 34). The Grofs also expressed the importance that one's increasing awareness in the spiritual dimension plays in the transformational process. More recently, Thalbourne (2003) described *spiritual emergence* as the "emergence of a more transpersonal outlook on life accompanied by increased creativity, feelings of peace, and an expanded sense of compassion" (p. 118). Spiritual emergencies can take the form of

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“nonordinary states of consciousness”, involving intense cognitive, emotional, visionary, and sensory changes, as well as various physical manifestations. Grof and Grof (1991) report that such experiences often revolve around “spiritual themes” which can include episodes of “psychological death and rebirth, experiences that seem to be memories from previous lifetimes, feelings of oneness with the universe, encounters with various mythological beings, and other similar motifs” (p. 31).

These concepts and experiences are very much in alignment with certain aspects of psychosis, but Phillips, Lukoff, and Stone (2009) have argued that conventional approaches to psychosis treatment have overlooked the spiritual experiences prevalent during psychosis. Spiritual experiences in themselves may be doorways or avenues to recovery from the psychopathological or harmful aspects of psychosis rather than mere symptoms, etiological markers, or inhibitory factors conventionally deemed to be counter-productive to treatment regimes. Indeed, in our previous study (Goretzki, Thalbourne, & Storm, 2009), we discussed “the notion that some psychiatric states are opportunities for spiritual growth, rather than intrinsically destructive psychopathologies” (p. 81), and we gave special attention to psychosis, arguing that psychotic experiences may be spiritual emergencies. Consequently, and with a view to discovering possible relationships between psychosis and various spiritual emergencies, we (Goretzki et al., 2009, p. 82) first identified “10 distinct spiritual emergencies”, as described by Grof and Grof (1985, 1991): (a) Dark Night of the Soul (feelings of fear, a sense of loneliness, experiences of insanity, and a preoccupation with death); (b) the Awakening of Kundalini (powerful sensations of heat and energy streaming up the spine, associated with tremors, spasms, violent shaking, and complex twisting movements); (c) Shamanic Crisis (an emergency which bears a deep resemblance to the initiatory crises of shamans—healers and spiritual leaders of many aboriginal peoples); (d) Episodes of Unitive Consciousness (Peak Experiences: an emergency may occur when a person has mystical experience but lacks real spiritual understanding); (e) Psychic Opening (e.g., awakening of extrasensory perception: the frequent occurrence and accumulation of psychic events such as precognition and telepathy can be very frightening and disturbing, since they seriously undermine the notion of reality prevalent in industrial societies); (f) “Past-Life” Experience (an emergency occurs when a strong karmic experience begins emerging into consciousness in the middle of everyday life and profoundly disturbs normal functioning); (g) Near-Death Experience (an emergency involves an unusually abrupt and profound shift in the experience of reality in people who are entirely unprepared for this event); (h) so-called “Possession” States (in these, the demonic archetype that causes the experiences is by its very nature transpersonal and represents a necessary counterpoint to the Divine); (i) the Activation of the Central Archetype (also known as “Psychological Renewal Through Return to the Center”: dramatic experiential sequences that involve enormous energies and occur on a scale that makes these individuals feel they are at the center of events that have global or even cosmic significance); and (j) Experiences of Close Encounters with UFOs (such experiences and apparent abductions can often precipitate serious emotional, intellectual, and spiritual crises).

We then constructed and combined ten questionnaire scales (collectively referred to as the Questionnaire) to measure each of these spiritual emergencies, as well as a 15-item experience of psychotic symptoms scale (EPSS), in order to determine possible relationships between psychosis and the ten spiritual emergency scales. The ten spiritual emergency subscales consisted of between 5 and 13 yes/no items ($N = 84$ items).¹ Bivariate correlational analyses showed that, in general, the relationships between our ten spiritual emergency subscales and the EPSS were strong (for details, see Table 3, Goretzki et al., 2009, p. 87). In addition, all ten sub-scales inter-correlated positively and significantly with each other, thus indicating that EPSS scores tend to be high when subscale scores are high (for details, see Table 4, Goretzki et al., 2009, p. 88).

In this article we extend our findings by constructing a convenient (user-friendly) Spiritual Emergency Scale (SES) comprised of considerably fewer items (30 in total) than the original 84-item Questionnaire with the aim of encouraging further research into spiritual emergency and related factors. We also present the results of independent research using the SES.

METHOD

Participants

A total of 109 persons completed the experimental questionnaire. They ranged in age from 11 to 86 (age missing for 3 persons); mean age = 45 yrs. ($SD = 15$ yrs.). There were 45 males and 64 females. Most participants were members of the local community; they were invited to participate via a newspaper article about the first author's research. All were volunteers, and showed an interest in the area of inquiry.

Materials

The Questionnaire is in two parts: Section 1, consisting of demographic variables (e.g., self-report measures of religious and spiritual beliefs and practice), and Section II, consisting of 108 yes/no questions derived from 84 randomly positioned items from ten Spiritual Emergency Subscales listed and described above. The 15-item Experience of Psychotic Symptoms Scale (EPSS) included such items as: "Have you ever found that the familiar boundaries between people, events, time and space were blurred or not as accessible as they once were?" and "Have you ever experienced distressing voices inside your head that didn't seem to belong to you?"

The ten Spiritual Emergency Subscales measure: (a) Dark Night of the Soul (7 items), (b) Awakening of Kundalini (11 items), (c) Shamanic Crisis (10 items), (d) Episodes of Unitive Consciousness (Peak Experiences: 7 items), (e) Psychic Opening (e.g., awakening of extrasensory perception: 13 items), (f) "Past-Life" Experience (5 items), (g) Near-Death Experience (8 items), (h) so-called "Possession" States (8 items), (i) Activation of the Central Archetype (9 items), and (j) Experiences of Close Encounters with UFOs (6 items).

Procedure

Ethics approval was obtained from the University of Adelaide Human Research Ethics Committee. In order to recruit participants, an article outlining the research was published in a local newspaper, and the majority of participants contacted the first author (and principle researcher) directly via the article. The remaining participants were recruited by word of mouth through the principal researcher or other participants in the study. The participants were informed that the study was an investigation into a variety of extraordinary physical, mental and spiritual experiences. The questionnaires were posted to participants through the mail or sent via email, with the majority being returned within a month. The sample was thus largely self-selected.

RESULTS

Development of the Spiritual Emergency Scale

Given that we started with ten subscales covering a diverse range of experiences, we needed to determine and identify whether there may be a single factor common to these subscales. The statistical procedure of (principal axis) factor analysis was therefore adopted. Our initial analysis yielded a single component that we labeled “spiritual emergency” (see Goretzki et al., 2009, pp. 88–89). This component had an Eigenvalue of 5.72, indicating that 57.2% of the variance in the ten subscales is explained by this single factor (Goretzki et al., 2009, p. 88).

Participants’ factor scores correlated significantly with the EPSS, $r(107) = .76$, $p < .001$ (two-tailed). The 84 items of the Questionnaire were each correlated with the factor score. We selected the 30 items for the Spiritual Emergency Scale (SES) that correlated the highest with that factor score. These were: Q3, Q12, Q14, Q16, Q18, Q21, Q28, Q29, Q31, Q50, Q52, Q56, Q57, Q61, Q67, Q68, Q69, Q72, Q74, Q75, Q79, Q81, Q83, Q84, Q85, Q89, Q90, Q100, Q103, and Q106. The remaining 54 items were excluded simply because their presence in the scale would theoretically have little or no relationship with the spiritual emergency factor. Appendix A lists the positions of these 30 subscale items as they appeared in the original Questionnaire, together with corrected item-total correlations (note that these correlations indicate the strength of the relationship between the given items and “spiritual emergency”). Appendix B is the 30-item SES with items re-numbered (1 to 30) but in the same randomized order as given in Appendix A.

We note that Shamanic Crisis—which loaded most heavily in the factor analysis—also contributed the most items (*viz.*, seven). Psychic Opening contributed six; Peak Experiences, five; Central Archetype, four; three each for Kundalini and “Past Life” Experience, and one each for Dark Night and Possession. There was no contribution from Near-Death Experience or UFO

Encounter. Corrected inter-item correlations ranged from .47 to .72, and all items contributed to the Scale. Cronbach's alpha was a very high .94.

The theoretical range of SES scores is 0 to 30, but the actual range was 0 to 29. The mean score was 14.72 ($SD = 8.52$) (halfway between minimum and maximum), the median was 16.00. While skewness was normal, there was a significantly negative (low) kurtosis, $z = -2.40$, $p = .016$ (two-tailed), indicating a relatively uniform (flat) distribution. Roughly equal frequencies of score occurrence may indicate relatively equal probability that one parameter value will eventuate versus another. By our criterion of setting cut-offs at 1.5 SDs above the mean to indicate *tentative* classification of a "relevant spiritual emergency" (Goretzki et al., 2009, p. 83), we may deduce that scores ≥ 27 suggest spiritual emergency, though exactly what type of spiritual emergency requires further probing, perhaps by clinical interview. Alternatively, the test-administrator can examine what items were answered affirmatively and make a subsequent determination as to which subscales they belong. In either case, the advantage to the researcher is that this tentatively clinical/sub-clinical group is not likely to be smaller than any other in the respective sample as suggested by the flat distribution.

It was also noted that the distribution of SES scores was not parametric, meaning that it did not distribute normally which is usually indicated by a bell-shaped curve. We therefore conducted a Spearman's test which is suitable for nonparametric data. The relationship between the SES and the EPSS was strong, positive, and significant, $r_s(107) = .71$, $p < .001$ (two-tailed). Some researchers would conclude that the two scales are measuring essentially the same thing. We return to this issue shortly.

To test the criterion validity of the SES, we examined the new scale's scores in relation to three measured variables: (a) Have you ever experienced what is commonly known as a psychotic episode? (b) Were you prescribed any kind of medication? (c) Were you actually taking any medication? If the SES is in fact measuring such experiences, we would expect scores to be higher in people who report having had a psychotic episode, who were prescribed medication, and who were actually taking medication. Statistics for these three variables are presented in Table 1. As demonstrated, people who report having experienced psychosis ($n = 20$) scored significantly higher on the SES than people who did not report having experienced psychosis ($n = 80$).

Also evident is the observation that persons prescribed medication ($n = 15$) scored marginally higher on the SES than persons not so prescribed ($n = 91$), and thus the effect size is very weak. Finally, there is a statistically significant difference between the mean SES scores of persons actually taking some form of medication ($n = 20$) as opposed to those not taking medication ($n = 89$), but the effect size is again very small. The SES appears to function in a way similar to that of the EPSS (with which it correlates very highly), inasmuch as persons who score high on the former tend also to report experience of psychosis, as well as the taking of medication. However, the effect sizes, as given by η^2 , suggest that the associations with these psychosis-indicators are very weak.

TABLE 1
Comparison of Scores on the Spiritual Emergency Scale for Three Psychosis Indicators

Category	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Reported psychosis	20	20.85	6.06			
Did not report psychosis	80	13.49	8.33	35.42 ^a	< .001	.27
Prescribed medication	15	18.33	7.36			
Not prescribed medication	91	13.90	8.62	3.53 ^b	.063	.03
Took medication	20	18.55	7.81			
Took no medication	89	13.85	8.48	5.15 ^c	.025	.05

^a *df* = 1, 98; ^b *df* = 1, 104; ^c *df* = 1, 107.

Confirmation of the Spiritual Emergency Scale

Harris (2010) administered the SES (30 items) and the EPSS (15 items) to a sample drawn from the general population (*N* = 37) to determine the efficacy of both scales on a non-student sample. Instead of Yes/No answers, items were scored using 45 five-point Likert scales. Thus, the theoretical minimum and maximum scores on the EPSS are 0 and 75, respectively, and the theoretical minimum and maximum scores on the SES are 0 and 150, respectively.

The scales were found to be positively and significantly correlated, $r(32) = .69$, $p < .001$ (two-tailed). Of those 11 participants who scored high on the EPSS (scores > 50), seven participants (64%) reported mental illness diagnoses, including alcoholism, depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, schizoaffective disorder, schizophrenia and psychotic disorder, and three reported spiritual emergence/awakening (27%). Of those 17 participants who scored high on the SES (scores > 100), seven participants (41%) reported mental illness diagnoses, and eight participants (47%) reported spiritual emergence/awakening. Consequently, the SES appears more sensitive in predicting spiritual emergence/awakening, but is less sensitive in predicting mental illness though it must be stated that these results are to be expected since the SES was designed specifically to identify psychosis/spiritual-emergency, not a broad range of disorders.

Like Harris (2010), a recent study by Bronn and McIlwain (2013) also used Likert-scales for the SES items. They reported significant positive correlations between the SES and positive symptoms of psychosis, spiritual identity, various forms of mysticism, and religious interpretation. Of particular interest was their claim that spiritual emergency is “a distinct and measurable construct, distinguishable from psychosis by its divergent relationship with alolia [poverty of speech], depression, anxiety and stress” (p. 19).

Finally, using the 30-item forced-choice (yes/no) version of the SES, Rooijackers (2013) found, for a sample of 61 participants who reported extraordinary experiences, that SES scores predicted psychosis, $r(59) = .35$, $p < .01$. Two surprising (though hypothesized) findings were that the SES and ego resilience (ability to modify level of ego-control in arousing situations) are significantly and positively correlated, $r(58) = .45$, $p < .001$, and the SES and ‘positive potential’ (“as transformation, beneficial results, and healing after

mental health episodes”, p. 2) are significantly and positively correlated, $r(46) = .44, p < .01$. Rooijakkers theorized that these relationships exist because “those who experience an extraordinary experience, have a more dynamic ego-complex and are naturally more gifted to keep a level of control, display more characteristics of a spiritual emergency” (p. 34).

DISCUSSION

The main aim of this article was to report on the development of a Spiritual Emergency Scale (SES). We showed that this scale predicts spiritual emergencies otherwise referred to as psychotic symptoms (as measured on the EPSS), and it also predicts prescription *and* usage of medication. Recent research (Bronn & McIlwain, 2013; Harris, 2010; Rooijakkers, 2013) has also shown that the SES predicts psychosis/spiritual-emergency.

One drawback of the SES is that it does not in itself tell us which spiritual emergency has taken place in the respondent and, despite the factor analysis, it may be the case that such information is still needed. In our favour, the fact that items from two subscales (Near-Death Experience and UFO Encounter) are not included in the SES is not necessarily a disadvantage to the measurement of our two constructs, spiritual emergency and psychosis. Quite the opposite, having items in the SES from only eight of the ten subscales indicates a practical refinement in the definition of psychosis/spiritual-emergency rather than a loss of information about either construct. Near-death experience and/or UFO encounters on their own might still indicate psychosis/spiritual-emergency of a sort, but we must concede that these experiences may simply be too rare in society for detection in a random sample of limited size. Furthermore, if needs be, the problem of identifying a specific spiritual emergency can be rectified on a case-by-case basis through the investigation of a given participant’s item responses. Researchers should understand that the SES acts as a generalized pointer to the occurrence of up to eight spiritual emergencies in a person’s history. They may also appreciate that the administration of the relatively brief SES, in comparison to the unwieldy 84-item Questionnaire, will significantly shorten procedures in the laboratory in cases where multiple instruments are to be administered to samples.

As mentioned previously in Goretzki et al. (2009), there is difficulty in distinguishing between psychosis and spiritual emergency. We suggested that people with psychosis are a sub-group of those experiencing spiritual emergency, and we argued that people having only spiritual emergency with no psychosis may be benefiting from specific support structures and resilience factors of which further investigation is required. The recent researches by Bronn and McIlwain (2013), Harris (2010), and Rooijakkers (2013), represent steps towards unraveling this mystery. For example, Harris (2010) found that supportive helpers, who were able to provide knowledge and/or understanding about the sufferers’ more spiritual experiences, provided a buffer to psychosis. It has also been found that diagnosed people who have faith in the medical model, are led by that faith to experience “less positive potential in their

extraordinary experiences” (E. Rooijackers, personal communication, August 22, 2013). More than ever, we are discovering the truth and relevance in the statement that “either spiritual emergency is nothing but psychosis, or psychosis is nothing but spiritual emergency” (Goretzki et al., 2009, p. 81), for it is now evident that the labeling of psychotic disorders under the current medical model, and the casting of them in a particular (negative) light, blurs the distinction between psychosis and spiritual emergency. Fortunately, the recent findings of Bronn and McIlwain (2013) may take us in a different direction, for spiritual emergency, although it “overlaps considerably with the positive aspects of psychosis” (p. 23), differs from psychosis by its divergent relationship with alogia, depression, anxiety and stress. We encourage interested researchers to adopt the SES in studies that they may confirm these new findings.

NOTES

¹ We acknowledged the possible advantages of using Likert scales instead of forced-choice (yes/no) responses (see Goretzki et al., 2009, p. 92). This idea has been adopted by Bronn and McIlwain (2013), and Harris (2010).

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APPENDIX A

THE 30 SPIRITUAL EMERGENCY SCALE ITEMS BY SUB-SCALE WITH ITEM-TOTAL CORRELATIONS

I. DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL SUBSCALE

Q18.	Have you ever lost your sense of reference as your outer and inner worlds dissolved?	.45
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II. THE KUNDALINI SUBSCALE

Q21.	Have you ever experienced the spontaneous production of complex visual geometrical images or chants inside your head?	.40
Q75.	Have you ever heard voices, music or the repetition of mantras, without knowing where they're coming from?	.50
Q81.	Have you ever experienced intense sensations of energy and/or heat streaming along your spine?	.54

III. THE SHAMANIC CRISIS SUBSCALE

Q29.	Have you ever experienced the spontaneous desire to create rituals?	.45
Q52.	Have you ever undertaken a powerful inner experience that involved a journey into another world?	.57
Q56.	Have you ever had the ability to move into and out of non-ordinary states of consciousness at will?	.53
Q67.	Have you ever developed a deep change in consciousness during which you lost contact with everyday reality?	.45
Q79.	Have you ever experienced insights and/or visions, in which you received secret or sacred teachings and healing powers to take back to the "ordinary" world?	.56
Q85.	Have you ever spontaneously attained profound insights into the nature or reality?	.49
Q90.	Have you ever experienced an increased connection with animals and plants and the elemental forces of nature?	.55

IV. PEAK/MYSTICAL/UNITIVE EXPERIENCES

Q3.	Have you ever had the experience of dealing with something that has a divine nature and is radically different from your ordinary perception of the everyday world?	.56
Q28.	Have you ever experienced the sense of becoming one with humanity, nature, the creative energy of the universe and/or God?	.64
Q50.	Have you ever spontaneously attained profound insights into the nature of reality?	.71
Q69.	Have you ever felt a sense of overcoming the usual divisions of the body and mind and reaching a state of complete inner unity and wholeness?	.67
Q74.	Have you ever experienced going beyond your normal understanding of time and space and entered a timeless realm where these categories no longer apply?	.53

V. THE PSYCHIC OPENING SUBSCALE

Q16.	Have you ever been aware of the presence of spiritual entities?	.48
Q57.	Have you ever spontaneously received accurate information about things in the past, present or future, by extra-sensory means?	.54
Q72.	Have you ever spontaneously gained a greater understanding of the cosmos?	.60
Q83.	Have you ever spontaneously lost your sense of identity?	.43
Q89.	Have you ever been able to see auras around people, animals, plants or other living things?	.50
Q106.	Have you ever experienced a greater awareness of the interconnectedness of all things?	.70

VI. THE "PAST LIFE" EXPERIENCES SUBSCALE

Q31.	Have you ever been overwhelmed by powerful emotions and physical sensations, concerning yourself and others in various circumstances and historical settings?	.53
Q61.	Have you ever experienced living what seemed to be another life, in another time and place, in great detail?	.59
Q84.	Have you ever felt like you have personally witnessed detailed sequences of events taking place in other historical periods and/or cultures that you have had no previous exposure to?	.61

VIII. THE "POSSESSION" STATES SUBSCALE

Q12.	Have you ever had the need to fight off or try to control the actions of a negative being or entity?	.55
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IX. THE CENTRAL ARCHETYPE SUBSCALE

Q14.	Have you ever experienced rich connections with mythological symbols from ancient history?	.43
Q68.	Have you ever experienced a visionary state taking you back through your own history and that of mankind to creation?	.37
Q100.	Have you ever been aware of a cosmic battle being played out between the forces of good and evil or light and darkness?	.48
Q103.	Have you ever experienced the destruction of an old sense of identity followed by rebirth and a renewed purpose for living?	.50

APPENDIX B THE SPIRITUAL EMERGENCY SCALE

Introduction: This research is seeking information about extraordinary experiences that occur in the natural, un-intoxicated state, so it is important that you do not include those instances when you may have been under the influence of drugs.

Instructions: Circle 'Yes' or 'No' for each item. Raw score is total count of 'Yes' answers.

1.	Have you ever lost your sense of reference as your outer and inner worlds dissolved?	Yes / No
2.	Have you ever experienced the spontaneous production of complex visual geometrical images or chants inside your head?	Yes / No
3.	Have you ever heard voices, music or the repetition of mantras, without knowing where they're coming from?	Yes / No
4.	Have you ever experienced intense sensations of energy and/or heat streaming along your spine?	Yes / No
5.	Have you ever experienced the spontaneous desire to create rituals?	Yes / No
6.	Have you ever undertaken a powerful inner experience that involved a journey into another world?	Yes / No
7.	Have you ever had the ability to move into and out of non-ordinary states of consciousness at will?	Yes / No
8.	Have you ever developed a deep change in consciousness during which you lost contact with everyday reality?	Yes / No
9.	Have you ever experienced insights and/or visions, in which you received secret or sacred teachings and healing powers to take back to the "ordinary" world?	Yes / No
10.	Have you ever spontaneously attained profound insights into the nature or reality?	Yes / No
11.	Have you ever experienced an increased connection with animals and plants and the elemental forces of nature?	Yes / No
12.	Have you ever had the experience of dealing with something that has a divine nature and is radically different from your ordinary perception of the everyday world?	Yes / No
13.	Have you ever experienced the sense of becoming one with humanity, nature, the creative energy of the universe and/or God?	Yes / No
14.	Have you ever spontaneously attained profound insights into the nature of reality?	Yes / No
15.	Have you ever felt a sense of overcoming the usual divisions of the body and mind and reaching a state of complete inner unity and wholeness?	Yes / No
16.	Have you ever experienced going beyond your normal understanding of time and space and entered a timeless realm where these categories no longer apply?	Yes / No

17.	Have you ever been aware of the presence of spiritual entities?	Yes / No
18.	Have you ever spontaneously received accurate information about things in the past, present or future, by extra-sensory means?	Yes / No
19.	Have you ever spontaneously gained a greater understanding of the cosmos?	Yes / No
20.	Have you ever spontaneously lost your sense of identity?	Yes / No
21.	Have you ever been able to see auras around people, animals, plants or other living things?	Yes / No
22.	Have you ever experienced a greater awareness of the interconnectedness of all things?	Yes / No
23.	Have you ever been overwhelmed by powerful emotions and physical sensations, concerning yourself and others in various circumstances and historical settings?	Yes / No
24.	Have you ever experienced living what seemed to be another life, in another time and place, in great detail?	Yes / No
25.	Have you ever felt like you have personally witnessed detailed sequences of events taking place in other historical periods and/or cultures that you have had no previous exposure to?	Yes / No
26.	Have you ever had the need to fight off or try to control the actions of a negative being or entity?	Yes / No
27.	Have you ever experienced rich connections with mythological symbols from ancient history?	Yes / No
28.	Have you ever experienced a visionary state taking you back through your own history and that of mankind to creation?	Yes / No
29.	Have you ever been aware of a cosmic battle being played out between the forces of good and evil or light and darkness?	Yes / No
30.	Have you ever experienced the destruction of an old sense of identity followed by rebirth and a renewed purpose for living?	Yes / No

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NEO-PIAGETIAN TRANSPERSONAL PSYCHOLOGY: A NEW PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT: Transpersonal aspects of development show potential to complete Piaget's project. At both the beginning and the end of his career Piaget showed an interest in transpersonal themes, which he approached through the theory of "immanentism;" in the present age he would have been classed amongst transpersonalists. In Piaget's genetic epistemology both evolution and development progressed in Hegel-like manner towards an ever-increasing ultimate value, in a manner which foreshadowed "participatory" approaches to transpersonal psychology. Neo-Piagetian psychology argues that an individual could be at different stages of development for different tasks. Echoing this trajectory, it is suggested that lines of meditative development pass through shared stages at independent rates. Lines of meditative development also aid the unfolding of aspects of ordinary ego development. The article identifies an alternative to the hierarchical neo-Piagetian transpersonal psychology offered by Alexander, Commons, Kohlberg, Sinnott, and Wilber.

KEYWORDS: transpersonal, transpersonal development, neo-Piagetian, Piaget, meditation, contemplation.

Piaget is perhaps one of the most influential figures in the history of psychology. His model of the development of the stages of representational cognition (described later in the article) has provided the basis for educational curricula around the world.¹ Yet his focus was really something much greater: in fact, his project had plenty in common with today's transpersonal paradigm, but this aspect of his work was never completely fulfilled. This failure was due in large part to a lack of a developed transpersonal paradigm in the literature for most of his career. Piaget was in no position to benefit from the integration of Eastern and Western thinking that began approximately in the 1970s, but only intensified in the 1990s, and has intensified again since the year 2000.

The transpersonal nature of Piaget's vision might be unknown to researchers who are nonetheless conversant with parts of his approach. For the young Piaget (1916, 1918, 1928, 1929, 1930), as well as for the later Piaget (e.g., 1983), especially in informal discussions (e.g., Bringuier, 1980), the development of the individual was considered to be concomitant with the growth of the felt experience of "value." Evolution and ontogeny constituted a progression towards something like the Hegelian Absolute or the Platonic Good (though this was most often expressed through the philosophy of Bergson, who identified the traditional notion of God with the evolutionary process of life itself.) This trajectory culminated in the experience of "immanence," a self-transcending absorption into the stream of life. About this experience, Piaget (1929, p. 39) wrote "whenever the unifying action of love overcomes the ego,

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then the conscience has the experience *sui generis* of harmony with thought which is the mystical experience supreme.” God was immanent in the world, and came into being concomitantly with human self-knowledge (especially the higher forms of self-knowledge).

Successful development involved more than the development of the logico-mathematical truths of representational cognition and science, for which he is well known; in fact, Piaget’s interest in representational cognition was a subset of his interest in the development of the experience of value (Chapman, 1988; Müller, Carpendale, & Smith, 2009). Piaget’s early writing (e.g., 1918) was concerned with the reconciliation of truth and value in the individual and the reconciliation of their cultural forms—science and religion—in wider society. The ideal equilibrium that the individual could attain was the experience of ultimate value, which inspired religiously or mystically flavoured language. The Absolute or the Good constituted the realisation of ideal equilibrium in the individual. This wider concern situates Piaget more comfortably in the company of Plato, Kant, and Hegel than with other twentieth century psychologists including Skinner and Freud.

In 1918 Piaget was writing, “to struggle for the good and the true is thus, in the fullest sense of the word, to collaborate with God” (Piaget, 1918, p. 85). Although Piaget toned down the use of spiritual sounding language in his writing at later dates, still he stated in informal discussions with Bringuier, “to believe in the subject is to believe in the spirit” (Piaget in Bringuier, 1980, p. 51). Expression of these spiritual themes was by now explicitly divorced from theological terminology, a position underlined in Piaget (1971, 1983), where a teleological view of evolution was rejected in favour of contemporary teleonomy, and the unfolding of life and consciousness into truth and value was explained in terms of the on-going emergent properties of complex biological systems. Piaget’s 1952 autobiographical essay (Piaget, 1952) dismissed his early interest in religion per se, but still stated that the early writings contained the central ideas of his life work. It seems that, despite his success, Piaget asked greater questions than he could answer.

BACKGROUND AND THEMES

The aim of the article is to outline a synthesis of Piagetian, neo-Piagetian, and transpersonal themes with the hope of both extending the range of issues to which Piagetian theory can eloquently contribute, while suggesting some new hypotheses concerning the nature of transpersonal development. The article explores three hypotheses (I will describe these briefly, and then define the terms in them over subsequent paragraphs): First, that lines of contemplative development echo the form and the dynamics of lines of neo-Piagetian development and consequently that much overlap exists in the growth of the two. (There are many forms of contemplation, but for the purposes of this article the focus will be on meditation.)² Secondly, the lines of meditative development affect the development of other lines so that the development of the whole individual can be aided through the practice of meditative exercises.

Third, the individual converges on greater knowledge of a shared spiritual reality across life, in an extension of the convergence of the individual on knowledge of physical reality.

Stages, Tasks, Contents, and Lines

Piaget is usually presented in a simplified general form involving four stages of cognitive ability, through which all or most individuals pass. These are the *sensorimotor stage* (understanding the world primarily through physical action), the *preoperational stage* (understanding the world primarily through the use of basic language), the *concrete operational stage* (understanding the world primarily through relations between concrete entities), and the *formal operational stage* (understanding the world primarily through relations between abstract entities). Both “contents” and “tasks” could advance through these stages. Contents refer to general cognitive areas like number, quantity, weight, etc. Tasks are more specific and refer to processes which are conducted using apparatus. For example the balance beam task involves predicting changes in the balance of the beam following the movement of weights positioned on the beam; hence the general content of weight is investigated through the balance beam task. Similarly, the water container task involves predicting the level of water in a container when water is poured in from a second container of differing shape; hence the general content of volume is investigated through the water container task. Contents and tasks are specific forms of the general notion of a “line.” A line in psychology is any developmental facet which undergoes progression over time. Mathematical ability, moral reasoning skills, musical ability, or sporting skills can all be considered examples of lines of development. Piaget’s interpreters generally presented him as believing that the same child would be at the same stage for all lines of development at a particular age, and hence development was said to progress in “synchrony” across contents and tasks. I say that this was his interpreters view rather than his own, as there is debate as to what Piaget really believed (see below).

Asynchronous Development and Neo-Piagetian Psychology

Piaget’s work was highly influential, but underwent considerable challenge beginning in the 1970s and intensifying in the 1980s. This challenge was based around the idea that different areas of knowledge progressed at different rates, rather than all areas of knowledge passing through the stages in age-synchronised fashion. Important texts included Fodor (1983) and Gardner (1983), both of whom proposed that different modules existed and that modules developed at different rates. “Modules” are forms of intelligence; for example Gardner identified linguistic intelligence, musical intelligence, logico-mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and intrapersonal intelligence. The term “module” is a synonym with “line” (and line was a phrase that Gardner also used). Modularity was a concept borrowed from computer design and applied to the brain: different areas of the circuit board in a computer performed different

tasks, and the human brain, it was argued, performed in much the same way. There was no reason, therefore, to expect different modules to develop at the same rate, as their functions were not related (Rumelhart & McClelland, 1986). In the evolutionary psychology of the 1980s and 1990s, which relied heavily on cognitive science and therefore on modularity, Piagetian theory was only considered relevant to psychology from a historical perspective. Many evolutionary psychologists, for example Cosmides (1989), were of the position that Piaget's work had no relevancy to evolutionary psychology, and was an outdated approach.

Neo-Piagetian psychology was the response by Piagetian scholars to the challenge from the cognitive science and evolutionary psychology paradigms to the original Piagetian framework. Neo-Piagetian psychology has been described as a synthesis of the original Piagetian theory with cognitive science/evolutionary psychology (Case, 1992). The modular basis of evolutionary psychology was upheld, but the different modules or lines of development were found to each unfold through Piaget's stages (though at different rates), and so important aspects of Piagetian theory were upheld as well. Classic examples of this approach include Case (1992) and Fischer, Kenny, and Pipp (1990). Development was therefore "asynchronous" across lines, rather than synchronised. While Piaget is generally taken as having believed that change was age synchronised across different lines of development so that the different Piagetian stages are achieved at (or close to) the same time for different lines of development, neo-Piagetian research showed that the same individual could be at different Piagetian stages for different lines at the same point in time, and thus development was asynchronous. As an example, a fifty year old university professor taking up the guitar will initially approach the guitar from a sensorimotor/preoperational perspective by learning how to hold down the strings effectively, then they will develop to a concrete operational level through learning set chords and pieces of music, and then they will develop to a formal operational level in which they apply the same generalised musical principles through novel situations and so learn to "improvise" or "jam." Such a person will likely be operating at a formal operational level for the lines of development they use in their job and in their life in general (numerical reasoning, moral reasoning, interpersonal intelligence, etc) but will *still* have to begin from a sensorimotor level when they begin learning the guitar. Hence, as argued in neo-Piagetian theory, different lines of cognitive development progress through Piaget's stages at different rates.

There is debate as to what extent the development of one line can exceed another, but all neo-Piagetian child development theorists emphasise asynchrony as a core assumption. Some of the best known of the original group of neo-Piagetian scholars who have focussed on the independent development of lines include Robbie Case, David Feldman, Kurt Fischer, and Annette Karmiloff-Smith.³ Authors including Flavell (1971) and Jamieson (1973) have argued that the neo-Piagetian versions are closer to the model Piaget actually described, and that the focus on asynchrony across tasks and contents was a simplified and inaccurate version of his theory in the first place.

For example, Piaget argued for “decalage”—the uneven spread of new developmental levels between different tasks and contents, an aspect of his work that is generally underemphasised, at least in undergraduate level treatments of Piaget’s work. If this is the case, then neo-Piagetian theory actually represents a return to the original Piagetian form.

Postformal Development and Neo-Piagetian Psychology

A related but different group of neo-Piagetian scholars have investigated *postformal* development, including Labouvie-Vief (1980), Richards and Commons (1990), and Sinnott (1998). These scholars are said to be neo-Piagetian as they use Piaget’s stages in their theory, but they build on the formal operational stage which is often considered to be the highest stage Piaget recognised.⁴ Some neo-Piagetian scholars address transpersonal themes (e.g., Kohlberg, 1986; Fowler, 1981). Within transpersonal circles, Wilber and Alexander might be the best exponents of this post-formal form of neo-Piagetian psychology. Wilber (1980) for example suggested that subtle, causal, and non-dual stages followed on from psychological stages, while Alexander et al. (1990) described the possibility of stages of cosmic consciousness, refined cosmic consciousness, and unity consciousness forming a progression from earlier psychological stages. But this approach is different to the present article which looks specifically at the independent development of meditative lines through Patanjali’s stages (or their cross-cultural facsimiles) at different rates.⁵ This differential development between individuals and cultures was not a part of Wilber (1980) or Alexander et al. (1990).⁶ The article proposes an alternative form of neo-Piagetian transpersonal psychology, based around the asynchronous development of meditative lines, in contrast to these postformal neo-Piagetian transpersonal psychologies. (But the two forms are by no means incompatible, as discussed as the article progresses.)

Genetic Epistemology

As well as the neo-Piagetian aspects, there are some other aspects of Piaget’s original work which contribute to the ideas in the article: specifically Piaget’s “genetic epistemology,” a term which may not be familiar to all readers, which Piaget used to describe his theory of human development. The International Centre for Genetic Epistemology, the central institution of Piaget’s research project, was founded in Geneva in 1956. The word “genetic” meant developmental and was derived from “genesis” (as in, the genesis of knowledge), rather than from “gene.” Piaget’s work in child psychology for which he is best known is just one aspect of his general study of knowledge in organisms from single cellular genre upwards. The biological base was important to Piaget, a qualified biologist, who continued to publish in biology journals throughout his career. Genetic epistemology was based around the mutual coalescence of subject and object, in a way which echoed the changing reflections of Ultimate Reality, described in participatory transpersonal theory. Neither the individual (or subject) nor the external world (or object) were fixed

or “given”—changes in one produced changes in the other, and vice versa, so that individual and world flowed into being together.⁷ Piaget precurred this participatory turn: the creation of reality by the subject in his genetic epistemology was essentially participatory in nature, though Piaget could not fully extend his system into transpersonal territory in the way that his peripheral work suggested he would have liked. The similarities between participatory approaches and genetic epistemology have received little attention. The analogues that exist with genetic epistemology can reinforce a participatory approach to spirituality; likewise, transpersonal theory can potentially complete Piaget’s original project in a manner which remained beyond Piaget.

CONTEMPLATIVE LINES AND ASYNCHRONOUS DEVELOPMENT

Like representational cognition, contemplative cognition also follows an asynchronous neo-Piagetian dynamic. Different lines of contemplative development (defined below) are developed to different degrees by different spiritual cultures, in proportion to the intensity of training that is put into each line, and this differential development contributes to explaining variability in the world’s literatures of mystical phenomenology. This application of the asynchronous aspect of neo-Piagetian psychology to transpersonal themes is the core expansion that the article makes of the more regular neo-Piagetian transpersonal work, which focuses on postformal development.

Stages and Lines of Contemplative Development

Patanjali’s Yoga identifies three stages of meditative development, *dharana*, *dhyana*, and *samadhi*. These represent successive stages of union with the object of meditation. Both concentrative meditation or “CM” and reflective meditation or “RM” styles of meditation pass through these stages (Washburn, 1978, 1995). CM progresses through concentrative awareness in which a focus is maintained on a particular object, and RM progresses through reflective awareness in which all objects arise and pass away in cognisance without grasping and in an uninhibited manner. Both CM and RM involve attention: CM involves mirror-like attention and RM involves laser-like attention (Washburn, 1995). Washburn (1995, 2000) traces Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian contemplative techniques through three stages. Although Patanjali and Washburn have used the *dharana*, *dhyana*, and *samadhi* terminology to refer only to CM, I have used them as generic terms that apply to stages of meditation commonly encountered in all three traditions. CM and RM can both be considered to pass through stages of attention (whether “mirror-like” or “laser-like”) and in this sense Patanjali’s terms are considered appropriate for both CM and RM. (In fact, many techniques generally considered to be RM, including Vipassana, actually combine both CM and RM. For example in Vipassana narrow or laser-like concentration on the object of the breath is used to stabilise general reflective or mirror-like awareness of all aspects of the mind and body as they arise and pass away

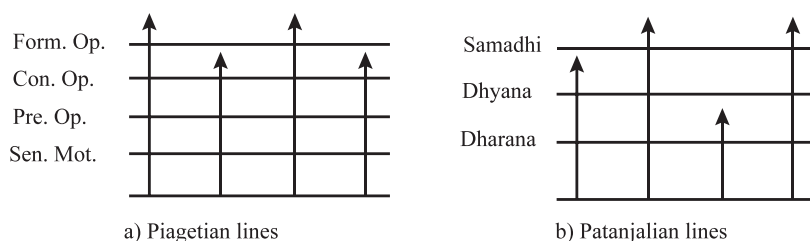


Figure 1. Neo-Piagetian psychologies, personal and transpersonal.

without grasping. In this and other respects the two techniques are not as distinct as is often imagined; general stages unifying the two techniques are to be expected.)

Numerous other lines of introverted transpersonal development can also be identified. (“Introverted” refers to eyes closed, motionless, meditative experience, “extroverted” to ordinary, eyes-open, waking consciousness.) These lines might include the gross, subtle, and causal contents of Vedantic psychology. As these Vedantic terms are usually associated with hierarchical frameworks these lines can be renamed *tactile*, *imagistic*, and *voidic* lines respectively. The gross line (tactile) reflects an increase in the tactile aspects of experience and is related to altered experiences of the body and the manifest world. The subtle line (imagistic) reflects an increase in the visual contents of experience and is related to an intensification of inner imagery. The causal line (voidic) reflects an increase in contentless experience or pure awareness, which is often described as an infinite expanse.⁸ Alternatively, lines of meditative development might be delineated through correspondence to particular techniques of meditation, so that there is a *Vipassana* line, a *Zen* line, a *TM* line, etc.

The tactile, imagistic, and voidic lines show a parity with Piagetian *contents*. The specific meditative techniques—the Vipassana, Zen, TM lines, etc—show a parity with Piagetian *tasks*. So in both neo-Piagetian psychology and neo-Piagetian transpersonal psychology, lines exist which correspond to both contents and tasks.⁹ Collectively the lines which develop through Patanjali’s stages, or facsimiles, including both contents and the tasks, can be referred to as *Patanjalian lines*. In figure 1, the independent unfolding of lines through Piaget’s and Patanjali’s stages is shown. It is thus possible to identify a form of neo-Piagetian transpersonal psychology from the stages and lines identified, based around development asynchrony. Each of the lines of meditative development identified passes through Patanjali’s stages at independent rates, in an echo of the progression of the tasks and contents of neo-Piagetian psychology through Piaget’s stages at independent rates.

The Asynchronous Development of Meditative Lines Across Cultures

Asynchronous development of meditative lines determines differences in contemplative experiences across cultures. Research shows that different cognitive skills, including different contents and different tasks, develop at

independent rates which are dependent on the level and quality of training involved (Case, 1992; Demetriou, Spanoudis, & Mouyi, 2010; Ferrari & Vuletic, 2010; Fischer, Kenny, & Pipp, 1990; Pascual-Leone, Johnson, & Agostino, 2010). Meditation works no differently: the variable literatures of the world's meditative traditions result from the differential emphasis in the training of different meditative skills. For cultural reasons, phenomenologies of imagistic light, for example, are sometimes preferred to phenomenologies of inner darkness (Happold, 1970) and the development of preferred lines is encouraged in students. Cultural polarisations of mysticism therefore exist between different traditions, in line with inherited cultural and religious frameworks. I suggest—using further principles derived from neo-Piagetian research which are discussed more fully shortly—that it is exposure to domain specific stimulus, practice with it, and quality of teaching that determines the level of development of one line in relation to another.

More specifically, the neo-Piagetian author Case (1992) identifies (a) a rich knowledge base, (b) a large exposure to the task, (c) a high level of motivation towards the task, as factors promoting the rapid development of a particular cognitive skill through Piaget's stages. These circumstances are also echoed by Fischer, Kenny, and Pipp (1990). Individual tutoring is also known to rapidly advance an individual line (Feldman, 1994), and this one-to-one relationship is often present in the relationship between the pupil and teacher of a meditative technique (even when a group is taught, individual time with a teacher, exemplified in the Zen mondo or personalised meeting session, is often available). An individual who practises imagistic meditation, like Sikh surat shabda Yoga, will be exposed to this particular content, will practise with it, and will receive specific instructions from a spiritual teacher (traditionally called a guru or master), and so the development of this line will exceed that of other meditative lines. A Buddhist will not emphasise the purposeful cultivation of these states and instead will focus on the nirvanic void, and for her this line will exceed the development of others. The different characters of the world's mystical literature—the voidic line which is the focus of Sunyavada Buddhism, the imagistic line which is the focus of surat shabda Yoga meditation, the tactile line which is the focus of Kundalini Yoga and the chakra system—are explained by the different cultural emphases on techniques which develop different lines.

The differential development of the lines will only occur when techniques are used that actively seek to develop one content ahead of another. Many popular contemporary meditative techniques—including Zen and certain Vipassana meditative techniques—do not do this. Vipassana or “insight meditation” for example, involves an observation of whatever experience is arising and cultivates no line specifically, in contrast to visualisation meditations that focus on the cultivation of the imagistic line, or kundalini chakra exercises which focus on the tactile line. (Indeed, Vipassana and Zen can be considered to develop a general *witnessing line*, which is not a content as such, but the ability to observe any and all contents through RM.) Again, things might come into starker relief when tasks are considered: as an anecdotal observation, a decade of practice at focussing on the breath in Zen practice will not automatically

mean a person can perform Tantric visualisation to the same level, or even close. When effort *is* made to cultivate specific lines, however, those lines develop independently.

The Question of Stages in Meditative Development

One criticism of stage-like approaches is that meditation students often report feeling that, although they progress, they do not experience stages to their progression (Rothberg, 1996). A neo-Piagetian perspective can explain this. Evidence reported in Fischer, Kenny, and Pipp (1990) has shown that performance on cognitive tasks will rapidly accelerate towards a new peak under *ideal learning conditions* in which one-to-one tuition is present. But under *suboptimal learning conditions* a gradual progression rather than a series of more discrete jumps to new ceilings followed by plateaus is to be expected. It is likely that in ideal learning conditions like those found in ashrams the stages of meditative development will be more noticeable than in modern Western “lay” conditions. New ceilings are reached in neo-Piagetian development quickly in ideal learning conditions, while a continuous rather than discrete developmental pattern applies in other circumstances. In the learning conditions of the modern West, without daily one to one tuition, and with meditation just one activity competing for time and focus with other activities (like work and family responsibilities), learning conditions are sub-optimal, and a gradual rather than discrete development might be the norm. In monasteries or ashrams, in ideal learning conditions, with intense effort and with expert tuition on hand on a daily basis, development is more likely to evidence discrete stages, and this is why a number of traditions marked out the path in terms of stages.

The classical texts often describe more stages than the three stages focussed on in this article. This discrepancy is explained by considering insights from neo-Piagetian theory. Both different Piagetian tasks and different meditation techniques involve different sub-stages. Even the four stages usually used in the text books (sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational) were not always, or even usually, the standard presentation that Piaget used. Often Piaget (e.g., 1941) spoke of six stages—reflexive activity, perception and habit, sensorimotor intelligence, intuitive intelligence, concrete operations, and formal operations. The number of stages or sub-stages identified is a function of degree of detail specified. Piaget, Fischer, and Case all break down the solving of specific tasks like balance beam exercises into specific steps. Piaget (1941) identified three particular areas in which decalage might occur: content, grouping, and task: the nature of sub-stages encountered in the solving of different cognitive tasks is often *compelled* to differ from one task to another as the tasks themselves are different. If different meditation techniques are considered different tasks, then the differences in the number of stages of practice that are identified in different meditation techniques strongly parallels the Piagetian development of specific tasks.¹⁰ The Buddhist term *jhana*, for example, is the Pali equivalent of the Sanskrit term *dhyana*, and the Buddhists often identify around eight different levels of *jhana* to meditation

practice (Buddhaghosa & Nanamoli, 1975). The existence of often very different numbers of stages of meditation in the literature is not a problem for neo-Piagetian views of meditation, and finds corollaries in the original Piagetian frameworks. Much as four Piagetian stages are useful in basic accounts but the actual number of stages and sub-stages varies between tasks, so three broad stages of meditation (dharana, dhyana, and samadhi) are helpful as a general orientating framework, but the actual number of stages and sub-stages varies from one meditation technique to another.

A weaker, though still neo-Piagetian, hypothesis would expect a gradual rather than discrete movement through stages, and only a little differentiation in the development of lines. In practice, especially in the modern West, this might be what is most likely to occur; and this description of development might feel more intuitively correct for contemporary Western meditators. This weakened hypothesis might also be the best description of how conventional Piagetian lines develop in practice as well: without specialist training to accelerate a particular capacity, lines of development are usually closely related (Case, 1992), and without specialist training to rapidly accelerate performance to a new developmental ceiling, growth of lines is usually gradual rather than discrete (Fischer, Kenny, & Pipp, 1990). But that both distinct lines and discrete stages of meditation are very prominent in the traditional literature, shows that in non-Western developmental environments a stronger form of neo-Piagetian transpersonal dynamics holds. In fact, development of transpersonal lines show a *greater* potential for disparate development than personal psychological lines: all children come into contact with number, quantity, volume, and weight, etc., and so it is practically impossible to completely isolate an individual line for specific training. But introverted transpersonal contents and tasks are often only encountered through specific training and therefore show a greater potential for isolation.

Some authors question the relevance of stages to the meditative literature, claiming that traditional stage-based compendiums are not intended to be used as practical guides; see for example Sharf (1995). A neo-Piagetian transpersonal psychology would embrace the stage-based meditative literature as expressive of beliefs about how meditative development actually happens in ideal learning environments. That meditative traditions wrote about stages because—in the ideal learning conditions of monasteries at least—they believed that stages were real and important aspects of practical development might be a more natural explanation of why stage-based descriptions are common. But further debate and research is needed to clarify this issue.

SOME FURTHER RELEVANT ISSUES FOR TRANSPERSONAL THEORY

The attainment of meditative states is not just a goal in itself for the spiritual seeker; meditation stimulates changes that resonate around multiple aspects of the individual. In addition to this matter, the important issue is still outstanding: the relationship between the two main aspects of neo-Piagetian theory that are relevant to transpersonal discussion (asynchrony in meditative

lines, and post-formal competencies). The suggestion, explored in more detail below, is that meditation is one activity that can stimulate postformal understandings of the world. Characteristics of postformal development—for example an autonomous moral conviction in the worth of all beings and a willingness to aid them (Kohlberg & Power, 1981), an awareness of multiple realities and the transcendence of Kantian notions of space and time (Commons, 2003), and wisdom in relation to the inherent paradoxes and contradictions in interpersonal relationships (Sinnott, 1998)—are drawn out in the first place, or subsequently enhanced, by the practice of meditation. As well, additional themes are discussed relating to the interface of Piagetian theory—especially genetic epistemology—and transpersonal psychology.

The Role of Meditation in Development

Meditation can aid the development of many aspects of the individual: neo-Piagetian *transpersonal* psychology can contribute to more conventional developmental issues. A discussion of presentational aspects of life can help explain why. The term *presentational* might not be familiar to readers: presentational development is the term used by Langer (1942), Edelson (1982), Haskell (1984), Hunt (1995), and Shanon (2008) among others, and refers to the so called “felt meanings” or aspects of cognition which involve knowing through non-representational means. Representational cognition involves mathematical symbolism, logical symbolism, or written and spoken language: presentational cognition involves expression which is felt through poetic imagery, music, dance, and stage-performance, or inner mental imagery in the manner of dream, day dream, free-drawing, and similar activities, as well as in interpersonal relationships. Presentational cognition also captures the synesthetic unity of the individual, involving the unification of thought and feeling which grows as the individual matures leading to a potential strengthening of conviction in causes and beliefs across the life time (see Erikson, 1982; Pascual-Leone, 1990). Presentational meanings might involve or be expressed through representational thought and language, but also involve a significant affective component, in a way which pure representational thought, like solving a mathematics problem, does not. Presentational cognition acquires the lessons the arts can teach, rather than the sciences. Meaning is derived through absorption in the medium of presentation itself—in the act of mesmerisation or enchantment derived from an appreciation of poetical, artistic, or dramatic performance. The felt meaning of art or literature—and the strength of conviction derived from the truths about the world it depicts—changes over the course of the life in a way which mathematical proofs do not.

A criticism of Piaget’s work is that it lacked a treatment of the affective aspects of development. Although this criticism might not be entirely true (see Piaget, 1981), it is fair to say that Piaget’s work did not treat these aspects of development as comprehensively as it treated representational cognition. A transpersonal approach can therefore inform and complete Piaget’s project. A principle of Piaget’s (1975/1985) model is that the representational lines of development equilibrate to the physical world (the slightly unusual word

“equilibrate” was Piaget’s choice in term). Representational cognition can be tested against the physical world. Likewise, facets of “presentational development,” including affective aspects of development, appear to equilibrate to the interior world of meditative experience.

The practice of meditation creates a point of stability from which calm waves radiate outwards and stabilise experience outside of meditation. This transformation of consciousness, sometimes called *sahaja* is, according to Vivekananda (1901), the aim of Raja Yoga, and is typical of other meditative techniques. It is echoed, for example, in the permanent changes in consciousness which have been observed in TM practitioners in the contemporary world (Alexander et al., 1990). Temporary experiences of altered states of consciousness eventually produce permanent changes in the equilibrium of the self. The openness and spaciousness of meditation moulds the development of an increasingly open and spacious personal presence. Presentational development equilibrates to the openness of meditative experience, much as representational development equilibrates to the physical world. The openness of meditative absorption—the enjoyment and inherent freedom of the experience—provides a cross-modal metaphor to which the personality in non-meditative states is drawn (c.f. Hunt, 1995). It is for this reason, perhaps, that meditation has been associated with the maturation of the personality. If Piagetian and neo-Piagetian psychology fail to address aspects of affective development adequately, then a neo-Piagetian transpersonal psychology can begin to address this. A neo-Piagetian transpersonal psychology would more comprehensively address affective as well as transpersonal aspects of development, in comparison to conventional neo-Piagetian psychology, as it would draw on meditation induced changes in the personality.

Much as the physical world provides an external point of equilibration for representational cognition, the presentational lines equilibrate to the intense felt-meanings attained in introverted mystical experiences. Synesthetic unity in meditative *samadhi* discloses a felt-certainty in spiritual realities which have inspired the great mystico-philosophical treatises. Affective and moral lines equilibrate to this intense, synesthetic, centre of experience; awareness of “God” as inner stillness traditionally translates into the outward motion of charity; the openness of introverted absorption becomes the guiding symbol to which the affective aspects of the personality equilibrate. Internal structures of concern, self-transcending care, and presence more adequately reflect the openness of introverted meditative experience much as logical structures based around object permanence more adequately reflect the nature of the external world than earlier logical stages. The choice to engage with meditation is a later life continuation of the processes of “reality testing” (Piaget, 1947/1950a) through which the child’s construction of reality unfolds. This intense form of reality testing creates a personality increasingly in line with classical spiritual values, moulded into the image of the open expanse of absorption, which increasingly becomes a part of the individual’s reality.

Motionless absorption achieved in meditation is expressed outwardly as care, concern, and presence. In this way, to use Piaget’s own phrase, the emerging

introverted structure is stabilised because it is “reversible,” finding expression both internally and externally. An increasing awareness of unity solidifies the immanence and continuity of consciousness: much as the constancy of the external world is crystallised in object permanence, “subject permanence”—an awareness of the inseparability of consciousness and its objects—crystallises the unity of consciousness and world. A constant sense of consciousness of the subject—a constant presence—cycling through both waking and sleeping experience results, as described in the *Mandukya Upanishad*. Such a continuous mode of present awareness is observed in empirical studies of advanced meditators (Alexander et al., 1990).

Meditation can aid the growth of lines of development which involve the synthesis of thought and feeling like moral development and ego development. This observation has been demonstrated among disadvantaged populations, including prison populations.¹¹ The early stages of moral development appear to be constrained by logico-mathematical cognition: Kohlberg’s (1986) higher stages presume a formal operational notion of the abstract equivalency of all humans (and the equal rights subsequently deserved). When moral development, however, does not achieve the ceiling made available by the development of logico-mathematical cognition, meditation can unfreeze development and raise these lines to an average level, as described by Orme-Johnson (2000).

Meditation, in summary, issues in changes which extend to many aspects of the individual. The result can be the emergence of a transpersonal equilibrium, best demonstrated in Alexander et al.’s (1990) studies. Meditation can contribute to the development of the individual towards the experience of spiritual value which Piaget (1930) described. Neo-Piagetian dynamics can help describe the development of meditative lines within the individual. There is a mutually complementary relationship between Piaget’s work, its neo-Piagetian variants, and transpersonal psychology.

The Relation between the Contemplative and Postformal Aspects

A possible relation between postformal neo-Piagetian transpersonal psychologies and the asynchronous neo-Piagetian transpersonal psychology described earlier is this: contemplative absorption is a synesthesia of postformal representational cognition. (A synesthesia is the experience of one sensory or cognitive modality in terms of another.) That is, representational cognition and contemplative cognition express knowledge of the same reality but through different mediums. Meditative insights translate back into the openness and wisdom that is one hallmark of postformal thought. Indeed, in psychedelic experiences in particular, individuals claim that they are *experiencing* the realities that are described in postformal theories of physics: they are experiencing the relativity of space-time, and other postformal, post-Newtonian constructions (Masters & Houston, 1966/2000). Intense meditative experiences are a synesthesia of postformal representational cognition, and produce similar insights. Contemplative development and the development of representational cognition can be considered parallel developmental facets;

in their highest stages they both open out into recognisably similar, and recognisably spiritual, forms.

Phylogenetically, there has been a large decalage in the rate at which representational and contemplative forms of cognition have unfolded. The products of postformal representational cognition, including relativity theory, Kaluza-Klein theories, quantum mechanics, and dynamical systems theory have only blossomed since the late nineteenth century onwards, while a high level of development in contemplative lines has been achieved much earlier, probably from Paleolithic times. For this reason, there are many similarities between the universe as described by twenty-first century physicists and the universe described by shamans and other mystics (Laughlin & Throop, 2003). Of course, this is not to say that indigenous characterisations of the cosmos are the same as those in modern physics; they are not the same but they do share recognisable similarities (for example, both Kaluza-Klein theories and shamans describe travel through multiple dimensions) because both of these world views involve postformal understandings of how the world operates. In summary, postformal representational cognition can be considered a synesthesia of contemplative absorption which produces similar insights. Moreover, contemplative absorption can help trigger and cement postformal cognitions. The relationship between contemplative and postformal neo-Piagetian transpersonal psychology is complementary.

Genetic Epistemology and Transpersonal Psychology

Genetic epistemology was concerned with the genesis of knowledge through the process of reality construction—that is, with the coalescence of the individual and the environment across ontogeny to produce knowledge of the world. Neo-Piagetian approaches are more concerned with Piaget's psychological theory (with describing the acquisition of skills over time) than with the dynamics of epistemology itself. But an increasing knowledge of reality is a shared aim of neo-Piagetian psychology, genetic epistemology, and transpersonal psychology. Much investigation has taken place into the way that knowledge of physical reality is created (e.g., Piaget., 1937/1970), and it is a small step to extend those findings into transpersonal territory.

There is much in common between Piaget's work in genetic epistemology and the participatory approach to transpersonal development, a situation which both reinforces the theoretical validity of participatory theory, and enriches genetic epistemology. In genetic epistemology perception and thought organise the world, but increasingly accurate knowledge of the world changes the logical structures which govern thought and perception, which in turn changes the appearance of the world (Piaget, 1972). Thus, reality is *constructed*, as Piaget (1950b) has said, or *cocreated*, as Ferrer (2002) has said, over the course of ontogeny and phylogeny. Reality is always open to change with further evolution and development. In a synthesis of genetic epistemology and transpersonal themes the reality that appears material in earlier equilibriums comes to appear spiritual in later equilibriums. The self-transcendence of which Maslow (1971) spoke, or the sixth stage of faith in Fowler's (1981) framework,

which have recognisable transpersonal components, typically unfold in the second half of life, as the nature of reality becomes more obviously spiritual.¹² Material reality flows into spiritual reality as ontogeny progresses: there is only ever spiritual reality, but reality is usually only recognised as spiritual later in life.

Recent work in transpersonal psychology and religious studies (Ferrer, 2002; Rawlinson, 1997; Schlamm, 2001) has perhaps shown fairly conclusively that there is no universal series of phenomenological states encountered in spiritual development. The progression from gross to subtle to causal for example, only applies to the Vedantic tradition, or more likely only to certain texts in that tradition. But at the same time some shared aspect—something objective or universal in spiritual development—is possible. Different spiritual paths converge on increasing knowledge of spiritual reality. Spiritual traditions reflect the universal religious value, which Piaget described in his early work (Piaget, 1918), in different ways. The expression of religious value is an expression of the same reality, and so it has an objective component, but religious value is expressed in different ways by different traditions. Universal values (tolerance, understanding, respect) often emerge across religions and across humanistic forms of investigation because they *converge* on the same reality. The similarities between the results of scientific and contemplative investigation described above suggest that these two general domains also converge as they progress towards infinity. Knowledge sources mutually confirm one another as they progress, because they produce knowledge of the *same* reality.¹³

There is no “given” spiritual reality, for reality is created through the mutual coalescence of subject and object. There is no end point to the spiritual path of any tradition, for there is no final form of reality at which cognition can arrive. Knowledge of the nature of (spiritual) reality can always increase from an initial starting point of ignorance, and that increase is unending. Like the progression of iterations of irrational numbers, different spiritual paths never reach a final endpoint and converge on increasing knowledge relative to an initial starting point of ignorance. Because spiritual paths progress towards knowledge of a shared reality, the paths tend to converge the further from the initial starting point of ignorance they progress. One simple example of this might be the increasing religious tolerance which has motivated discussion in the twentieth and twenty-first century, relative to previous historical ages. This is not to suggest that there is a universal shared ultimate: the spiritual ultimates of different traditions are different, but they still have some recognisable similarities; a general drive towards love, or compassion, or respect, for fellow beings is present in the ideologies of many, and perhaps all religions. Realisation in Hindus, Muslims, and in indigenous/shamanic cultures has *something* in common, though the expression of that commonality is focussed through culturally specific lenses. This, at least, should be the finding which is expected, if knowledge of other areas of epistemology is applied to the growth of spiritual cultures and individuals.

For Katz (1978), there was no unity of religions as all was cultural construction. Certain versions of the perennial philosophy (Schuon, 1953; Wilber, 2000) have been accused of being overly monolithic and of ignoring

cultural variety. Piaget provided a large amount of evidence that there are both objective and culturally specific aspects to conventional human development. If the same processes are involved in spiritual development then the convergence on a shared spiritual reality, nonetheless expressed in pluralistic ways, is to be expected and a vision of spiritual and religious development which preserves both unity and diversity appears justifiable through analogy with well confirmed processes of psychogenesis.

For Piaget (1950b) evolution led upwards from the lowest biological units of cells, and progressed towards the highest expressions of value, in which human conviction reaches heights which often converge on mysticism. Piaget's system was reminiscent of Koestler's (1978) later theory of holons, though more widely encompassing: from as early as 1916, Piaget (1916, 1918) was identifying the meaning of life with the drive of evolution. Comparisons with Bergson and Hegel are apt, and Piaget acknowledged Bergson in particular as a profound source of influence. In contrast to the view of Teilhard de Chardin (1965), there was no omega point to evolution, only the continued upward drive into "new possibilities," which were ever-surpassing (Piaget, 1950b). There was no pole towards which evolution grew, only new emergent levels issuing from new structures of organisation. In this respect Piaget precurred by many decades the "participatory turn" in transpersonal studies (Ferrer, 2002) and "integral post-metaphysics" (Wilber, 2006), in which spiritual ultimates are not considered to be fixed but instead are constantly open to revision through further evolution. Piaget's model of development was open towards the future: there was no upper limit to the quality of value the individual could experience. His theory was, in this respect, angled towards the possibility of a transpersonal future for both the individual and the species in a way reminiscent of Maslow. Spiritual value was not an aspect of human development, but the future condition towards which all aspects of human development were driving.

These higher evolutionary possibilities eventually lead to the postformal world views that are beginning to emerge in Western culture through the development of representational cognition, and which existed long ago in indigenous cultures due to the development of contemplative cognition. Meditation, an asynchronous activity involving neo-Piagetian dynamics, can stimulate the growth of postformal representational cognition by synesthetic transfer between modalities, and so fuel the increasing convergence of the subject on reality, which can be considered the goal of the spiritual quest. It is in this respect that asynchronous/contemplative and post-formal aspects of neo-Piagetian theory relate. Meditation and other contemplative techniques are one tool among others which can help the individual converge on the knowledge of spiritual reality which Piaget sought to describe in his genetic epistemology, but was unable to investigate comprehensively.

CONCLUSION

Piaget set out on what would now be called a transpersonal project, as detailed in Piaget (1918). The result of this was his "immanentism" theory (Piaget,

1930)—an exploration of the development of thought towards ultimate values that transcend both the individual and the limits of individual thought, which had both Hegelian and Gödelian overtones. Arguably Piaget’s transpersonally motivated work failed to completely fulfil the aims of his project adequately. Although Piaget maintained an interest in spirituality as indicated in his informal recorded conversations (Bringuier, 1980), he generally toned down his academic interest in spiritual themes as his career progressed, perhaps because he was unable to adequately substantiate them with the same precision as his other work. The search for spiritual value that Piaget (1918) began can be completed through dialogue with the contemporary transpersonal project in the future. The addition of the asynchronous development of contemplative lines to postformal aspects of neo-Piagetian transpersonal psychology is a step in this direction, and the fresh contribution of the article.

NOTES

¹ Representational cognition concerns understanding that is completely derived from the meaning of the symbols involved, like mathematical or logical notation. This is contrasted with presentational cognition in which the meaning is conveyed through absorption in the medium of expression itself, for example in the appreciation of music, or of interpersonal emotions.

² But the three stages identified also apply to mystical prayer (Washburn, 2000) and Lewis-Williams and Pearce (2005) have argued that a three stage formula describes shamanic trance.

³ For more recent examples of neo-Piagetian psychologies please see Demetriou, Spanoudis, and Mouyi (2010), Ferrari and Vuletic (2010), Pascual-Leone, Johnson and Agostino (2010).

⁴ Again, it is actually doubtful that Piaget did not incorporate postformal themes into his work. For example, as early as 1950, Piaget (1950a) was writing about “axiomatic operations,” which transcended formal operations in the same way that formal operations transcended concrete operations. It is inaccurate to say that Piaget ignored postformal thought, much as it is inaccurate to say that Piaget lacked an awareness of asynchrony. But still, it is generally taken in psychology that postformal thought was a later addition to the Piaget corpus, provided by subsequent researchers.

⁵ I use the term “Patanjalian” as a generic term for meditative stages, much as “Piagetian” is used as a generic term for the stage-like development of representational cognition, including instances when different numbers of stages to Piaget’s four stages, are used.

⁶ In later work Wilber (e.g., 2000, 2006) followed Gardner and used the notion of lines, but the different lines emerged in an invariant order; it was still the case that causal led on from subtle and subtle led on from gross.

⁷ Piaget used the term “subject” as an abbreviation of his phrase “epistemic subject” which was an abstraction of individual subjects, rather like species constitute abstractions of biological individuals. In general, I use the term individual rather than subject, to avoid confusion.

⁸ The practice of language mysticism might also be added as another line; Lancaster (2000) described a form of language mysticism based on Hebrew practices. This is a very detailed exposition of the mysticism of a linguistic or auditory line (related to the processing of sound) which could be added to the tactile, imagistic and voidic lines. Evidence for olfactory and gustatory lines is rare, but existent, especially in Tantra (Gyatso, 1991).

⁹ Contents and tasks were the two main sources of “decalage,” that is, of uneven or asynchronous development across lines. Procedural decalages were also identified (e.g., Piaget & Inhelder, 1956) in which asynchronies in development between different versions of the same task were studied (for example, different exercises which could be performed on the balance beam). The analogue of procedural decalages in meditative development might be different versions of the same meditative technique, like the different ways in which Vipassana can be performed.

¹⁰ The practice of the task involved in Vedic meditation, which conforms to Patanjali’s three stages, is different from the tasks of the complex meditations of Yoga Tantra in which many stages are identified. But arguably both result in recognisably similar states of subject-object union: the samadhi state of Vedic meditation produces the same union of subject and object as the higher stages of the process of melding bliss and emptiness in “clear light”

as described in Yoga Tantra. Both Vedic and Tibetan traditions are correspondingly grounded in non-dual philosophical systems (see Radhakrishnan, 1927; Bapat, 1956).

¹¹ See Kela (2003), Orme-Johnson & Moore (2003), Samuelson, Carmody, Kabat-Zinn, & Bratt (2007), Perelman, Miller, Clements, Rodriguez, Allen, & Cavanaugh (2012). For counterinterviews to the claims that meditation results in moral development see Barnard & Kripal (2002).

¹² Spiritual development can happen at any point in life, but evidence suggests it is more likely to happen later in life (see Dale, 2011).

¹³ This idea is reminiscent of Piaget's (1950b) circle of sciences in which the main sciences of mathematics, physics, biology and psychology mutually confirmed each other as they advanced, but Piaget did not develop his circle of sciences to include contemplation.

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YOGA PSYCHOTHERAPY: THE INTEGRATION OF WESTERN PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY AND ANCIENT YOGIC WISDOM

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ABSTRACT: This article offers a comprehensive perspective on how Western psychological theory and practice, specifically developments in somatic psychology, can be integrated with the scientific insights of Yoga in order to produce a more thorough model that seeks to reduce the symptoms of psychological trauma and promote overall well-being. Toward this goal, the article offers a literature review that includes trauma studies, neuroscience, mindfulness, and yoga. By integrating these disciplines, we discover new possibilities for healing psychological trauma in the body through yogic techniques, including physical postures, meditation, and breathing exercises. The article also introduces an overview of the Yoga & Psyche Method, a process that allows practitioners to easily experience and teach this integration to clients and offers five key insights and possibilities that result from this integration. This synthesis of Eastern philosophy and modern scientific research offers a possibility for further developments in psychological theory, research, and effective therapeutic treatments.

KEYWORDS: somatic psychology, trauma, yoga, neuroscience, mindfulness.

Psychology is a field in the making. Whereas many of the wisdom traditions have been developing philosophies and methods to address the great questions facing humanity for thousands of years, Western psychology is just over a hundred years old. Globalization, the increasing interest in Eastern traditions such as Yoga, and significant developments in neuroscience, trauma research, and somatic psychology, have opened up the doors for a synthesis of Eastern and Western approaches to well-being that include the treatment of clinical disorders, as well psychological health and thriving.

This article offers an insight into what the integration of Western psychology and ancient yogic wisdom might look like. We begin by describing important findings and developments in somatic psychology, yoga research, breathing techniques, and mindfulness. The literature review then summarizes current trauma research in order to illustrate the importance of incorporating the body and yoga in the treatment of trauma. To conclude, we offer five key insights and implications of this integration, and consider the important questions and research directions for further developments in this emergent interdisciplinary

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field. An appendix describing the Yoga & Psyche Method, a process created by one of the authors of this article, is introduced as an example of a model that offers a theoretical explanation and a phenomenological experience of the usefulness of integrating these approaches.

Delving into the vast field of Yoga, one discovers that the physical exercises we commonly understand as Yoga are but one aspect of a highly refined philosophy that offers a psychological view of the human being. When we consider Yoga from this wider perspective, we discover many of the goals of modern psychology to be complementary with those of Yoga.

The precise origins of Yoga are not known, and even great Yoga scholars differ vastly on the dates they cite in Yoga's history. Eliade (1975) suggests that the first systematized form of Yoga could have been written by *Patañjali* in his *Yoga Sūtras*. There seems to be no consensus of when Patañjali lived and wrote this classical text, but it is thought to be somewhere between 300 BCE to 500 CE. Feuerstein (1998) dates the writing of the *Yoga Sūtras* back to the Classical Age (100 BCE to 500 CE) and suggests that less structured yogic ideas and practices can be found dating back to the time of the *Rig-Veda*, which is thought to be composed before 1900 BCE. Additionally, Bryant (2009) in his book *The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali* talks about images of figures in yogic postures, dating to pre-vedic times (3000 - 1900 BCE) adding that, "This evidence suggests that, irrespective of its literary origins, Yoga has been practiced on the Indian subcontinent for well over four thousand years" (p. xx).

Considering that modern psychology is just over a century old, we discovered that an interdisciplinary approach that bridges this field with Yoga has just begun to be articulated (Chung & Hyland, 2011). Yoga is a tool for a myriad of applications, including a reconnection with a deeper sense of self, as it is practiced by many in the East (Eliade, 1975). Yoga is a wide and complex subject, and for the purpose of this article, we will only make reference to three (of eight) specific "limbs" or aspects introduced by *Patañjali* in the *Yoga Sūtras*: *āsana* - physical postures and stretches, *prānāyāma* - breathwork, and *dhyāna* - meditation, all of which are also mentioned in the *Hatha Yoga Pradīpikā* (Swami Muktibodhananda Saraswati, Swami Satyananda Saraswati, & Swami Svatmarama, 2000).

Welwood (2000) overviews some of the distinctions in social and cultural factors between East and West—particularly the Indo-Tibetan cultures — which helps us understand some of the differences in the course of psychospiritual development between these cultures and points to why developments in modern psychology are specifically relevant to the Western practitioner of spiritual traditions. Some of the (generalized) strengths of the East include strong mother-infant bonding, intact extended families, a life attuned to the rhythms of the natural world, and maintenance of the sacred at the center of social life. He suggests that the gift of the West is "the impetus it provides to develop an individuated expression of true nature... [which is] the unique way that each of us can serve as a vehicle for embodying the suprapersonal wisdom, compassion, and truth of absolute nature" (p. 207). In other words, drawing on the strength of cultural and social factors from both

East and West, the sum is greater than each of its parts. For a deeper discussion and understanding of Eastern perspectives on and practice of Yoga and their contextual elements see the work of scholars such as Sovatsky¹.

A helpful step in integrating the yogic and Western psychological approaches is to consider the role of somatic psychology. In the West, there is increasing recognition that body awareness is an essential component to psychological well-being (Mehling et al., 2011). Somatic psychology has been shown to be effective in treating symptoms associated with anxiety, depression, psychosomatic issues, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), sexual abuse, and other forms of trauma (Berg, Sandahl, & Bullington, 2010; Koemeda-Lutz, Kaschke, Revenstorf, Scherrmann, Weiss, & Soeder, 2006; Lopez, 2011; Price, 2005; Steckler & Young, 2009). Therapeutic techniques that include the body improve self-regulation, increase body awareness, reduce dissociation, foster self-care and pain management skills, and allow for the body's innate wisdom to come forth to help complete impulses that may have been halted during the time of the traumatic event (Lopez, 2011; Price, 2005; Price, McBride, Hyerle, Kivlahan, 2007).

Further building blocks that positively impact our capacity to integrate these theories and practices are the emerging fields of neuroscience and trauma research. Both are beginning to reveal a substantial body of research-based evidence about how trauma resides in the body, brain, and nervous system. Many of the most effective methods for working with post-traumatic stress disorder and complex trauma involve body-centered treatments (Emerson & Hopper, 2011; Lopez, 2011; Ogden, Minton & Paine, 2006; Ogden, Pain, & Fisher, 2006; Rothschild, 2000; van der Kolk, 1994; van der Kolk, 2006).

In setting out to offer an integration of Yoga and Western psychology, particularly in light of the findings in somatic psychology, neuroscience, and trauma research, the authors engaged a thorough review of the literature related to our topic. We discovered that there is little scholarly material published on how these topics are integrated. There are papers and books written on the benefits of physical yoga and meditative practices for health, happiness, and psychological issues. There are many new and important studies, too numerous to mention, about the benefits of mindfulness meditation. However, only a few individuals (Emerson, Sharma, Chaudhry, & Turner, 2009; Longaker & Tornusciolo, 2003; Spinazzola, Rhodes, Emerson, Earle, & Monroe, 2011; van der Kolk, 2006) have published on how the Yoga of the East and the Psychology of the West can inform each other, enhancing the effectiveness of each to create an integral model seeking to reduce the effects of psychological trauma. It is our hope that this synthesis and accompanying method will form a foundation for further research and the development of practices that support healing from trauma.

SOMATIC PSYCHOLOGY: WHAT IS IT AND WHY IS IT RELEVANT?

In beginning to articulate a synthesis between Yoga and Western psychology, it is useful to understand the significance and scope of the developments in

somatic psychology. A philosopher named Thomas Hanna first applied the term Somatics to the field of psychology in the 1970's. Hanna wished to merge the Western split between mind and body and declared that, " 'Soma' does not mean 'body'; it means 'Me, the bodily being' " (Hanna, 1970, p. 35). Hanna (1995) later defined somatics as, "The field which studies the soma: namely the body as perceived from within the first person perception... the human being as experienced by himself from the inside" (p. 343).

Although somatic psychology has only picked up momentum within the past decade, its roots date back to the early originators of modern psychology, including Freud, Ferenczi, Adler, Groddeck, Reich, and Jung (McNeely, 1987). It took the outside view of scholars, some fifty years later, to name this phenomenon as the single field of somatic education. Summarizing the history of somatic practices, Eddy (2009) wrote:

Hanna (1985), supported by Don Hanlon Johnson (2004) and Seymour Kleinman (2004), saw the common features in the "methods" of Gerda and FM Alexander, Feldenkrais, Gindler, Laban, Mensendieck, Middendorf, Mézières, Rolf, Todd, and Trager (and their protégés Bartenieff, Rosen, Selver, Speads, and Sweigard). Each person and their newly formed "discipline" had people take time to breathe, feel and "listen to the body," often by beginning with conscious relaxation on the floor or lying down on a table. (p. 6)

More recent approaches to somatic psychology and body-oriented psychotherapy include Sensorimotor Psychotherapy (Ogden, Minton, & Paine, 2006), Somatic Experiencing (Levine, 1997, 2008, 2010), Body-Mind Centering (Bainbridge Cohen, Nelson, & Nelson, 2003), Somatic Trauma Therapy (Rothschild, 2000), Hakomi (Kurtz, 1990), Bioenergetics (Lowen, 1994), Integrative Body Psychotherapy (Rosenberg, Rand, & Asay, 1985), Holotropic Breathwork (Grof & Grof, 2010), Core Energetics (Pierrakos, 1987), and iRest (Miller, 2010). These approaches include both the body and mind, creating specific methods to deal with trauma and self-knowledge.

Within this discipline of somatic psychology, the mind and body are viewed as an interactive whole where mental and physical symptoms are connected and are representative of an individual's whole being. In this way somatic psychology links psychotherapy with the soma, which allows one to consider the psychological meaning of symptoms that manifest in the body (Hartley, 2004). The change from doing psychotherapy strictly in the mind to moving it into the body is a radical shift. Somatic approaches work directly with present tense phenomena in the body and "unwind" psychological material via the means of direct experience. Berg et al. (2010) state that becoming more aware of the connection between bodily symptoms and emotions allows clients to increase their feeling of control. This approach empowers individuals as physical symptoms morph into information about their body that they can then learn to understand and integrate.

Treatment of disorders such as depression, which is increasingly recognized as a mind-body phenomenon (Steckler & Young, 2009), must include both mind

and body for full recovery. Furthermore, Koemeda-Lutz et al. (2006) found that body therapy treatments significantly improved symptoms of anxiety, depression, interpersonal problems, and psychosomatic grievances just after six months. The longer the treatment lasted the greater the improvement, with benefits remaining for up to two years following treatment (Koemeda-Lutz et al., 2006).

By understanding the bridge that somatic psychology makes between psychotherapy and somatic bodywork, we can build a similar bridge between psychotherapy and Yoga. With an accompanying language and set of practices, Yoga psychotherapy is an integral framework that has a powerful impact on cultivating wellness.

YOGA RESEARCH

In the West, the intricacies and depth of Yoga are not widely practiced to its fullest extent (see endnote¹). The Yoga research and literature reviewed here includes studies of physical yoga, as well as breathwork and meditation; the latter is often investigated under the term “mindfulness.” The authors do recognize that due to all the different types of meditation and breathwork approaches, it is difficult to compare the results and psychological effects of the various methods (Sedlmeier et al., 2012).

Yoga, including meditation and breathwork, has proven to be effective in reducing symptoms of several physical and psychological disorders. In a study done by the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM), Yoga, deep breathing, and meditation are in the ten most common complementary and alternative medicine therapies among adults in 2007 (Barnes, Bloom, & Nahin, 2008). The following sections summarize specific studies that explore the benefits of different yogic techniques. Given that in the West some of the terms used for different techniques are interchangeable, some of the following studies might incorporate more than one of these approaches (i.e., postures, breathwork, meditation).

Yoga and Stress

Numerous studies have been conducted that demonstrate that the physical practice of Yoga *āsana* decreases stress, promoting increased relaxation and regulation at a psychological and neuromuscular level. In the Harvard Mental Health Letter (Harvard Health Publications, 2009), an article entitled, “Yoga for Anxiety and Depression” spoke to the significance of yoga on stress management:

By reducing perceived stress and anxiety, yoga appears to modulate stress response systems. This, in turn, decreases physiological arousal—for example, reducing the heart rate, lowering blood pressure, and easing

respiration. There is also evidence that yoga practices help increase heart rate variability, an indicator of the body's ability to respond to stress more flexibly. (p. 1)

Some researchers have conducted similar studies using short term yoga interventions and have found a relationship between Yoga and decreased stress across many different populations such as young adults (Gard, Brach, Hölzel, Noggle, Conboy, & Lazar, 2012), older adults, (Bonura & Pargman, 2009), businessmen and women (Wolever, Bobinet, McCabe, Mackenzie, Fekete, Kusnick, & Baime, 2012), and patients suffering from chronic illness (Pritchard, Elison-Bowers, & Birdsall, 2010; Salmon, Santorelli, & Kabat-Zinn, 1998). Yoga helps to train the body to relax on a muscular level, allowing the stress response to be more easily managed (Serber, 2000). Brisbon and Lowery (2011) found that compared to beginners, advanced practitioners of Hatha Yoga displayed lower levels of stress and increased awareness of being present in the moment.

Yoga also gives individuals a framework for regulating emotions and a space to practice self-soothing techniques (Harper, 2010). Gootjes, Franken, and Van Strein (2011) conducted a study that confirmed that yogic meditative practices help with successful emotion regulation. There is also evidence to suggest that yoga aids in the development of the self-soothing capacity of traumatized youth (Spinazzola et al., 2011). Overall, yoga practice has been shown to support stress management at a level comparable to cognitive behavioral interventions, helping to increase relaxation and improve emotion regulation (Granath, 2006). Breathwork has also been found to increase one's ability to regulate emotions, in addition to improving heart rate variability by balancing the interaction between the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems (Brown & Gerbarg, 2009; Holzel, Lazar, Gard, Schuman-Oliver, Vago & Ott, 2011).

Yoga and the Treatment of Clinical Diagnoses

Numerous studies have revealed that Yoga benefits various clinical diagnoses, as articulated by the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.; *DSM-5*; American Psychological Association, 2013). An example of this is children with a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) for whom a yoga practice has been shown to stabilize emotions, reduce hyperactivity and impulsivity, increase attention span, feelings of calmness and confidence, and improve social skills. It also has shown to improve the quality of the parent-child relationship, sleep patterns, and positively change the child's approach to school (Abadi, Madgaonkar, & Venkatesan, 2008; Harrison, Manocha, & Rubia, 2004; Jensen & Kenny, 2004).

When applied to those with eating disorders, such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and eating disorders not otherwise specified, yoga has shown to improve mood, increase physical and emotional awareness, and decrease eating disorder symptoms. A study conducted by Dale, Mattison, Greening, Galen, Neace, & Matacin (2009) reported that "Women's intense fear of gaining weight, preoccupation with weight, body dissatisfaction, extreme desire to be

thinner, and desire to think about and engage in bouts of binge eating was reduced” (p. 431).

Yoga has also been shown to benefit those with schizophrenia by reducing psychopathology when paired with standard psychiatric treatment. Studies have found reduced psychotic symptoms and depression, improved cognition, enhanced social and occupational functioning, and an increased quality of life (Bangalore & Varambally, 2012; Duraiswamy, Thirthalli, Nagendra, & Gangadhar, 2007; Visceglia & Lewis, 2011).

Yoga and Depression

As depression and anxiety are often co-occurring, some findings related to anxiety are also included in this section. A study conducted by Kinser, Bourguignon, Whaley, Hausenstein, and Taylor (2013) found that the women diagnosed with major depressive disorder who were assigned to the yoga intervention group showed a decrease in depression and experienced less ruminations, increased feelings of connectedness, and the added benefit of a new coping method. Forbes (2008) reports that yoga’s ability to calm the nervous system, foster an awareness of the present moment, and release energy that has been trapped in the body, aids in the reduction of symptoms associated with affective disorders.

Studies have shown that the practice of following the breath is a valuable aid in the treatment of depression and anxiety. Miller (1994) found that yogic, diaphragmatic breathing increases ego strength, emotional stability, confidence, alertness, and perceived control over one’s environment, as well as reducing anxiety, depression, phobic behavior, and psychosomatic problems. Lalande, Bambling, King, and Lowe (2012) studied how the suppression of inner experiences, possibly triggered by traumatic events, may be linked to inhibited breathing which in turn may be furthering states of depression and anxiety. Additionally, a meta-analysis conducted by Baer (2003) suggests that mindfulness-based interventions may be helpful in the treatment of several issues including chronic pain, anxiety, depression, eating disorders, patients with cancer, fibromyalgia or psoriasis all with positive results.

Amy Weintraub (2004) describes in detail various yoga practices that can be used to treat depression. Her work is grounded in research and based as well on the experience of healing and managing her own depression through Yoga. In a more recent effort (Weintraub, 2012) she also illuminates how therapists can learn and teach a variety of yogic processes—including breath, sound, mudras (hand positions), imagery, and self-inquiry — to increase the effectiveness of psychotherapy.

Yoga and Well-Being

Yoga also improves the mood of individuals who do not suffer from a diagnosable disorder and overall offers a practice that promotes general well-

being. In a study by Shapiro (2004) healthy participants recorded the fluctuations of their mood and emotional states before and after yoga classes. The results showed that positive moods increased and negative moods decreased following yoga practice (Shapiro, 2004). A study that assessed yoga practice and its effect on mood compared to walking found that those who were assigned to the yoga group reported greater improvements in both mood and anxiety levels than those in the walking group (Streeter et al. 2010). Yoga practice additionally promotes greater well-being by increasing body awareness, positive affect, and satisfaction with life for both men and women, while simultaneously decreasing objectification of their bodies (Impett, Daubenmier, & Hirschman, 2006).

The ability to be present increases with the practice of yoga, which has a positive effect on overall well-being. Studies on mindfulness have found how it helps people increase attention and focus (Lazar, Bush, Gollub, Fricchione, Khalsa, & Benson 2000). Shelov, Suchday, & Friedberg (2009) found that just eight weeks of yoga practice significantly increased mindfulness, insightful understanding, and an open attitude. Meditation can also be useful with deeper issues around personality and maturity of relatively healthy individuals (Epstein, 1986). Findings such as these are important in thinking about preventative mental health, protecting against disorders such as anxiety and depression, and strengthening the already existing resources that every individual possesses.

Yoga has been shown to relieve suffering during periods of grief and bereavement. Philbin (2009) wrote, “The therapeutic process creates a safe and sacred space for processing sensations, thoughts, and emotions... Grieving adults who participated in the yoga therapy intervention showed significant improvements in vitality and positive states and a trend toward improved satisfaction with life” (p. 129). Yoga can also provide a space for connection and relationship building. Partner yoga can foster deep emotional connection, healthy boundaries, trust, and a strong sense of self while simultaneously being in relationship (Swart, 2011).

Looking to neuroscience, studies show that practicing mindfulness increases positive affect (Davidson et al., 2003) and enhances self-regulation (Holzel et al., 2011). Certain areas of the brain associated with attention, introspection, and sensory processing are thicker in participants with extensive meditation experience compared to those with little to no experience, and the UCLA Laboratory of Neuroimaging found that the brains of people who practice meditation are in fact different from those who do not (Holzel et al., 2011; Lazar et al., 2005; Luders, Kurth, Mayer, Toga, Narr, & Gaser, 2012).

TRAUMA RESEARCH

Trauma and the Body

A significant amount of attention has been paid to the study and treatment of trauma in the last few decades. The most effective treatments for trauma often include body-centered methods as these have a direct effect on the

physiological and neurological mechanisms that affect the body following a traumatic event (Emerson & Hopper 2011, Levine, 1997; Ogden, Minton, & Paine, 2006; Rothschild, 2000; van der Kolk, 2006). We now know that Yoga also contributes to the health and well-being of both the body and psyche, and when it is merged with modern psychology, clinicians have a wider array of tools and greater knowledge from which to draw upon in regards to treating individuals suffering from trauma. Before offering a synthesis of how these approaches to psychological transformation work together, it is important to note some of the significant findings in trauma research.

Trauma is a form of stress. Under normal circumstances stress protects the human system and promotes growth. However, if the stress response is maladaptive or becomes chronic, it can lead to psychological and biological transformations that are harmful (Christopher, 2004; McEwan & Lasley, 2002). Although the stress response is a biological process that naturally occurs in every individual, trauma manifests in different ways for each unique person (Christopher, 2004). The event does not necessarily have to be catastrophic, it can be a seemingly mundane event that directly or indirectly affects the individual, but what is crucial is how the body reacts to the situation (Levine, 2008). Peter Levine (1997) stated that:

Traumatic symptoms are not caused by the “triggering” event itself. They stem from the frozen residue of energy that has not been resolved and discharged; this residue remains trapped in the nervous system where it can wreak havoc on our bodies and spirits. (p. 19)

Trauma symptoms arise when the arousal cycle cannot be completed, keeping the individual locked in an aroused state of fear. This traps the traumatized person in a cycle of fear that affects the entire body, including the mind, the emotional system, and the neurological system that regulates the body (Levine, 1997). Stephen Porges (Porges, 2001; Prengel, 2011), a professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Illinois at Chicago, proposed, through his polyvagal theory, that in addition to the fight or flight defenses of the sympathetic nervous system, there is a vagal defense system that causes immobilization and a newer mammalian development, the myelinated vagus, which plays a role in self soothing (Prengel, 2011). When treating trauma these systems are important to note as they are physiological components that can keep the trauma victim locked in a frozen state and unable to self soothe.

Experiencing trauma puts the individual under great physical and emotional distress, and the biological changes that happen in the body result in various forms of symptoms that can show up months or years following the event. It is the biological alterations that lead to the psychological effects of trauma, which are often not within control of the individual. A comprehensive literature review on complex trauma observed in childhood trauma revealed seven areas of impairment: attachment, biology, affect regulation, dissociation, behavioral regulation, cognition, and self-concept (Cook et al., 2005). Leading trauma researcher Bessel A. van der Kolk (2002) wrote:

Once people are traumatized and develop PTSD, their ability to soothe themselves is compromised. Instead, they tend to rely on actions, such as fight or flight, or on pathological self-soothing, such as self-mutilation, bingeing, starving, or the ingestion of alcohol and drugs, to regulate their internal balance. (p. 386)

The limbic system, an area of the brain that is associated with emotions and survival behaviors, is also affected by trauma. The result of this is that the individual may feel the emotions as if they were a reenactment of the traumatic event, leading him/her to act irrationally to events that may be irrelevant in the moment but important during the traumatic event (van der Kolk, 2006). Emotions can be uncontrollable and overwhelming, becoming the enemy, turning the individual against his or her self, therefore learning to self-soothe is essential in healing from trauma (Gallop, 2002). The goal of treating PTSD is to help the client live safely in the present without being pulled back into the trauma.

What then, constitutes the major ingredients to effective trauma treatment? Van der Kolk (2006) suggested it needs to involve, “(a) learning to tolerate feelings and sensations by increasing the capacity for interoception; (b) learning to modulate arousal; and (c) learning that after confrontation with physical helplessness it is essential to engage in taking effective action” (p. 1). Since trauma is re-enacted in the present through one’s physiological, mental, and emotional systems, effective therapy includes self-awareness and self-regulation to bring one back into the present moment (van der Kolk, 2006).

Yoga and Trauma Research

Because trauma treatments often involve body-centered approaches to healing, a new body of research on the benefits of Yoga on trauma has just begun to emerge. “Clinical experience shows that traumatized individuals, as a rule, have great difficulty attending to their inner sensations and perceptions—when asked to focus on internal sensations they tend to feel overwhelmed, or deny having an inner sense of themselves” (van der Kolk, 2006, p. 11). The practice of Yoga is an excellent tool to bridge this gap. Gerbarg & Brown (2011) voiced some strong points on this topic:

While talk-based and cognitive therapies can be of great benefit, there are situations in which mind-body approaches, such as yoga, qigong, tai chi, breathing practices, and meditation can be extremely beneficial and sometimes necessary for full recovery... Learning how to use the body to speak to the mind circumvents the prohibition against talking and can be more effective than relying solely on verbal, cognitive, or intellectual approaches. (p. 199)

Traumatized youth have also benefited from yoga. Spinazzola, Rhodes, Emerson, Earle, & Monroe (2011) conducted a study with traumatized youth living in residential treatment homes. The primary goal of the practice was to provide them with a safe space and structure in which to reconnect with their

bodies. The results showed that doing yoga helped to strengthen the youth's self-regulating ability (Spinazzola et al., 2011). Another study (Longaker & Tornusciolo, 2003) implemented yoga as a type of group therapy for severely traumatized adolescent boys and found that the boys learned how to develop effective attachments, empathy for others, trust, and a sense of security within the group. There was improved self-regulation, a foundation for which to build a stronger sense of self, which allowed for the boys to connect with bodies in a healthy way promoting a sense of empowerment and responsibility over their body (p. 80-81).

One week of yoga has proven to reduce fear, anxiety, sadness, and interrupted sleep in individuals who survived natural disasters, suggesting that yoga may be useful in managing the negative emotional and somatic-based effects of these disasters. (Telles, 2007; Telles, Singh, Joshi, & Balkrishna, 2010). Additionally, yogic breathing can help relieve psychological distress in individuals that have undergone trauma from such events (Descilo et al., 2010).

Mindfulness techniques help individuals to re-focus on the present, allowing thoughts and feelings to be experienced without judgment or avoidance (Follete, Palm, & Pearson, 2006). A study by Lopez (2011) suggested that techniques that have a mindfulness component allow people suffering from PTSD to improve self-regulation. Meditation also activates structures involved in attention and control of the autonomic nervous system (Holzel et al., 2011).

CONCLUSION

Through our review of the major studies exploring yoga (including *āsana*, breath control, and meditation), somatic psychology, and trauma, we have found yoga and psychology to be complementary to each other and that the integration supports the process of recovering from psychological trauma. In closing, we propose the following five insights and possibilities for this integration:

1. The Western psychologist can benefit from the insights of a comprehensive view of Yoga and how this ancient practice can complement modern psychological theory and clinical work. Yoga and yogic techniques have been shown to reduce stress and anxiety by modulating the stress response and regulating emotions. This improves one's ability to self-soothe, supports mindful living, increases feelings of connectedness, confidence, focus, body awareness, and perceived control over the environment, and promotes greater well-being and satisfaction with life. Using some of the key insights Yoga offers to inform psychology—it particularly lends itself to somatic psychology—the clinician can begin to use these techniques to complement their clinical knowledge to benefit their clients without having to engage years of Yoga studies.
2. As a result of these positive effects of Yoga, the symptoms of a handful of *DSM-5* disorders can be reduced, i.e. ADHD, eating disorders,

schizophrenia, and depression. The positive benefits seem to particularly address many of the issues associated with PTSD and related symptomology, including the inability to self soothe and modulate arousal, fear and dissociation from the body, and persistent stress that pulls the individual out of the present and into the trauma.

3. The Western practitioner of Yoga can benefit from this integration by expanding their understanding of Yoga to include a psychological component. This can allow for a deepening of the practice to focus on how Yoga can affect one's sense of self and improve well-being both in formal yoga practice as well as in daily life. It is not expected that Western yoga teachers would know how to work psychologically, but by increasing their understanding of somatic psychology and the sensitive nature of trauma, they can significantly increase their skill set to integrate psychological material, or create a psychological frame, for themselves and their students during yoga practice.
4. *Embodiment*. There exists the possibility for human beings to become fully embodied—for the consciousness and intelligence that is ordinarily associated with the mind, to become awakened throughout the whole body. The integration of Yoga and psychology supports this whole body awakening by allowing one to work through their psychological holding patterns, traumas, and ailments, while also connecting one to their body and the present moment. This clearing away of psychological traumas, paired with full body and present moment awareness, allows one to come into a deeper knowing of themselves and get in touch with their natural essence that is embodied in their being. When this happens, radical changes in the phenomenological experience take place. The split between thoughts, feelings, and actions, disappears and more congruence begins to arise, adding a spiritual dimension to life that includes behaviors, vocation, health, lifestyle, relationships, and thriving.
5. The integration of Yoga and psychology, in the light of trauma, offers many opportunities for trauma sensitive yoga techniques, informed by psychology, to be created, researched, and implemented. The authors believe that further researcher in this area will strengthen the links between these three fields of knowledge (yoga, psychology, and trauma), supporting its application to different populations from prisoners to youth, medicine, preventative medicine, palliative care, well-being, and thriving. We offer this foundational article, and following application of how Yoga and psychotherapy can be integrated for clinical use, as a wellspring from which others can draw on and further develop.

To conclude, as Yoga becomes increasingly acceptable to mainstream and scientific communities, it is likely that many opportunities for further research will become available. As the popularity of neuroscience continues to link science with psychology and spirituality, we hope it will bridge the perceived separation between “mainstream” and “psychological” communities with spiritual traditions. Questions that remain for further study include: Could the validation of Yoga, that neuroscience and trauma research are providing, make it possible to include Yoga as a treatment modality in the DSM for PTSD and

other anxiety-related disorders? Will the scientific discoveries and developments that are changing the way humanity lives in the world be able to further integrate the wisdom of the East and West to allow for an inclusion of not just mind and body, but of the more spiritual aspects of the soul/psyche too? Will this integration allow for trauma to be better understood and addressed? We offer this review and synthesis of the current literature and research in these areas not as a final analysis but rather as a foundation and springboard for further studies in the field.

Appendix: The Yoga & Psyche Method

One practical application of the integration of yoga and Western psychology, which would benefit from further research as well as added developments as the field continues to evolve, is *The Yoga & Psyche Method*. Developed by one of the authors of this article, who is a psychotherapist specializing in psychological integration on the spiritual path as well as a long-term yoga teacher and practitioner, *The Yoga & Psyche* method draws upon 19 years of clinical experience and Yoga studies, as well as Peter Levine's Somatic Experiencing model. Through this method, clients and students are introduced to the importance of the body in their psychological healing, and taught to use yogic exercises, breathing, and meditative practices to unwind trauma and regulate their nervous system.

This method can be taught in a workshop setting where the facilitator teaches, demonstrates, and guides participants through the steps listed below, followed by an opportunity to share in dyads, bring questions to the facilitator in a group setting, and then continue to practice and refine the skills. The steps can also be applied in the psychotherapy room, with the therapist directly guiding the client through the process over several weeks or months. The process deepens and becomes more effective the longer it is practiced. It can be integrated with most other therapeutic modalities, complementing their efficacy.

The following steps are an outline of the process, which can be adapted and changed according to the skills of the therapist and needs of the clients or practitioners:

1. Educate the client or group about a) the field of somatic psychology, b) how Yoga and psychology complement each other, c) trauma and its treatment, and d) an overview of how the exercise will be experienced in their bodies.
2. Teach client(s) to move awareness from their minds into their bodies by teaching exercises that create psychological safety and bring in visualization, yogic breathing, and mindfulness.
3. Once clients have a sense of how to experience their emotional states as bodily sensations, a process called *pendulation* or *titration* (Levine, 1997) is introduced through which clients learn to move their awareness between creating a sense of safety in their bodies to briefly (30–60 seconds) experiencing the sensations associated with traumatic experience and then moving back to that place of safety in their bodies. This process of *pendulation* (Levine, 1997) can be repeated several times for a gradual deepening, and clients discover they can learn to move back into a sense of safety.

4. The process is then applied to working with specific yoga poses. These include some general positions understood to allow the release of tension and even illness, as well as yoga postures that could be holding deep emotional content.
5. The possibility of receiving physical touch and support in the yoga poses while releasing traumatic emotions is introduced when appropriate in a workshop context. Workshop participants learn to provide a safe space in which to offer this. Clients and workshop participants are always offered the option of the therapist's or facilitator's presence without touch.
6. Clients and/or workshop participants are then redirected to a place of safety within their bodies and "complete" their process with the conscious recognition that they can engage with deep, traumatic material within themselves, and emerge from this with more energy, joy, and relaxation. This experience facilitates the eventual ability to digest very difficult emotions and experiences in the moment.
7. The client/participant processes with the therapist/facilitator the material that emerged.

Once the therapist or facilitator is comfortable with these steps, these practices can range in length from a short, 5–10 minute individual or group process, to a 45 minute – 1 hour session, including the time for integration and discussion.

This practice is safe as long as the therapist or facilitator keeps the interaction between the client and their traumatic material in gentle 30–60 second intervals, instead of longer periods of time, which tend to facilitate catharsis rather than gradual integration.

It is the hope of the authors that many new methods and practices will continue to emerge alongside the continued developments in neuroscience, trauma research, somatic psychology, and Yoga research.

NOTES

¹ Although outside the scope of the present article, some researchers—especially Sovatsky—are of the position that modern psychology is incomplete and operates from a *scientia sexualis* (science of sexuality) perspective, thus missing further maturational states that a system operating from *ars erotica* (erotic art), such as Kundalini Yoga, embraces and embodies. This position suggests that modern psychology does not fully comprehend the depth of yogic phenomena. Furthermore, it is said that *asanas* exported to US are disconnected from their tantric traditions and shaped by European practices, such as ballet and gymnastics (Sovatsky, 1998). Norman Sjoman (1999) stated that modern yoga "appears to be distinct from the philosophical or textual tradition, and does not appear to have any basis as a tradition as there is no textual support for the *asanas* taught and no lineage of teachers" (p. 35). For those who may wish to further explore this matter, please see Singleton, M. (2010), Sjoman, N.E. (1999), and particularly Sovatsky, S. (1998).

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BEYOND THE EVOLUTIONARY PARADIGM IN CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES

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ABSTRACT: Adopting an “archetypal” reading of analytical psychology, this paper seeks to explore the often encountered assumption that consciousness is “evolving.” The author considers parallels between the work of C.G. Jung and Jean Gebser, arguing that the ideas of both figures have at times been improperly understood and misappropriated in support of the evolutionary paradigm. It is suggested that the insights of archetypal psychology might help dismantle some of the long-standing assumptions of transpersonal theorizing, thus supporting the emergence of a more participatory outlook. Such an outlook proposes that consciousness is both culturally-embedded, yet self-creatively vitalized. This approach finds further support from the work of Jacques Lacan, Owen Barfield, and Jorge Ferrer.

KEYWORDS: archetypal psychology, consciousness, evolution, participatory, transpersonal theory.

Since its inception, transpersonal theory has fostered the idea that consciousness is evolving. Such a position holds that the “history” of consciousness can be traced in terms that are broadly indicative of advance. So widely held is this assumption that it could easily be mistaken for an established fact. When the notion of “evolution” is applied in the study of consciousness, how are we to interpret this? Integral theorist Allan Combs (2002) suggests that the word can be understood in at least three distinct senses: in *biological* terms, it signifies the process by which life on Earth is thought to have developed and diversified; in a *historical* sense, it is adopted as a way of characterizing any process demonstrating a supposed growth or improvement over time; and in the context of *complexity*, the word is used to suggest the manner in which self-organizing systems appear to develop from simple states to those perceived as hierarchically more complex. These three senses of “evolution” clearly exhibit some measure of overlap, with each definition informing our impressions of the other two. Why has the conceptual precept seemingly embodied in this term exerted such a fascination for the transpersonal study of consciousness, and what are the implications for the extent to which its postulation has gone unchallenged?

To begin to explore these questions, I would like to consider Jung’s notion of the archetypes, which he conceptualized as the innate organizers of thought upon which consciousness is founded. Jung’s approach to the psyche places considerable emphasis on teleology. So strongly emphasized do some consider this aspect of his thinking that many of his most well-known followers have been moved to claim an almost religious significance for his ideas. Perhaps the most striking of these readings is reflected in the approach of Edward Edinger

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(1984), for whom Jung's work is fashioned as nothing less than a new dispensation. Interpretations of this kind have sometimes been challenged, particularly by the archetypal tradition established by James Hillman. Hillman's (1976) notion of "seeing through" (pp. 113–164) calls for a reading of Jung that does service to what he and others perceive as the living kernel of Jung's psychology: a self-reflexively informed and existentially nuanced approach to the life of the imagination. An appreciation for the substance of the archetypal approach can be gleaned from an examination of the role that biological evolution continues to play in the reception of Jung's work, with this appreciation further informing our understanding of the implications of the other valences attendant to the notion of "evolution" in respect to its application in the field of consciousness studies. Prior to pursuing this line of inquiry, however, I would like to contextualize the matter by considering the work of Jean Gebser. Combs and Krippner (1996) consider both Jung and Gebser to be *historical evolutionists*, suggesting that both figures "regarded the development of the modern psyche as a product of time and experience" (p. 68). While ample evidence certainly exists to support this contention, such a view does not adequately encapsulate the full scope of either writer's work. It will be argued in the present context, that both Gebser and Jung actually seem to point to a trans-developmental position that problematizes the notion of development and throws doubt upon the evolutionary paradigm itself.

MISSED CONNECTIONS AND MISSING LINKS

Gebser's theoretical relationship to Jung is an intriguing topic that has yet to be properly explored. The most frequently cited difference between the two men would, on the face of it, appear to be a significant one: Gebser (1984) questions the conceptual legitimacy of an "unconscious" mind, and favors instead an approach founded on different intensities of consciousness (p. 204). This seemingly fundamental critique of Jung may not cut so deep, however, in that Gebser tends to use the term *consciousness* more expansively, adopting this word to intend both a witnessing tendency and a directive force. For Gebser, consciousness is not only identified with the ego, but is treated more broadly as a mediator between the ego and the suprapersonal. Jung, by contrast, uses the term more narrowly to signify the sense of oneself as an independent subject. Thus, this seemingly fundamental difference might rightly be regarded, for the most part, semantic. In fact, considering the lack of interest in Gebser's work demonstrated by Jungian scholarship, the two figures have a great deal more in common than might be supposed.

A strong argument can be made that Gebser's structures of consciousness are implied, though in less worked out form, in the work of Jung. For Gebser, human consciousness is thought to have gone through four distinct noetic styles or "structures," as he calls them: the *archaic* structure gives rise to a form of consciousness that is "zero-dimensional" and minimally differentiated, the *magical* structure conjures a point-like sense of unity that is still embedded in nature, the *mythical* structure translates experience in terms of a world image, and the *mental* structure registers the emergence of conceptual thought proper.

Gebser also identifies a “deficient” mode of the mental structure, which he terms *rational* consciousness. It is at the level of the mental structure that Gebser believes most Westerners presently reside, although he also posits the emergence of a fifth *integral* structure, the nature of which is to integrate all four of the structures preceding it.

Resonating with Gebser’s approach, Jungian scholar Robert Segal (1992) suggests that Jung’s treatment of the psychological history of humankind can be understood in terms of four stages. Segal’s approach is helpful, in that these stages are not clearly formalized in Jung’s work. The *primitive* stage is marked by a state of primal identification, which Jung identifies with Levy-Bruhl’s notion of *participation mystique*. At this stage, the “individual” has yet to experience him or herself as such, living instead in a state of immediate identification with the wider world. Under these circumstances, it is not yet possible to discern between the external environment and the content of the unconscious. This is followed by the emergence of the *ancient* stage, which is related to the rise of civilization, witnessing the nascent signs of ego consciousness and a partial withdrawal from the previous state of identification. The gods are now perceived to exist as separate entities. Relations between the unconscious and the emergent sense of a separate self are congenial since, like the primitive, the ancient continues to regulate unconscious dynamisms by means of religion. Only in recent times, with the development of the *modern* stage, does the ego become dangerously independent, tending to dismiss the role of the unconscious altogether. At this stage the individual identifies only with the ego, and lives in a world that has been “demythified.” While the primitive and ancient both manage the unconscious by means of ritual, in the absence of a living religion the modern’s projections are erratic and largely unregulated. The fourth and final stage identified by Segal as occurring in Jung’s work is that of the *contemporary*. In contrast to the modern, the contemporary lives in recognition of the great loss associated with the disenchantment of the world. Without falling back into the ancient’s state of identification, the contemporary nevertheless mourns the absence of a connection to the irrational basis of life, and strives to find new ways of consciously connecting with this ground. According to Segal, the emergence of the contemporary stage is only discernible in a small portion of the population, with most individuals at the present time still tending to fall into the modern or ancient designations.

The four stages identified by Segal demonstrate obvious parallels with Gebser’s *magical*, *mythical*, *mental*, and *integral* structures. While these structures were only implied by Jung, Gebser is much more explicit in theorizing the structures themselves. He also examines the apparent transition between these structures, suggesting that the movement thus suggested is not gradual, but registered in terms of a sudden qualitative shift in consciousness. The emergence of a new structure heralds a radically new style of consciousness that comes to overlay and largely obscure those structures preceding it; the integral structure constitutes an exception, since its essential nature lies in the integration of all the structures coming before it. Somewhat reminiscent of Prigogine’s approach to dissipative systems, Gebser conceives of the transition from one structure to

the next as a radical and discontinuous break from the previous state of order. What makes Gebser's work so problematic and yet so fascinating is his attempt to speak in conceptual terms (and hence from the mental structure) of modes of consciousness that are both pre- and trans-conceptual. His reflexive engagement with this problem leads to a self-canceling reserve, as he strives to resist falling into the deficient "rational" mode of consciousness, and to do service to the emergence of the integral. Since the mental structure is reflected in perspectival/linear thinking, Gebser is loathe to take the historical record too seriously, and is particularly averse to speak of a "progression" or "evolution" of consciousness. This aversion seems to contradict the entire thrust of his project, yet it appears necessary if his theory is not to defeat itself by way of a less conscious contradiction: either Gebser willingly recognizes the limits of his own method and seeks to take self-contradictory measures to enact this knowingly, or in the very act of theorizing he falls head first into the problem his own theory is so much concerned with explicating. By "sacrificing" itself, Gebser's work seems to enact its own egoic defeat in cause of the emergence of something that lies just beyond its grasp, rather than capitulate to rationalistic hubris and become internally inconsistent as a consequence of its own lack of self-reflexivity.

The most well known scholar of Gebser's work in the English speaking world, Georg Feuerstein (1987), is impatient with Gebser's reserve. He writes: "I am aware that trying to date and trace the inner development of humanity's beginnings is like walking on brittle ice. Yet I do feel that Gebser's reticence about this is a limitation rather than a virtue" (p. 9). Elsewhere he describes Gebser's efforts to transcend the limits of mentalistic language as "like riding a train off its rails" (p. 43). In his attempt to nail Gebser's structures to the supposed historical facts, Feuerstein goes so far as to claim that had Gebser shown more concern for chronology, "he would have had to acknowledge that there is a far greater continuity of consciousness mutations than his four-structure model permits" (p. 44). This claim goes to show how far Gebser's major English language explainer has diverged from Gebser's work. To question whether the structures really emerge through mutation is to throw out an absolutely fundamental aspect of Gebser's thinking. Adopting such a position is of course legitimate, but in the context of outlining Gebser's theories (Feuerstein defines his approach as both an introduction and a critique), there is a clear danger that Gebser's original vision might come to be obscured. Ken Wilber's ideas have been served well by Feuerstein's reframing of Gebser, since he shares with Feuerstein both a similar attraction to historical dating and a possible lack of concern for the limits of "plain spoken" discourse. Feuerstein's revisionist approach to Gebser has facilitated Wilber in integrating Gebser's thought into his own system.

In a similar attempt to bring Gebser's work back into the evolutionary fold, Combs (2002) distinguishes between *constructive* and *emergent* models of evolution. While thinkers such as Hegel, Aurobindo, Bergson, de Chardin, and Wilber, adopt evolutionary models that rely on the idea of gradual change, according to Combs, Gebser's notion of mutation implies a "radical bifurcation of structure" (p. 232) and hence is posited as an emergent model.

While this distinction is helpful and (unlike Feuerstein) attempts to do service to Gebser's discontinuous approach, the presentation of the two models as "evolutionary" clearly privileges the constructive mode of understanding since the notion of evolution already implies the question of gradual change. It is precisely for this reason that Gebser himself is averse to using the word. Gebser's (1984) adoption of the term *mutation* is of fundamental significance, and can in no way be understood as synonymous with evolution: "With the unfolding of each new consciousness mutation, consciousness increases in intensity; but the concept of evolution, with its continuous development, excludes the discontinuous character of mutation" (p. 41). The observation that evolution understood in terms of emergence and complexity does indeed resonate in certain respects with Gebser's approach, effectively acts so as to obfuscate the radical significance of mutation. While Gebser is at pains to recognize that even the notion of mutation is inadequate in so far as it purports to be the product of the very thing it seeks to give a name to, "emergent evolution" as a scientific principle does not hold itself accountable to the same standards. In the scientific context where material reality is assumed to be primary, emergence is posited as a timeless and unconditional statement of fact about the nature of a supposedly objective reality, and not as a function of participatory consciousness. Since the discourse of science is based on a completely different set of foundational assumptions, the radical shift imposed upon our thinking by positing consciousness as the primary field of study precludes a casual adoption of scientific standards in support of a rendering on behalf of *common sense*. R.D. Laing defines psychology as "the structure of the evidence" (1967, p. 18). Likewise, Jung never tired of asserting the primacy of the psyche: "There is no medium for psychology to reflect itself in: it can only portray itself in itself" (1947, para. 421). How then are we to account for the extent to which widely respected Jungians (Knox, 2003; Stevens, 1982) have been able to argue that Jungian thinking is compatible with, and in fact necessarily culminates in, an evolutionary approach to the psyche? Confining this question to its theoretical dimensions, the answer appears to lie with the explication of Jung's theory of archetypes.

ARCHETYPES, INSTINCTS, AND DEVELOPMENTAL FANTASY

The archetypes are conceived by Jung as the foundation of consciousness (1959, para. 656) and the "unconscious organizers of our ideas" (1950, para. 278). Archetypes are also "locally, temporally, and individually conditioned" (1954, para. 476). They are conceptualized as representations of the instincts, and yet these representations are not themselves directly representable: the archetype itself is unknowable and posited (only by implication) as a dynamism, the nature of which arises in consciousness by way of archetypal images and ideas. Jung uses the spectrum of light as a metaphor, with the infrared end of the spectrum assigned to the instincts, and the ultraviolet range associated with the archetypes (1947, para. 414). The evolutionary approach to Jung's work claims that since the instincts are a product of evolution, so too are the archetypes:

The basis of ethology is the recognition that an instinct must be understood in terms of a species' *environment of evolutionary adaptedness*, that is, the environment in which it has evolved and to which that instinct has served to adapt the species. This is the context in which we may explain the *purpose* of an instinct (that is, its adaptive function). [...] Therefore, to understand the purpose (adaptive function) of the archetypes (as the psychical correlate of the instincts), we must consider *Homo sapiens'* environment of evolutionary adaptedness. (MacLennan, 2006, p. 11–12)

This seemingly quite reasonable position is, upon closer inspection, fundamentally backwards. How can we talk about the archetypes having a “purpose” and suppose that we have gotten to the bottom of things, when any notion of purpose is itself by definition an archetypal construct? While from an evolutionary perspective the archetypes are indeed the precipitate of the instincts, this holds true only from within the confines of this archetypal meaning construct. With reference to Jung's assertions that the archetypes were formed out of lived experience, Rensma (2013) has convincingly demonstrated that Jung's work often flirts with Lamarckian ideas, and that the efforts of biologically-inclined Jungians to “defend” Jung against the suggestion that his psychology does not fit neatly into a strictly Darwinian paradigm are unconvincing. In fact, the Lamarckian strain sometimes detectable in Jung's work is by no means the most challenging aspect of his approach to the matter—his archetypal theory in fact threatens to burst the confines of the evolutionary paradigm altogether. Recognition of this tendency, however, requires an attentive attitude to the logic of Jung's argument, and a willingness to follow this logic to its conclusion. The archetypes are representations of the instincts, yet these representations are not themselves directly representable. So what *are* the instincts? Since they can only be brought to consciousness by way of the archetypes, we cannot say. Thus, while the instinctual might be assumed primary by a biologist, from the point of view of the psyche, even speaking of the instinctual requires that we have an idea of it, and to have a meaningful idea of it, consciousness is already being constellated around archetypal influences. The instincts are therefore at a double remove from consciousness; we infer their existence only with recourse to the representations (archetypal images) of their representations (the archetypes *per se*). In Gebser's language, this points to the extent to which the mythical structure subtends the mental.

In distinct contrast to transpersonal theorizing, analytical psychology has been upheld for the most part in clinical rather than academic environs. The trajectory of Jungian thinking has for this reason been made subject to a possibly counter-productive demand for “scientific” respectability. Additionally, Jung's own desire to identify himself as a scientist alongside his reticence to engage with the metaphysical implications of his work has left his psychology vulnerable to scientific reductionism. The misrepresentation that Jung's ideas have sometimes endured as a consequence is perhaps nowhere more evident than in the recent trend towards “supporting” his findings with recourse to the assumptions of evolutionary biology. While this tendency has reached a new apotheosis in the fetishizing of neuroscience, the groundwork was perhaps established with the genetic approach of Erich Neumann. As is

well known, Neumann's (1954) major work, *The Origin and History of Consciousness*, purports to outline the evolution of consciousness as expressed through a proposed historical development of mythology. Giegerich (1975) mounts a strong critique of Neumann's project, arguing that Neumann's "history" suffers from a chronic lack of historically dateable material, and that a study of mythology refutes the proposed chronology. More fundamentally, however, Giegerich reminds us that the evolutionary perspective rests upon a form of religious fascination that marks this perspective as archetypal (p. 27), hence attempting to explain the entire archetypal field from this singular vantage is inherently problematic. Recognition of this perspective has often been found wanting, perhaps because the question is readily conflated with matters arising around "individuation," and the ill-founded yet often encountered notion that this process is somehow inherent to the unconscious. The sense of a "process" is engendered by the meaning-making function of conscious experience. This is apparent where Jung writes: "If one believes that the unconscious always knows best, one can easily be betrayed into leaving the dreams to take the necessary decisions, and is then disappointed when the dreams become more and more trivial and meaningless. [...] The unconscious mind functions satisfactorily only when the conscious mind fulfills its tasks to the very limit" (1945, para. 568). In Giegerich's view, Neumann's theory can be understood as a myth about myth: "What makes the book a mythos is the archetypal fantasy of genetic development itself, the idea of phylogeny and of the progressive differentiation from the uroboric One to the radiant sun-hero" (Giegerich, 1975, p. 26). Giegerich's critique has interesting implications for the revisionist approach to the work of Jean Gebser demonstrated by Feuerstein. Feuerstein (1987, p. 53) endorses Neumann's view that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny, calling upon figures like Freud, Erikson, Piaget, and Kohlberg, to try and support the claim that there are innate stages to development. He fails to mention that all four of these theorists have been widely criticized for the subjectively bound nature of their supposedly universal claims (Gilligan, 1982). Feuerstein shares this approach with Wilber (1981), who likewise attempts to associate Gebser's structures with the proposed developmental schemas of a host of theorists. This universalist attempt to assimilate Gebser is only conceivable with a disregard both for the substance of his work, and for the number of culturally bound assumptions that need to be made in order to carry this project through.

Remaining faithful to the direct experience of the psyche, with a careful reading of Jung we can no longer trick ourselves into assuming that the instincts have priority. While this conclusion might surprise those who would seek to position Jung as a pioneer in evolutionary psychology, it is nonetheless in keeping with his claim that physical reality is merely a postulate, and materialism, a hypostasis of matter (1939, para. 762 & 765). This dimension of Jung's thinking also resonates to a considerable degree with Lacan's work, who is likewise concerned to preserve a distinction between "the body" *per se* and the symbolic order. Lacan suggests that the body is infiltrated by the symbolic realm having been written over with signifiers in the acquisition of language. While it may seem counter-intuitive to claim that our experience of the body is not primary, this is what is implied by Freud's (1915) notion of primal repression: "a first

phase of repression, which consists in the psychically [ideational] representative of the instinct being denied entrance into the conscious” (p. 148). Developing Freud’s thinking, Lacan suggests that the reality of the body is something that comes to be obscured as we enter language. This establishes a dynamic in his theorizing reminiscent of Jung, in that Lacan’s postulating of the “real” as an inexpressible order lying *beyond* language is itself registered *by way of language*, and hence is subject to the same problematizing we have seen with respect to Jung’s approach to the instincts and their inference by way of the archetype. In both cases, any pursuit of a final “truth” lying beyond the meanings we construe, leads to a uroboric swallowing of the tail. A consciousness of this pursuit lies at the heart of a participatory ontology. For Jung, the transpersonal dimension of experience is registered in active participation with the process of meaning-making, or “dreaming the myth forward” (1951, p. 160), which for Lacan is registered by a shift in the individual’s relationship to the wider symbolic order. In a fashion reminiscent of both Gebser and Hillman, Lacan (1997) also emphasizes an approach to the psyche that postulates a-temporal structures rather than stages of linear development. His notion of retroaction (an expansion of Freud’s “deferred action”) suggests that the past is only meaningfully constituted in the present, leading him to state quite unequivocally: “beware of that register of thought known as evolutionism” (para. 213).

The challenging and unstable nature of these ideas has sometimes been interpreted as a threat to transpersonal theorizing. Wilber’s (2000) often-aggressive diatribes against post-structuralism and what he has termed “the rancid leveling of all qualitative distinctions” (p. 160) is emblematic of this. Wilber (2000) writes: “The extreme postmodernists do not just stress the importance of interpretation, they claim reality is *nothing but an interpretation*” (p. 163). As Wilber does not cite these extremists or indicate who specifically might fall into this camp, it is difficult to examine the substance of this claim or what exactly might be intended by it. The notion that reality is founded in interpretation need not imply that there is no such thing as an objective situation, but simply that the objective situation is participatory and hence subject to change. This, of course, does not bode well for any transpersonal theory that would seek to objectively outline the sequence of human development from the archaic past to the distant future. Combs (2002) writes:

Just how flexible, however, can reality be? Is it just putty to be molded into any shape whatsoever? Few would argue for this position, though certain postmodern constructionist thinkers seem to flirt with it. A more likely position is that reality is only incompletely defined in terms readily understood by nervous systems. In this case the principal occupation of science and philosophy is to sharpen up its corners for us, grinding the right set of lenses through which to see it truly. (Combs, 2002, p. 55)

For Jung and Lacan however, it is imperative that we recognize how the nervous system is already implicated in the meaning-making process. There is no question of finally separating the supposed data of the senses from our interpretation of it. This notion finds support in the work of Owen Barfield

(1988), who argues: “if the particles, or the unrepresented, are in fact all that is *independently* there, then the world we all accept as real is in fact a system of collective representations” (p. 20). Reflecting on the nature of the historical enterprise, Barfield notices that received opinion proceeds on the assumption that in the past: “the unrepresented was behaving in such a way that, *if* human beings with the collective representations characteristic of the last few centuries of western civilization had been there, the things described would also have been there” (p. 37). From a participatory perspective, such an assumption appears wholly unfounded. Considered in terms of the individual, there seem to be interesting implications for the mainstream assumption that therapeutic practice is concerned merely with transforming the experiential past in distinction from the historical actuality. In keeping with Barfield, “history” has no meaning outside our shared experience of it, hence a change in the experiential dimension figures a change in the historical actuality—the past exists only as a function of the present¹. This is suggestive of the systems effect that a shift in individual consciousness can have upon others who share a living-past with that person. The creative dynamism of the psyche tends to be regarded only in terms of the future, yet the subject of creation is just as much the past. This past, in so far as it is configured in the unconscious constellation of meaning by way of the archetypes, is changed in an actual sense, an approach that was foreshadowed with Freud’s shift from uncovering the “truth” of a seduction, to an emphasis on the underlying myth. Ferenczi and Rank (1923) suggest that while the major task of psychoanalysis is ostensibly the uncovering of the unconscious, the material that is most truly repressed “since it was never ‘experienced’ can never be ‘remembered,’ one must let it be produced on the ground of certain indications” (p. 31). Freud actually makes a distinction between repression proper (the process by which that which was once conscious is forced into unconsciousness) and *Verleugnung*, or “disavowal” as it is translated in English, a term used to signify the subject’s refusal to consciously register a traumatic experience. This distinction was subsequently amplified by Lacan to explore how the unsymbolized past remains trapped outside history (Davoine, & Gaudilliere, 2004). The reality of trauma persists in its remaining unmoved by time; its facticity is in some sense jeopardized precisely when the traumatic reality of the unspeakable is rendered into words, for at this moment the event which was not yet registered as such can be made subject to the possibility of being treated metaphorically and hence metabolized by history.

WHERE NOW?

The most we can do is to *dream the myth onwards* and give it a modern dress. And whatever explanation or interpretation does to it, we do to our own souls as well [...] the “explanation” should always be such that the functional significance of the archetype remains unimpaired. (Jung, 1951, para. 271)

Over the course of his synthetic approach to the evolution of consciousness, Kelly (2010) explores some of the archetypal constellations manifesting in

various perspectives on evolution. But what of the fundamental organizing principle implied by the notion of evolution itself? In an article responding to Tarnas' *Cosmos and Psyche*, Kelly (2011) posits the archetypal and historical realms as distinct and complementary (p. 78). Apparently regarding the notion of "evolution" as somehow existing altogether beyond the preserve of the archetypal, he goes so far as to state that: "the archetypal-astrological perspective is most coherent and compelling when explicitly engaged with *the larger and more determinate context of the evolution of consciousness* [italics my own]" (p. 80). This position seems to reflect an underestimation of the claim that archetypal theory makes over historical process. That Kelly takes this stance is surprising, since in an earlier article he clearly recognizes the extent to which operational thinking is subtended by the analogical imagination (2002, p. 72). As though in direct response to the position Kelly adopts in assuming that the historical domain can be separated from the archetypal, Barfield (1988) states: "For non-participating consciousness it is either, or. A narrative is *either* a historical record, *or* a symbolical representation" (p. 151). Ironically, Barfield himself is perhaps guilty of the same mistake in respect of demonstrating a reificatory attitude towards evolution. In the course of outlining his approach, he makes a distinction between three different varieties of evolution: "(a) an imputed evolution of some wholly 'objective', and therefore wholly unrepresentable base, (b) a fancied evolution of idols, and (c) the actual evolution of phenomena (including, as that does, a correlative evolution of consciousness)" (p. 71). Thus, while offering one of the most compelling cases in favor of a participatory perspective, Barfield continues to endorse the notion of an "evolution of consciousness," not seeming to account for the fact that the very notion of evolution is itself a representation. Barfield is able to speak of Darwinian evolution as an "evolution of idols" (p. 66), yet does not seem to acknowledge that the "evolution of consciousness" is susceptible to the same criticism. In having failed to subject "evolution" to an act of imagination that would consciously register this idol as a figuration, it appears questionable whether Barfield remains true to his own cause.

Jung (1954) states: "The forms we use for assigning meaning are historical categories that reach back into the mists of time—a fact we do not take sufficiently into account. Interpretations make use of certain linguistic matrices that are themselves derived from primordial images" (para. 67). In the following paragraph Jung points to how the word "idea" is historically determined, and hence, in a fashion reminiscent of Gebser, seems to allude to how his own theory of archetypes is in danger of consuming itself. In so far as archetypal theory exerts its own fascination and embodies its own kind of meaning making, it too is archetypal. Just as the birth of the universe and the birth of the individual are essentially veiled, so too the nature of the archetype. This is a recapitulation of the essential problem of consciousness. To explicate the origin of archetypes requires that we rely on archetypes. How then can the whole domain of the archetypal be thought adequately explained in the terms of evolution? Jung's approach to the archetype certainly does not require that we give up the notion of evolution altogether, but it does remind us that this particular means of structuring meaning is by no means final. That which Jung says in respect of the God image is just as much applicable to evolution—it is

unquestionably a psychic fact, but beyond that we cannot say. Furthermore, it is a psychic fact of seemingly pressing value for the present age. Clearly evolutionary thinking cannot simply be sidestepped, since the very act of attempting to do so is liable to rest upon an evolutionary supposition. By considering the evolutionary paradigm as in some respect inadequate, we seem to imply that we have evolved beyond it. Nonetheless, it appears that the study of consciousness is in danger of putting the cart before the horse when it takes “evolution” as a factual given and loses sight of the always self-reflexive nature of the discipline. This means respecting the likes of Gebser and Jung for the nuanced subtlety with which they approach these questions, rather than attempting to correct these figures by means of historicist revisionism in the case of the former, or a biological reductionism in terms of the latter. Barfield (1988) suggests that what is “needed” is not a new idea, but a new way of looking at the ideas we already possess (p. 11). He writes: “The best way of escape from deep-rooted error has often proved to be, to pursue it to its logical conclusion, that is, to go on taking it seriously and see what follows. Only we must be consistent. We must take it *really* seriously” (p. 57). The evolutionary paradigm is too fundamental to our present consciousness for there to be any question of our simply discarding it. Lachman (2003) suggests that for the esoteric study of consciousness, a teleological-evolutionary assumption constitutes the “paramount idea” (p. xxviii) for the field’s development. We might tend to this idea in the manner Barfield (1988) suggests by applying greater attention to the fundamental distinction between a metaphysics *of* process and a metaphysics *in* process.

If we are to do service to the “participatory turn” championed by Ferrer (2002, 2011), it seems necessary that we at least relinquish the evolutionary paradigm as a *prima facie* given. Ferrer argues against Wilber’s notion of a predetermined evolutionary path, and suggests that “teleological thinking does not require a monolithic final causality” (p. 155). This rejection of a finalized goal certainly seems to be an “advance” for transpersonal theorizing. Hillman (2010), in attempting to de-literalize the notion of a final purpose, quotes Jung as follows: “The goal is important only as an idea; the essential thing is the opus which leads to the goal: *that* is the goal of a lifetime” (Jung, 1946, para. 400). With this said, might it not be conceivable that the concept of a goal Jung speaks of, even if the content remains undetermined, still remains to be overcome? The indeterminate goal as an abstract ideal is always in danger of being concretely determined as the very goal of upholding this ideal, or perhaps even as the goal of transcending all goals altogether². It is precisely as we attempt to conceptualize a progression beyond progress that we encounter the limits of our ability to free ourselves from the fundamental assumption that consciousness is evolving.

NOTES

¹ In its “actuality,” the past can never be contained by history. The historical record, which speaks to the collective conception of possible pasts as we experience them in the present, is of course not identical with the past itself. History gives form to the past, even as the actuality of that past is naturally transhistorical.

²Ferrer is careful to state that his position in respect to the indeterminacy of the Mystery should not be confused with what he posits clearly as a plurality of determinate spiritual paths, each of which might function as a means of enacting that Mystery.

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BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN SPIRITUALITY AND PSYCHOLOGY: AN INDIGENOUS HEALER'S TEACHINGS ABOUT BEFRIENDING THE SELF

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ABSTRACT: Two modern day psychologists explore the intersection between Western and Eastern psychological and philosophical theories and the philosophy of an American Indian folk healer. Drawing from extensive research in the field as well as personal experience and more than one year of interviews with "White Bear," they arrive at conclusions that offer further material for building a bridge between spirituality and psychology. They explore ways a folk healer's concepts about the self, seeing gifts in others, one's own experiences, and anonymity apply to an emptying of the inner contents of self so that one can experience the undistorted reality that one actually encounters. In order to appreciate the bridging of the spiritual realm and the psychology, one must fully understand the tenets of each. The article includes a review of psychological and spiritual viewpoints about self to contextualize the qualitative study that follows as well as recommendations for further inquiry.

This qualitative research study is about giving voice to a Native American folk healer about spiritual healing. In the process of the discussions, White Bear, the participant, began to discuss the concept of self and relationship to self as foundational to spiritual health. During excavation of both religious and psychological literature, we found that many prominent thinkers had preceded White Bear in arriving at the same conviction. Such psychological and spiritual viewpoints about self contextualize the study.

INTIMATIONS FOR THE INTEGRATION OF PSYCHOLOGY AND SPIRITUALITY

Ongoing empirical psychological research supports a positive relation between religion/spirituality and physical and mental health (e.g., Ellison & Levin, 1998; Hill & Pargament, 2003; Powell, Shahabi, & Thoresen, 2003). Explanations for the positive associations include healthier lifestyles that persons committed to a religion purportedly lead (Kark, Shemi, & Friedlander, 1996), regular interaction with persons who supposedly have healthier attitudes and behaviors (Oman & Thoresen, 2003), the physical and psychological support offered by religious institutions (Lazar & Bjorck, 2008), and increased opportunities to engage in altruistic acts (Krause, Herzog, & Baker, 1992). A

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reader of such studies may appreciate the union of spirituality and empiricism and the concrete and practical explanations that have emerged, but may wonder where the more inner intangible aspects of spirituality are in the explanations.

As far back as the turn of the twentieth century, William James suggested that the inner aspects of spirituality could not be encapsulated by behavioral, affective, or cognitive concepts. He wrote, “The ordinary waking consciousness is but one form of consciousness. All around us lie infinite worlds, separated only by the thinnest veils” (James, 1902/1961, p. 300). Referring to noetic or mystical states of consciousness, James said they may be similar to but different from feelings or emotions. He continued, “Mystical states seem to those who experience them to be also states of knowledge” (p. 371). Richards (2003) referred to mystical states of consciousness as ineffable and paradoxical. He wrote that the mystical experience cannot be captured with words or Aristotelian logic. Kelly, Kelly, Crabtree, Gauld, Grosso, and Greyson (2007) described the mystical experience as a unitary experience during which one feels an interconnection with an ultimate all-encompassing reality. Richards (2009) wrote, “Consciousness includes infinitely more than our individual egos. ... Mystical consciousness includes a conviction that, within this unitive world, all of us are interconnected and inter-related” (p. 141).

Varying and fuzzy definitions of the self appear to be obstacles in making connections between psychological and spiritual perspectives. The concept of the self is a subtle and elusive notion within psychological thinking. In the study of personality, those who admit it as a construct define it obliquely. Ryff (1995) wrote that in the field of psychology, the construct of the self is typically described in terms of autonomy, observable behaviors, mastery of skills, self-regard, and development. Seligman, Stern, Park, and Peterson (2005) argued that individuals define themselves partly through their self-ascriptions, which are directly related to their actions, and partly through others’ ascriptions. Identity, which emerges from these ascriptions, is directly related to motivation and directs behavior. Harter (1999) reported that self-esteem is a by-product of achievement, though it can be a buffer to anxiety. Inflated self-esteem has been associated with aggression and violence (Izard, Fine, Schultz, Mostow, Ackerman, & Youngstrom, 2001). Self-schemas, or cognitive generalizations, which form the content of our self-concepts, become increasingly resistant to change the older we become (Swann, 1997). Sometimes one thinks and acts to preserve one’s viewpoints and views of oneself even in the face of contradictory information, ignoring, avoiding, or refashioning its meaning rather than engaging in profound self-reflection.

Reacting to what they felt was a constrictive construct of the self, Richards and Bergin (2002) argued for the consideration of an “eternal self,” one that is connected to a transcendent purpose and meaning in life (pp. 101–110). Sperry and Schafranske (2005) created a “model of integrative spiritually oriented psychotherapy” (pp. 21–23), arguing that the psychological and spiritual experiences are fundamentally related. They wrote that psychotherapy often focuses on symptom relief and adaptive functioning but should include self-

transformation and self-transcendent values and acts. More than any other movement in psychology, transpersonal psychology has been instrumental in connecting spirituality and psychology and in fact preceded the literature presented above (for example, Grof, 1975; Walsh & Vaughan, 1980; Wilber, 1980). Considering obstacles to this connection between psychology and spirituality, Jorge Ferrer (2002) assigned the primary problem to be psychology's commitment to the sovereignty of the isolated Cartesian individual ego, which observes the world from a detached position. In reaction to the Cartesian paradigm, initially some transpersonal psychologists tried to go beyond personhood in order to experience the sacred, though many have begun to develop a more participatory vision of human spirituality that maintains personal experience. That is, they argue, individuality is not lost when one partakes in transpersonal experiences, though it may be purged of selfishness. Ferrer (2008) is of the position that the transpersonal experience can be achieved by progressing down various paths such as, through Buddhism's compassion raising insight, Christian agapeic love, or shamanistic visionary experience, but ultimately the movement of the spirit is away from self-centeredness to a fuller participation in the mystery of existence.

THEORIES OF MAJOR PSYCHOLOGISTS AND SPIRITUAL THINKERS ABOUT THE SELF

The discussion that immediately follows is an attempt to lay a foundation that may be helpful in determining what might be the most naturally intertwining strands regarding the selves described by psychology and religion/spirituality literature. Once these strands can be made visible, we may proceed to consider the question of how psychological health and healing may be informed by spiritual understandings, or more specifically, by a Native American folk healer around whom the study revolves. So we begin with an overview of the most recognized psychologists' and spiritual thinkers' perspectives about the self and its development, including transpersonal perspectives that follow later.

Aaron Beck and his colleagues (Beck, Freeman, & Associates, 1990) referred to the self as a reflection of schemas and interpersonal strategies. Sometimes he used the word ego to refer to the self and then only with negative connotations. For instance, he sometimes described self-centered and distorted perceptions and interpretations as being "egocentric," while he claimed, on the other hand, that the functional self has undistorted recall, good concentration, and reasonableness. Interestingly, Rogers (1965) too typically used the word self as the center of the personality but occasionally used the word *ego*, always with negative connotations. For instance, he described "ego involvement" as selfishness that deters one from making good decisions. Rogers and Malcolm (1987) believed that the core of each individual was trustworthy, positive, resourceful, and possessing a basic drive toward health. Rogers (1965) held that distrust in one's own organismic nature results in premature closure in development. Maslow (1970) criticized the field of psychology for focusing on the negative side of human nature and then focused on individuals' capabilities for awareness, creativity, and peak experiences. He was of the position that the biggest enemies of growth are a person's settling for "normality and

convention.” Rollo May (1967, 1991) described a self as the means whereby persons make choices, but argued that one must transcend self-centered prejudices and the anxiety of freedom to make objective and creative choices.

Christian theologians too have written extensively about the functioning of the self as it is related to health and salvation. *The Confessions of Saint Augustine* (Augustine, 2001) revealed Saint Augustine purging himself of pride on his way to finding peace with God. According to Kierkegaard (1974), the self that searches for subjective meaning by using reason ultimately experiences despair. The self must take a leap of faith and direct its energies into a single-mindedness toward something unknown (God) in order to find atonement. Bonhoeffer (1968) argued that in order to receive God’s costly grace, one must give up self and its subterfuge. Tillich (1963) wrote that identity is symbolized by the self, which can only find “centeredness” after it has spurned self-centeredness and repeatedly engaged in acts of “transcendence and integration.” Reinhold Niebuhr (1953) saw self’s pride as the great enemy and enumerated the self as threefold: natural, rational, and spiritual. The natural part of the self urges the self toward destructive competition and will to power. Reason inevitably fails to acknowledge its own prejudices and finitude, rationalizing selfish acts. Only through the spirit can one transcend one’s selfishness and through grace experience unity with God. Neibuhr also referenced the “resurrection of the body” passage in the New Testament to remind his readers that the individual self is maintained even in atonement. Catholic theologian Teilhard de Chardin (1960) acknowledged that the self must detach from “enjoying oneself egotistically” and then encouraged his readers toward the path of “glorious responsibility and splendid ambition of expanding the self,” which he refers to as divinization (p. 74). He warned, however, that there are hazards of self-regard even when related to self-renunciation. Like Neibuhr, even though he advocated “the radical sacrifice of egoism,” he held on to the idea that one can be united with God and still remain oneself even after death.

St. John of the Cross (John of the Cross, 1958) expressed a mysticism founded on a dualism in which human beings are a battleground between the spirit and the flesh. The flesh must be mortified. His mystic way required extreme will power to remain obedient to God’s authority. He wrote, “One cannot reach union without remarkable purity through vigorous self-mortification. Whoever refuses to go out into the night to search for the Beloved will not succeed in finding Him” (p. 27). Thomas Merton (1957) maintained that submitting one’s self to God was paramount for spiritual healing. He argued that a false self urges us toward self-glorification, but God facilitates our awareness of our true self. God helps us transcend the depravity of reason to experience ourselves as part of his mystery. Sufi thought contends that the false ego that separates itself from experience and reality is a delusion. Inayat Khan (1999) wrote, “The false ego is a false god; when the false god is destroyed, the true God arrives” (p. 54). Krishnamurti (1973) stated that the mind or self finds healing when a person realizes that he or she is not a separate entity, that the observing self is the content of the observation. According to Kornfield (1993), Buddhism teaches that there is not a self. Healing occurs when we cease to identify

ourselves with repetitious mental patterns and when we achieve emptiness or basic openness beyond the self's fixed notions and obsessiveness.

Native American mystics frequently allude to spiritual experiences in which they feel or intuitively know they are interconnected to all of creation. Neihardt (1959) quoted Black Elk, who described an experience he had beyond the multiplicity of time and space. "I was seeing in the spirit ... all shapes as they must live together like one being. And I saw that the sacred hoop of my people was one of many hoops that made one circle ... and in the center grew a mighty flowering tree" (p. 58). Lame Deer and Erdoes (1972) repeatedly emphasized Lame Deer's spiritual awareness of transcending a separate identity. He said, "I offer myself to the Great Spirit. ... We are a part of nature, rain, stones, trees, animals, even insects. ... We try to understand them not with our head but with the heart. ... Time, like space, shrinks in unexplainable ways ... pressed together in a few seconds of insight" (p. 84). Discussing Hanblecya (vision quest) and the Four Directions, Bad Hand (2002) wrote, "Let go of yourself, so you can find yourself in the order of all beings ... recognize a common divine reality that belongs to every living thing upon the earth" (p. 76). The mystic journey begins with the awareness of a natural divine order, which results in a sense of belongingness and feelings of peace. Donald Fixico (2002) of the Muskogee Creek tribe wrote, "mainstream Christian thinking conceives of a bracketed, reified individual self. Fundamental Creek thought eschews the existence of atomistic selves and entities. The Creek entities, all my relations, human and nonhuman, known and unknown, are all part of a continuum of energy that is at the heart of the universe" (p. 2). Seminole Anne Waters of the Seminole tribe (2004) wrote, "Cultures that locate identity in a politic of ideas tend to colonize other cultures and link individual identity with linear time. Indigenous [culture] nurture individual identity formation with a communal interdependence and geographic location" (p. 154).

Almost all of the above authors write about the self being the center of personality and that selfishness is the main deterrent to development. The psychologists also see conventionality, bias, and anxiety as barriers to growth, while the spiritual and religious writers speak of temptation and sin, bias, anxiety, overestimation of reason, lack of faith in God, and lack of awareness of our interconnections as being limitations. The developmental goal of the self, for most of the psychologists, is to become trusting, free, autonomous, reasonable, and creative. The religious and spiritual writers are more likely to write about a loving relationship with God, realization of no self beyond conditioning, or a movement toward a unitary experience with God or Being Itself, some emphasizing absorption more than others. We are struck by the psychologists' focus on characteristics that might describe what may lead to or actually be a balanced, interdependent awareness, even though they do not name it in spiritual terms, while the religious and spiritual writers utilize metaphor to refer to an unnamable experience achieved through a higher awareness or submission to God and His/Her grace.

Again, it is transpersonal psychologists who have explored the connections between spirituality and psychology the furthest. Grof (1988) described two

types of consciousness; hylotropic and holotropic. Hylotropic refers to one's individual, normal, everyday consciousness which is in consensus with most other people. Holotropic refers to a state of consciousness that is equated with an awareness of the totality of existence. When in the holotropic state, an individual transcends his/her individual self. Ken Wilber (1995) has continued writing in this tradition. He argued that the crucial task in this regard is to integrate the subjective (associated with "I" and the arts), the inter-subjective (associated with "we" and morals) and the objective (associated with "it" and science). Through vision logic or "thinking globally," he argued that human beings have the capacity to integrate all three dimensions and come to the brink of the transpersonal (p. 264). Ferrer (2002) argued that during transpersonal experiences there is a fluidity between the objective and subjective. The self expands and can become identified with objects and subjects in the world (p. 32). Grof (2012) argued that transpersonal events encompass experiences at both micro- and macro-cosmic levels. He wrote that this identification can entail contraction to the cellular level.

Chögyam Trungpa (1973) used the phrase "spiritual materialism" to describe how attachment to spiritual achievement, even to apparent spiritual progress is simply another egoistic way of thwarting the ultimate awareness of the Self. Both Wilber and Ferrer caution that there is a realm of spiritual narcissism in which a person seeks a quantity of spiritual experiences for themselves. Ferrer wrote, "The goal is not to have spiritual experiences but to stabilize spiritual consciousness" (p. 37).

Using Wilber's ideas about self as a springboard, Washburn (1995) argued that the self is ultimately illusory, which concurs with Buddhism and the Vedanta philosophy. The self is not an entity or a pre-given structure but rather a phenomenon of identification. The sense of the self is derivative of consciousness experiencing itself through the basic structure of the highest active psychic level. He wrote, "The self exists only as self-identity, the content and boundaries of which are determined at each psychic level by the basic structures of that level" (p. 35). Bernard (2008) too is troubled by the notion of a separate core self whose essence is fixed. He contends that instead of thinking of ourselves as "an unchanging nugget like essence that undergoes change on the surface, while underneath remaining the same...our individuality is the never ending changing end result of all the countless life experiences we have had, held together and unified into a single stream of experience in our memory... our identity is constantly in flux and is intrinsically interactive" (pp. 340-341). Ferrer cited anthropologist Charles Laughlin's (1994) definition of transpersonal as "those experiences that bring the cognized-self into question" (p. 7), but added that transpersonal experiences vary across cultures. Then he expanded his definition further by arguing that, for some, the transpersonal experience has been incorporated into one's ordinary mode of being in the world, while for others it is experienced but not lived (p. 196). Further, Ferrer contended that the transpersonal experience is always participatory in the sense that "mystical knowing" is developed intersubjectively against the background of adequate metaphorical models (p. 197). Wilber (1995) and Ferrer (2002), while appreciating Grof's (1975) contributions in the area,

expressed concerns about descriptions of the self's monological experiences with God which can easily evolve into narcissism in the subject. Instead, they are more appreciative of Frohlich's (1993) description of the transpersonal experience as a "mystical intersubjective experience of a non-objectifiable presence of the divine at the level of one's own presence" (p. 140).

FOCUS OF THE STUDY

Both authors of this article brought to their study an awareness of the above research as well as deep awarenesses of their own spiritual traditions, which were Native American spirituality, Christian theology, and Buddhism, as they analyzed interview data with a folk healer (White Bear—see below), who discussed his ideas regarding self and healing. White Bear was selected based on one of the researcher's five years of experiences with him, the trust and respect both researchers have for him, and because he is well respected in both his local community for his spiritual wisdom and his Sun Dance community, which honors him with ongoing leadership positions. In line with transpersonal research methods (Anderson & Braud, 1998; Braud & Anderson, 2011), the researchers actively reflected on their own spiritual and psychological journey, while being open to changes of their understanding of this topic and seeking personal growth and development during and beyond this research processes. For over five years, one of the researchers had participated in purification ceremonies and dances with White Bear, the Native American folk healer participant of this study. While this researcher had engaged in many conversations with White Bear about healing, he had never considered writing a paper divulging any of the wisdom he had garnered until White Bear himself suggested it. This researcher conducted all of the interviews with White Bear. Because White Bear spent so much of the conversations clarifying and reiterating points about the self, both the interviewer who did the interviews and the other researcher decided that self would be a good starting point as a topic to consider. The two researchers articulated four areas for discussion which White Bear agreed to talk about. Consequently, the researcher decided to ask White Bear questions regarding his views of self and self-transcendence. Specifically, he was asked about the following four topics: (a) developing beyond the self-centered identity; (b) achieving awareness beyond judgment; (c) selflessness; and (d) healing through meditation. Also emerging from the interviews, White Bear offered many comments related to the importance of befriending one's self rather than engaging in an ongoing combative relationship with it. We hoped White Bear and his comments could act as catalysts to facilitate the further integration of deep spiritual wisdoms into psychological discourse. By inviting and listening to White Bear's stories, as researchers, we ultimately hoped to expand our own understanding of this topic as well as that of White Bear and the reader.

INDIGENOUS METHODOLOGY FRAMEWORK

This article is built on the framework of Indigenous Methodology (IM), which is defined as "research by and for indigenous peoples, using techniques and

methods drawn from the traditions and knowledges of those peoples” (Evans, Hole, Berg, Hutchinson, & Sookraj, 2009, p. 894). The main intention of Indigenous Methodology is to ensure that research is conducted in a respectful and culturally sensitive fashion from an Indigenous perspective. Thus, our contention is neither to reject nor compete with Western psychology, but to generate meaningful discussions by challenging Western psychology with the questions folk and indigenous knowledges raise about the nature of our being, spirituality, and healing. It is our assumption that the certainty and “scientific rigorousness” of Western psychology and its process of judging knowledge and truth (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2008) are in need of reassessment. Locally constructed and transmitted knowledges and values can provide new and different perspectives of psychological theories and spiritual traditions. Thus, we attempted to explore “the unique and yet potentially universal nature of the experiences” (Anderson & Braud, 1998, p. 31) by incorporating White Bear’s perspective with researchers’ insight and compassion, and the literature reviewed as well.

White Bear

A Native American male folk healer living in Oklahoma was interviewed multiple times during the course of a year. As mentioned previously White Bear asked one of the writers of this paper to interview him and write about what “the spirits” had to say about spiritual healing. This interviewer had witnessed countless others bother him for interviews and never wanted to be such a nuisance to him. Still, having been asked by White Bear, the interviewer could not imagine a person whom he would rather interview on spirituality. For years, the interviewer had participated in ceremonies with White Bear and had come to respect not only his opinions but also his spiritual commitment. Never had the interviewer ever met anyone who lived more in “spirit.” From the researchers’ perspective, spending more time in the spiritual dimension does not always equate with more profound or more complex perspectives. We had a hunch that he might be able to offer profound insights about the self, based on previous interactions and observations. One of the most discussed topics between the researchers was our experiences with other folk healers who overestimated their powers and who exhibited narcissistic tendencies. We revisited this concern many times during our work with White Bear. We found White Bear’s recurrent remarks about his limitations and his dismissive, self-effacing comment that often ended the interviews refreshing: “Take this information or leave it. I just say what I am told. If it is helpful good, but it is really none of my business.” We also found ourselves examining our own academic narcissism which lead us to value being “very critical,” an attitude that closes off much life experience.

Whenever going to visit White Bear, he was almost always to be seen on a boulder in the distance with his pipe. He had led over 500 sweat lodge ceremonies, hundreds of healing dances, including being pierced at sun dance over two dozen times. There were also little things he did without the slightest fanfare. I was told that in the middle of one night he had gotten up, put as

many bottles of water in the back of his pick-up as he could and then headed 15 hours south to Louisiana. He had heard that people there were without water after the hurricane. He also talked differently than most medicine people. He did not seem to ever say what tribal people thought he should say. He seemed to always talk spontaneously, without calculation, with great wisdom and genuineness. From the researchers' views White Bear is a good representative of folk healers because of his genuineness, his uniqueness and the respect he has from his local community and Sun Dance community.

The pseudonym "White Bear" is used to protect his identity. He made it clear that maintaining his anonymity is vital primarily to protect his and his family's privacy, so he limited the demographic information we originally proposed to disclose in this paper. As the concept of anonymity will be discussed at length in a much wider usage later in this article, it is relevant here to state that White Bear irregularly goes to a local prison to support Alcoholic Anonymous members. When asked if he received his teachings about anonymity from this organization, he said, "No. the spirits taught me about it. I use an old Indian word for it but what I have heard of anonymity I think it may be close to what the spirits taught me. So that is the word I use with you."

Like the shamans in biographies (Conley, 2005; McFadden, 1991) we have read, White Bear described horrific times in his life's path. He said he endured great poverty when he was young, but more painful was learning to love and accept his mother who was called "schizophrenic." He said he spent the first part of his life fearing he was "crazy," but the spirits told him that he could heal. He repeatedly spoke of his station as a healer as being involuntary.

White Bear is in his fifties and said that his vocation is a "ditch digger." He has a high school education but has never read an entire book and has no interest in doing so. Although he has limited formal education, he discussed his spiritual experiences in a highly sophisticated fashion. For the most part, he spoke out of his personal experiences, though, often relating them to the hundreds of Native American events in which he has participated over the years. He said he simply reported what the "spirits" taught, whether they were "Native American or other religions." The interviewer told him that some of his teachings sounded similar to Eastern religious ideas. He responded that he "did not know about that." But that he did not have time to read about it if that was what I was suggesting, because he already had too much to think about just dealing with what the spirits taught him. Still, he explained that just because he practiced Native American rituals (He has sundanced with the Lakota for half his life), he had no interest in "preaching Indian stuff." In fact, he was happy that one of the researchers practiced Buddhist rituals and hoped the ideas could be translated into that person's life in a positive way.

He and his wife do healing work together on an almost daily basis. In the past, his wife and her family have been very politically active members of their tribe. He and his wife live on a small tract of land several miles from a small town, where people come for healing from across the United States, Europe, and Mexico. White Bear said the number of people who come to them seeking

healing can become overwhelming. He and his wife run two large sweat lodges every other Saturday evening and lead healing dances every other Sunday. The participants range in number from 12 to 75 persons on those Sundays. He and his wife also receive individuals seeking healing throughout the week. They conduct at least one fire dance per year, during which they carefully contextualize its appropriateness and relevance. About half of the people who come for healing report drug and alcohol problems.

Researchers

We consider White Bear as a partner in theorizing rather than a research participant. Thus, it is vital to explain the nature of the interaction between us as researchers and White Bear, although we acknowledge that the relationship is a complex and changing entity. We are a Native American counseling psychologist and a Korean educational psychologist. The Native American researcher has known White Bear over seven years. He has participated in hundreds of Native American Indian ceremonies and dances throughout his life and has periodically participated in spiritual and cultural events in which he practiced the “pause” (the pause will be described later) with White Bear. He has also regularly conversed with White Bear on the topics of spirituality and healing in formal and informal settings. This pre-established rapport and trusting dynamic allowed us to retain an insider (*emic*) perspective, which facilitates the representation of the lived experience of indigenous people through dialogue. The insider’s view requires rigorous, critical self-reflection to avoid potential prejudicial views (Smith, 2005). Thus, the Native American researcher kept copious notes regarding his own observations and interpretations to reflect upon throughout the study in order to keep in mind that White Bear’s knowledges and perspectives were the center of the study. The other researcher has less knowledge of and fewer experiences with Native American culture, but has extensive knowledge of research methodology, and has regularly participated in Christian workshops and retreats that have encouraged spiritual experiences that might be described as mystical. She positioned herself as a fellow traveler of sorts who listened and shared with a participatory mode of consciousness.

Data Sources and Data Representation

Interviews were the main data sources in understanding the intricate details of White Bear’s perspectives and conversing freely without being constrained by predetermined prototypes or assumptions. The Native American researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with White Bear on ten separate occasions. Open-ended questions were used during each interview to serve as reference guides for the researcher, but the researcher attempted to follow the natural flow of White Bear’s remarks and attempted to engage in dialogue. Each interview conversation was centered around certain topics, such as ego diminishment, spiritual and psychological healing, energy, dimensions of reality, and interconnectedness and the unitary experience. Each interview

lasted one to one and a half hours. The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed, which resulted in a 146-page transcript.

Besides the interviews, observations of and participation with White Bear in rituals also served as data sources, which were documented in the extensive field notes format. The field notes included descriptions of the setting where the rituals and ceremonies were conducted, descriptions of behaviors and interpersonal dynamics, direct quotes from the conversations, and our comments, insights, and reflections. In addition, our ongoing memo writing and follow-up communication with White Bear were used as data sources. The multiple data sources in this study helped us to better understand the multifaceted nature of White Bear's perspectives. We read and reread the interview transcripts, field notes, and memos and then highlighted significant remarks throughout the documents. The highlighted remarks were compared, contrasted, and aggregated in order to find similar patterns and categories. Throughout this process, the researchers triangulated and summarized the extensive text into core themes that reflected overall contexts and meaning. During the process of interviewing White Bear and analyzing the text, we brought in defined concepts from Western psychology and Western religions and showed them to White Bear. However, White Bear constantly deconstructed those concepts and loosened the researchers' rigidity so that the meaning could be expanded and enriched. Thus, this study is based on the premise that there is no single spiritual Truth in time and space; rather, tentative truths and meanings can emerge through discourse with the subject of the study. This study attempts to encourage this dialogue with readers as well so that the process of deconstruction creates more space for growth and new language.

RESULTS

The following comments recorded from interviews with White Bear came in response to the questions (related to the four inquiry areas mentioned in the focus of the study section: (a) developing beyond the self-centered identity, (b) achieving awareness beyond judgment, (c) selflessness, and (d) healing through meditation. The areas of inquiry primarily emerged from previous experience with White Bear but were informed by the research and theory outlined in the literature review. As mentioned in the method section, triangulation, involving both researchers was utilized to arrive at the themes that are discussed below. The subheadings listed below emerged from analysis of the data rather than from any theoretical framework. Nonetheless, analysis of the data, a joint effort of the researchers, was certainly influenced by knowledges of Native American spirituality, Christian theology, Buddhism, and psychological theories.

Overcoming the Self-Centered Identity by Befriending the Self

When listening to White Bear define the self, the Native American researcher recalled feeling at first that he was being equivocal. "The self is a concept just

like God is a concept. If you don't know what they are, then my words won't help you. You feel yourself if you are open to feeling alive, and you can feel God's love if that is what you want to call it, but you can't talk precisely about it because we don't know anything that we can compare them to." At first, the interviewer wondered if White Bear was incapable of defining the self. Did he instinctively know the self and feel by summing it up in words he would be doing it violence? It was clear that he was not going to begin a plodding doctrinaire elucidation. He would not give the researcher repetitious phrases that would congeal into a fully developed definition. But he does indicate in this comment that the self is something we "feel" or intuit. As mentioned earlier, Tillich (1964) also suggested that the self we talk about is removed from lived reality. Language itself is based on dividing up and comparing experiences. Further, White Bear connects the self to God, mysterious reality beyond isolated containment.

I continued, "I have heard Christians talk to you about the importance of dying to the self or sacrificing the self. I have listened, wondering how that may or may not fit into Native American views about realizing our interconnection to everything. Would you comment on this?" White Bear responded,

There is not an Indian perspective. I can tell you what the spirits are telling me. They say, "Don't kill it. You can't kill it." The self tries to keep us safe from suffering right now. The self is important because it protects us and it keeps us on top of problems. It is helpful. I might have been hit and buried by the dirt when we were digging that ditch the other day if not for self. But it likes to look good all the time and the false one the Christians are talking about is a control freak (he seems to mean what the Christians refer to as the false self; possibly White Bear was reacting to phrases such as Bonhoeffer's "death of the self" described in the literature review) It is supposed to be viewing all this ... this creation that is always going on right now, but when it is in control, you just see only its protective vision that is not totally true and keeps you from seeing the beauty right in front of you.

White Bear begins with the assumption that there is part of a person that transcends and is capable of being mindful of the self. White Bear suggested that the self is simply a part of who people are and has a protective function. However, appearance is more important to it than truth. It may hide faults from a person on the pretext that the person may suffer, thus denying the person the possibility of insight and growth. White Bear suggested that the self may deny us the full present experience of appreciating our surroundings because it may keep us preoccupied with protective concerns and the way we may appear to others or try to control things so much that we cannot experience them for what they are. When individuals are overly self-conscious or preoccupied with how they think things should be, they cannot think clearly, feel naturally, or appreciate what is occurring in the present. White Bear continued,

People have tried to control the self through warfare. If it is the true self, it is viewing creation. It doesn't need to be killed. It's got its purpose. I try to not

fight self but have conversations with it instead. The self loves being listened to. Give it attention and honor it by wondering about its gifts. Make friends with it. We have to give self the permission to be who it is. We have to quit being at war with it. It is too tricky and powerful for us to defeat anyway. Self wants to look good. We have been hurt and embarrassed, and self wants us to look good. That would be a tricky thing for us to just kill off.

White Bear argued that it is important not to deprive the self of its needs. He said it is vital that a person let the self be who it is, a protector and an observer. People can “view creation” in harmony with their protective self. White Bear sees the insurmountable wiles of the self and suggests that people give it attention and make friends with it. It is crucial to note that White Bear was careful not to demean the self but rather said that the self demands recognition. The underlying assumption is that the self is only one important part of who we are but should not completely rule us. White Bear continued,

When a drop hits the rock, it goes everywhere, but then it becomes whole in the stream. Hitting the rock we come whole again. Self doesn't want to splatter. It wants us to stay in the protective box. It doesn't want to be the water drop that splatters into everything. When things happen that splatter us, we become nut cases. Self wants to quickly put us back together in the same or a similar box to not be embarrassed. Self wants to be in control all the time but it needs the chaos of splattering to change and grow.

The researcher asked, “Have you seen examples of people splattering and staying free?” White Bear said, “I have seen a few persons who were thought to be burned out on drugs or alcohol and miraculously re-emerged as humble appreciative people.” Was White Bear saying that when people accept the loss of control of their over-protective selves, when they lose their identification with their rigid self forms, that they have a chance for a larger identification? He seemed to be saying that full awareness comes when people are no longer in a hypervigilant state, when there is no more self-importance left. In order to remain free from self-tyranny, people must relax into the stream of ongoing change and openness or even into the chaos of unpredictable spontaneity. It is a state of being that may appear excessively vulnerable to many of us who want control. Still, White Bear had seen a few people who, having hit “rock bottom,” had become humble, meek, and thankful enough to “go with the flow” of life.

The researcher asked, “If we become truly humble, are we what people call enlightened or in harmony?” White Bear laughed and complicated matters more. He said, “If anyone got there, they would become unenlightened the next second because creation doesn't stop. As long as you are in time and space, there is always more to experience and know.” White Bear believes that people can only experience profound awareness if they avoid developmental closure by responding flexibly to new conditions and challenges. Any state like enlightenment must constantly be renewed and refilled (Wilber, 2007).

White Bear discussed the self's tendencies toward hubris. For many Christians, pride is believed to be the most fundamental enemy to spiritual development,

social harmony, and individual happiness. Consequently, as White Bear said, many believe they must make war against the hubris self until it is subdued. White Bear claimed that such an approach only initiates an unwinnable war that will cause misery. He suggested that people give the self attention, which it craves, and converse with it (possibly about its protective functions). When this is done, the self can relax and continue its protective functions and begin to view ongoing creation rather than seeking to control it. The point of his comments appears to be that we can move beyond the self's fears to living a life of greater freedom and serenity.

Healing the Self by Wondering about Hidden Gifts

When the self is not given the attention it desires, it looks with the gaze of judgment. White Bear said, "Most of the time our minds are a cesspool. We are so in our heads sizing each other up and judging, we end up abusing each other instead of creating with each other. If we were healthy, we would be healing others in our every interaction with them." White Bear's metaphor compares our selfish pattern of compulsive fault finding, critical one-upmanship, and obsessive comparisons with stench and waste. The self-interested identity feeds on distinguishing its opinions and appearance from others with a desire to feel superior. Csikszentmihalyi's studies (1990) support White Bear's metaphor; he reported that most people's attention is engaged in personal problems, grudges, and frustrations. He further estimated that most people spend, on average, 50% to 90% of their conversations talking negatively about others. White Bear continued, "By judging, you are trying to prove you're okay. Your self is telling you that you are such a great person and others aren't. Judging keeps us from being who we are. You are a being living in the present and you don't even know it. Instead of living in creation, you are in the cesspool of the false ideas about who you think you should be." White Bear said that there are continual opportunities to relax and live in the moment. We can live in life's constant stream, in relationship with others, rather than a stagnant egotistic pool, at odds with others. In the stream, people would no longer feel the need to judge and compulsively react. By not succumbing to the self's defensiveness, we could experience harmony and promote it in the world. Complaints and judging have no purpose except to feed the false self's attempts to control rather than observe creation.

White Bear carefully linked judging with not being present. He said, "If you are judging others or yourself, you are recreating an event that happened to you. You are recreating what already was created. You are not experiencing the new building blocks of the present. You are not in the present unfolding of creation." White Bear argued that most of people's physical, mental, and emotional functions are carried out in an involuntary, automatic, and repetitive fashion, out of habits based on past experiences. They are unaware of many of these habits, many stemming from patterns that were created in their ways of thinking and feeling from previous events in their lives. Those narrative patterns are so ingrained that they distract people from feeling the life within and around them in the present moment. White Bear said that these

mental patterns include judging both others and ourselves. People have the illusion that judging will somehow protect them, but the false, controlling, and judging self cannot live in the moment, where it is vulnerable to unpredictable occurrences.

White Bear said that one of the “Little People” (spirits he works with) gave him a specific concept to help him avoid engaging in incessant automatic judging.

Eneecho is an energy without judgment, without control, without dogma. *En ee okeenee eneecho o kone a baka*. The spirit inside you and the spirit inside me is the only truth we have. I wonder what the gift is inside you. Baajaloo (little person spirit) taught me this. He asked me, “Do you want to be healed?” He observed me making a judgment toward my mother and her schizophrenia. He asked me when was the last time I wondered what her gift is. ... Wonder is energy without control. You are not making a judgment of what the gift is.

White Bear believes that by practicing *eneecho*, looking for the gifts in others, one refines perceptual sensitivity, which helps the mind to observe itself and the world in a new and fresh way. When one becomes capable of this kind of conscious self-regulation, one begins to wonder and see gifts in all things and experiences, and then healing can ensue. If we change the negative patterns of measuring ourselves against others, being competitive, feeling threatened and threatening others, and looking endlessly for what we can gain or preserve, into wondering about others’ gifts, we can begin to heal instead of being caught in the cycle of producing antagonism and receiving it, resenting others, and being resented. White Bear continued,

These people we judge are our teachers. They are doing things to us that should teach us something. Many people will pray for their enemies so they won’t be bothered by them anymore. They should consider what it is about themselves that attracts the conflict with the person. You have a chance to move closer to no time, no space if you can do that. Every difficult experience or conflict is what they call enlightenment. ... Don’t try to control the conflict or even force harmony. Let go as you live each moment.

People view others as enemies when they personalize things others do or say. White Bear suggests that people pause and consider their own limitations or prejudices in the context of the conflict rather than reactively judging the “other” who judges them. Such a pause in judging preoccupations and reactions can provide a healing space that is without stress and anxiety. He suggests that even prayer for others can be tarnished by a condescending false compassion and can cause us to avoid the potential for growth that the conflict might contain. He advocates a qualitative state where the mind and emotion relax their braces.

Then, just when one might be considering that White Bear’s challenges may be too difficult to achieve, he makes them more arduous. “No one gets healed

until they see the gift in their abuse. Never! People realize how hurt their abuser is when they become healed. It is hard to get to this place.” The researcher responded, “But what about the abuser who feels no remorse?” He replied, “Be careful. You are getting into the area of judgment. There are people who did not experience as much pressure growing up, and some of these blessed ones become judgmental towards those who had a tougher time than they did growing up. Every person is an abuser and everyone has been abused, otherwise we wouldn’t be here.” If people meet hatred with hatred, they degrade themselves. When they judge, they bring fear and contention into their relationships. Unresolved conflicts, that is, ongoing, circular, vengeful thoughts, keep us unhealthy, obsessive, and unconnected to reality. If people can change negative patterns of thinking into compassion, they change who they are. White Bear contended that to gain clarity and healing, one must suspend judgment. People can commit their lives to living consciously in openness, forgiveness, and love rather than continuing in negative modes.

Various psychologists have written about ways that people block or armor themselves from living naturally, freely, and openly. Their perspectives are not so different from White Bear’s. Freud (1923/1960) defined neuroticism as viewing present experiences through the lenses of past traumas. Perls, Hefferline, and Goodman (1980) claimed that the most difficult clients were those who avoided present awareness by intellectualizing. Cognitive-behaviorists wrote of imprisoning automatic thought feedback loops (Beck, Brown, Berchick, Stewart, & Steer, 1990). The Flow psychologist Csikszentmihalyi (1990) wrote that the optimal flow state requires mastery over one’s inner life, filtering both worries and intruding, irrelevant thoughts. Deikman (1966) demonstrated that participants in his study who engaged in Meditation De-automatization increased the quality of their perceptions, developed capacities for unusual deployment of attention, and disrupted habitual perception patterns.

White Bear situates psychological liberation in the larger context of an oceanic spiritual energy flowing through all things. He argues that when the ego usurps control, an imbalance blocks energy, causing illness. He also puts special focus on how judgment of others or events keeps us in the realm of concepts and away from direct perception, experience, pure energy, and healing. White Bear adds psychological content to the typically noted idea of Native Americans favoring naturalness over more conventional and artificial modes of living and perceiving. He calls our typical mental and emotional functioning a “cesspool” filled with memories, cravings, miscellaneous irritations, and much nonsense distracting us from present awareness of the beauty in our immediate surroundings.

Anonymity

In the above sections, White Bear teaches that we suffer because of our failure to be in the present. We think our true being resides in our sense of self-importance and believe that we are isolated individual beings. He reminds us

that judging others is really about feeding our own self-interestedness. White Bear said,

It is like an ocean of energy is pouring through us and we get a bucket and fill it up and try to live on that bucket of water that we have decided we are. The bucket wears out. Narrow and fixed views of ourselves block energy flow. In anonymity, we can live in celebration of the energy flowing through us. Judging is the quickest way of ending the experience of anonymity. You are no longer in the moment.

White Bear stated that if we can allow ourselves to relax our insulated self-vigilance and experience the natural flow of life as it occurs, we might consciously experience an anonymity that allows the omnipresent energy to flow through us. He stressed that we must let go of our ordinary, narrow self-definition. It is our self-importance that keeps us fixed in our limited reality and separates us from feeling the exhilaration of ourselves as conduits through which life constantly flows.

One of the integral aspects of White Bear's teachings about spiritual healing is that we function as conduits rather than as buckets. White Bear says,

Who do you want to be anyway? When we are in spirit, we don't need credit for anything. It is better if you heal without knowing you are doing it. This way you won't try to control the work you are doing and limit it. The spirits can do the work without your pride or self-importance blocking the pure energy. ... I don't heal anyone. I am present observing the spirits working on people. We all do this and typically are not aware we are doing this. ... Healing is best done in anonymity. You do it indifferently. I mean you feel it but you don't control it. It is none of your business.

White Bear said that the healer allows the healing energy to freely pass through herself or himself to others. Self-glorification is a form of hoarding that halts the flow of energy. The false insulated self is possessive in regard to actions and achievements, taking credit for successes and bemoaning failures and making excuses for them, worrying about results. White Bear spoke of himself as a vessel. He said that the result of his healing work is "none of his business," which frees him from anxiety about the outcome of his healing work.

When asked for an example of when he successfully practiced anonymous healing, he replied,

I saw a washboard appear in the sweat lodge and told a person in the lodge about the vision. It meant something to the person I was talking to but had no meaning to me. He said that he had one in his car trunk. I think the person is surprised out of their thoughts or something, but they also feel kind of special when the spirits pick them out. It becomes none of my business instantly. I may say that I don't know what it means, but it must mean something to you. The spirits will show me something sometimes to get a person in a position for healing. The person usually says "yes." Just by

saying “yes,” the energy moves. But if a person backs off, then the spirit will say or show something funny. Laughing is a no time/no space experience.

Consistent with the above teachings about the self, anonymity is not the same as selflessness. On the contrary, many people should develop a sense of feeling special. White Bear makes it very clear that until people realize their own self-worth, they can never attain a more expanded awareness. Self-worth is not the same as self-centeredness. Self-centeredness, greed, and self-interestedness must be faced and worked through in order to attain authentic self-worth (Fromm, 1956). The individual self may be inconsequential compared to the whole, but it is the passageway or conduit in time and space for the creative energy to flow.

To summarize this anonymity section, it is best for us not to be fully aware of the healing that we accomplish with others. Anonymity keeps self-interestedness, which blocks the healing energy that flows through us, out of the way. The anonymous healer is in a place of no self-importance and no expectation for the fruit of his or her labor. The anonymous person is a vehicle of energy, not an obstruction to it, and knowing it is none of his or her business, there is no desire to be seen as great, nor is there a need to have things turn out the way one wants them to.

For White Bear, humility and anonymity are prominent, but not in a stereotypical way. White Bear, like other warriors, never humiliates himself, laying prostrate, begging for pity. As a healing person, he realizes that self-centered effort limits the effectiveness of his work with persons with problems and illnesses. White Bear yields himself to the present moment and detaches from his expectations. A person can get caught up in the suffering of trying to attain recognition and then suffer when he or she attains it. The project of personal development can easily turn into mere self-gratification, but real personal development may be more about divesting ourselves of the image of ourselves that we seek to attain.

Healing in the Pause

During healing dances that White Bear leads every other Sunday, White Bear sometimes calls on all dancers to “pause,” or suddenly stop dancing. When asked about the significance of “pause,” he said,

We often move ahead of the energy. Getting in the pause allows us to get back into no time and no space ... back before you learned anything, back to being at one. Watch the lizard and you will see what the pause is. When we stop and pause, all of our dimensions get in line again. There is active chaos in our everyday actions, and that is a part of creation. Everything comes apart as we dance. Then we pause in no time and no space. Then if there is not control, the true, pure creation of life comes through and spiritual healing occurs.

Here he described a pause that allows for a unitary healing spiritual experience. The lizard that White Bear referenced moves quickly from one place to the

next, stopping abruptly and looking around. When we are driven in our intention to reach a goal, we may accomplish much but may also lose touch with our unity and harmony unless we stop intermittently to connect with the world we live in and our whole selves. A pause involves sitting in no time no space, reconnecting to our whole self. It is a place where we may escape our goal-driven hypervigilance in order to experience calm and gain some inner order. It is also a place where there is potential and creative visionary experience. White Bear did not say that the pause is a place to recuperate, nor did he say it is a moment that lends significance to our lives. It is a place where we can be absorbed in no space and no time, in the unity of being and a time to allow creative healing energy to flow through us. White Bear continued,

When you are momentized, you are in a black hole. You wonder about the thoughts you have outside the hole. We wonder about those thoughts in an uncontrolled way. We should think of these thoughts in much the same way we would think about another person's conversation. We feel disconnected from ourselves when we wallow in thoughts. We stay in those ongoing thoughts, never disconnecting ourselves from them, never connecting to the pure energy in the black hole. Somebody insulted you. Simply pause, stop your train of thought, and sift through your thoughts, wondering what would be of value in the insults. *Loin beon miscelic*. Wondering what the gift is in anything. Wondering what the gift is not knowing, but wondering. You are here connected with all things.

Potentially, the pause is a space where we are free from the delusions that come from identifying with our thoughts and feelings. It is a unique position from which we can view our thoughts and feelings without being carried away by them. We can detach from our worries and fears and wonder about the creative potential embedded in them, but we must hold them in the purifying energy of the moment. We can be the awareness behind our opinions and feelings.

The researcher asked if the pause could be cultivated in sweats, peyote meetings, or meditations. He responded,

I am not trying to offend you about your Native American Church meetings, and you know I lead sweats, but intentional meditation and rituals almost always become boxes. They are usually set up in regular ritualistic ways. I don't like this. Anything that gets too purposeful can begin blocking the energy, the spirits. You can be in a pause while riding a bull. Children get in pauses all the time while they are playing. I am in the pause more often than I would choose. You know living in time and space is important, but you need no time and space for healing. The pause hasn't always necessarily been a peaceful place for me either. A couple of times, early on, I became very afraid when there. I saw some of the thinking outside the black hole coming into this spirit space. I don't know if it was coming in to be transformed through healing or if I didn't completely get out of time and space with all its stuff. I felt fear. I now let go and experience it for what it is and no longer feel fear. But it is not a place most adults can be peaceful in for very long. It is just being. It is not self.

White Bear let the interviewer know in no uncertain terms that experiencing the pause is not something we can grasp and subdue through intention and focused discipline. Rather, it is something more elusive and free. It is experienced by the unarmored, the one with childlike spontaneity, else the pause becomes another box created by regimented discipline, which has little place in White Bear's teachings about the primacy of the moment. It is a potentially scary place if we are not ready for the unpredictable and unexplainable that may occur there. He hinted that if we are not ready to simply be in the pause, we may be especially vulnerable to anxiety and fear when outside worries intrude. We have forgotten how to pause, and if we simply *be* rather than *do*, we lose our orientation and lack organization. Yet White Bear teaches that it is this state of unscheduled silence that heals.

DISCUSSION

From the first interview, White Bear insisted that neither concepts nor analogies will do when one tries to define God or the self. As selves, we bear the imprint of an ineffable reality. William James wrote that mystics have noetic experiences, or experience scattered bits of a unitary experience, that is, intuit the connection of their self with the Real Self but cannot articulate it. Thomas Merton followed a long line of Christian mystics such as Master Echart and John of the Cross in what he called the apophatic tradition, or the dark path, which seeks to unite the small self with the larger Self through a subjective path that eludes definitions and is communicated, though inadequately, only in paradoxical expressions. White Bear is in this tradition although he expresses his thoughts differently.

While White Bear never offered, and even resisted a definition of the self, he did suggest meanings about the self. For instance, after a purification ceremony, I asked him if he would be White Bear after he died. This following is the essence of what he said and in a harsh tone I might add. "No! Hey nobody knows what happens after we die. You really want to be a reference point? You want to be your memories? Really? Listen. The center, which you are always in, whether you know it or not, is everything and one. It is that simple." This seemed to be the essence of what he had been saying all along and having read more of the transpersonal literature this statement had meaning for us. Both Wilber and Ferrer argued that the self is not real in the sense of a static point of view objectively scanning the environment but rather is the interconnections themselves of which our subjectivity is participatory and does not exist without.

So, in what ways might White Bear's mystical perspectives influence behavioral health, and how can they be utilized by therapists? White Bear helps us to reconsider our relationship to ourselves. Many Western psychologies have emphasized that persons must have achieved in order to feel self-efficacious. On the other hand, some mystical traditions have argued that self-diminishment is necessary for an awakening to the vision of unitary consciousness. White Bear teaches that one can never slay the self and that it

is vital that we “make friends with it” and “give it the attention it needs” to keep it from acting as a tyrant. White Bear suggests that we do not give in to the tyranny of the self, which easily becomes overprotective and self-interested. On the other hand, White Bear believes that the self can act as a conduit for a much larger energy. When appreciation is shown to the self, it can do its protective work and give us a strong sense of will and purpose without becoming tyrannical. Ken Wilber (2007) also argued that persons who have matured into responsible, stable persons may then move to the next stage of growth, which consists of transcendent openness and the awakening of a unitary awareness.

One of White Bear’s most powerful spiritual techniques for healing is achieving a state that he calls the pause. In most mainstream Western psychologies, there is little emphasis on the use of states of being for healing. This is in spite of the fact that four decades ago Charley Tart (1972) wrote a seminal article that challenged the idea that alternate states of being were not accessible to scientific investigation. Since then a plethora of articles have appeared in journals such as the *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* and the *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies* where state specific methods of investigation have been developed and used to examine areas such as meditative states, lucid dreaming and LSD intoxication. “Mainstream” psychology would do well to listen to such contributions and make more use of it in therapy. As far as literature about Native Americans in psychology, in particular, is concerned, we most often find an emphasis on system theories, which focus on external patterns. White Bear, on the other hand, focuses on interior states of individual being, which may or may not contribute eventually to more healthy social interactions. By entering the “pause,” one can enter a state of being characterized by what he calls “no time and no space,” or “momentization,” during which one is freed from obsessions, all dimensions of being are integrated into one, and spiritual healing occurs. It is also characterized by a lack of self-domination and no differentiation. These states may facilitate the self’s growth into higher stages of development in which energy blockings due to self-centeredness are replaced by a wondering about others’ gifts, which, according to White Bear, allows the release of healing flexibility, openness, fluidity, and living in the present.

Without these pauses, the mind remains in a tortured state of constantly making judgments, filled with envy, jealousy, and ambition, unendingly comparing itself to others. White Bear refers to our inner worlds as tremendous wastages. If clients could be taught to pause periodically, turn off judgments, see the gifts in others and their own experiences, and identify with a broader consciousness, they might potentially address their stress issues as well as gain valuable insights that could act as anchors to hold them in higher spiritual developmental levels. Such a perspective is close to the Buddhist practice of *bodhichitta*, or wishing well on others (Kornfield, 1993). Instead of being annoyed with a person with whom we see ourselves in competition, we have positive aspirations for that person. When people are difficult to interact with, instead of hardening our hearts toward them, we see them as our teachers. Also, White Bear’s perspective is somewhat akin to Mindfulness Based

Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), which “unlike Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, has little emphasis on changing the content of thoughts: rather, the emphasis is on changing awareness of and relationship to thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations” (Segal, Teasdale, & Williams, 2004, p. 54). MBCT therapists teach mindfulness and meditation to their clients to relieve stress and facilitate relapse prevention.

On the other hand, White Bear’s perspectives do not directly address many areas that psychologists and therapists regularly work on with their clients. Folk spiritual practices, such as White Bear’s, could benefit from incorporating some mainstream psychological practices that have been subjected to empirical investigation since many spiritual folk approaches may not directly address contemporary Western family system problems and difficulties of love (Livingston & Cummings, 2009; Morrison, Clutter, Pritchett, & Demmitt, 2009). All sides, including White Bear’s, are limited and should be willing to learn from those with different perspectives.

In line with this, Vazquez and Garcia-Vazquez (2003) reported that folk healing perspectives are rarely covered in the graduate curriculum in psychology. Mio (2005) argued that for the most part training of mental health professionals is “culturally bound” due to the lack of coverage of models besides “traditional white models.” Duran (2006) discussed what he saw as “ethnocentric bias” in mental health services and argued that it is damaging to “natural help giving networks” that have benefitted community members for ages. He wrote that Native Americans, Asian Americans, African, Hispanic/Latino Americans and other groups are being delegitimized because they are not represented as consistent with “professional standards of practice.” We hope this paper helps readers consider the validity and therapeutic value of indigenous and folk healing ideas and methods such as White Bear’s.

This paper focused primarily on one folk healer’s opinions about his relationship to the self and ways to utilize the self in spiritual healing. In the future, researchers might include several folk healers and consider similarities and differences of their views and healing practices. More specifically, researchers might inquire into the methods whereby folk healers enter into transpersonal states. They might also consider inquiring about how the time they spent in transpersonal states impact their everyday lives. Possibly, the most meaningful part of the above study was the folk words and phrases (e.g., momentization, making friends with self, self as reference point...etc.). They provided new possibilities to articulate vital themes that are found in transpersonal literature.

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BOOK REVIEWS

HERLIHY, JOHN. (2011). *Wisdom of the senses: The untold story of their inner life*. San Rafael, CA: Sophia Perennis. 208 pp. ISBN 9781597311274. Paperback, \$18.95. Reviewed by Samuel Bendeck Sotillos.

The eye by which I see God is the same as the eye by which God sees me.
My eye and God's eye are one and the same. (Herlihy, p. 40).
— Meister Eckhart

How often does one hear vague references made to the idea of—‘common sense’—without any reflection as to its underlying meaning? However, an interesting point regarding the notion of a shared world of the senses is that it is all-too-often reduced to what can be empirically verified solely by the five senses, excluding a whole dimension that has been not only acknowledged but also inseparably connected to the function of the senses since time immemorial.¹ The Sufi mystical poet and metaphysician Rumi gracefully outlines the indispensable role of this mystical dimension: “Your head is but a lamp with six wicks: Without that spark, would any remain alight?” (p. 3)

This volume penned by prolific author John Herlihy² brings a double-edge to the material at hand. While he moves freely between the diverse spiritual traditions, he is also a committed practitioner of one of them. Readers will be drawn-in by the poetic prose, intermingled with illumined wisdom taken from the world's religions, together with firsthand encounters with traditional peoples often allowing the reader rare glimpses into unknown worlds as if he or she were actually travelling along.

The work contains absorbing chapter titles serving a didactic function that lead one through the labyrinth of the world of tangible forms to the intangible world of the formless: (a) The Secret Life of the Senses, (b) The Visionary Power of Sight, (c) The Evocative Power of Scent, (d) The Resonating Power of Sound, (e) The Appreciative Power of Taste, (f) The Exploratory Power of Touch, (g) The Intuitive Power of the Sixth Sense and the Epilogue: A Crack in the Wall.

The theme of the senses requires a participatory inquiry, as they are the very instruments with which humans interpret the physical and spiritual worlds. Regardless of our unique human differences, we are all reliant upon the five senses, yet we commonly neglect to contemplate the mystery of the sixth sense—the most magisterial of all which subsumes and integrates the very doors of perception themselves. The author underscores its centrality: “The sixth sense is the apex and summit of the other five senses” (p. 3). It is often overlooked, that apart from its objective claims, the entirety of modern science could be said to be circumscribed within the domain of the five senses:

[T]he premier instruments of investigation supporting the scientific method are no one other than the five senses that on their own, or in tandem with

the recently developed rarefied pieces of scientific equipment that attempt to document at the quantum level and through empirical evidence the true nature of reality. In the end, we still rely on seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching in order to declare what we believe to be an objective reality. (p. 1)

While transpersonal psychology, like its forerunner humanistic psychology, has responded with good intention to the so-called intellectualization or rationalization alleged as defense mechanisms within modern psychology in order to affirm the importance of the wisdom of the body, yet both of these approaches are arguably rooted in one and the same organismic epistemology that affirms the popular adage: “Lose your mind and come to your senses.”³ In endorsing a way of knowing based on the sensory experience, it has gone to the polar extreme in excluding the importance of not only the human mind, which includes not only discursive thought or reason, but the very transcendent faculty of the Intellect.⁴ This organismic epistemology embedded within both third and forth “forces” in modern psychology favors the senses and the emotions over the mind, yet it blurs the distinction between reason and the Intellect, which is similar to the error of confusing the ego with the Self.⁵ The Intellect is the noetic or transcendent faculty within the human individual that perceives Reality unmediated, whereas the other faculties perceive the physical world through the medium of these faculties.⁶ This is not to suggest that the mind or reason is superior to the body, on the contrary, the human microcosm consisting of—Spirit/Intellect, soul and body—acknowledges the importance of the faculties and their fundamental interconnected nature; however, with this said, only the spiritual domain can truly situate the psycho-physical order.⁷

English	Latin	Greek	Arabic
Spirit (Intellect)	<i>Spiritus (Intellectus)</i>	<i>Pneuma (Nous)</i>	<i>Rūh ('Aql)</i>
soul	<i>anima</i>	<i>psyché</i>	<i>nafs</i>
body	<i>corpus</i>	<i>soma (hylé)</i>	<i>jism</i>

It would be also useful in this context to mention medieval philosopher Boethius (480–525), who presented the human faculties in the following ascending order: sense (*sensus*), imagination (*imaginalis*), reason (*ratio*), Intellect (*Intellectus*), and similar interpretations can be found amongst the other spiritual traditions of the world.⁸ The author reminds the reader of the divide that exists between traditional modes of knowing and those of modern science, which equally applies to humanistic and transpersonal psychology: “Sadly, the modern mentality does not accord the intellect its true value as a spiritual faculty capable of direct knowledge of God” (p. 192)⁹.

A paradoxical facet of the senses is that whatever sense is employed, it always alludes to what transcends it. For example, the scent of the rose is not limited to the rose, or the taste of sugar is not limited to sugar, as the sense experience invokes the mystical dimension beyond form. This however does not in any

way diminish the sensory experience of the physical world, as the forms not only assist in navigating the physical world, but simultaneously point beyond it. Similarly, the human *psyche* is never solely satisfied with the gratification of the senses because it yearns for what is beyond itself, what is supra-sensible and equally supra-rational. The great Sufi mystic Al-Hallaj (858–922) proclaimed the inner meaning of the senses: “When I wanted to drink to quench my thirst, it is You that I saw in the shadow of the goblet” (p. 134). With this said, we cannot take it for granted that it is through the forms that the formless can be intuited, which mirrors the intersection of the horizontal or psycho-physical with the vertical or spiritual domain as the poet Awhadi Kirmani, so skillfully expresses:

*I gaze upon form (surat) with the physical eye because
There is in form the trace of the Spirit (ma'na).
This is the world of form and we live in forms:
The spirit cannot be seen save by means of form. (p. 41)*

Sensory deprivation as a spiritual *praxis* as has been applied within the diverse plenary revelations has been known to heighten the physical senses. However, these transpersonal methods were always contextualized within an authentic spiritual form and were not focused on “consciousness expansion,” “altered states of consciousness,” or “non-ordinary states of consciousness” for such experiences in and of themselves do not lead to sensory integration and are more often than not hindrances on the spiritual path.¹⁰

At last there is a discerning and insightful work devoted to the invaluable theme of the senses which is informed by the—sacred science—of the perennial philosophy that needs to be set apart from modern science that began with the materialistic outlook of the Cartesian-Newtonian paradigm. In spite of the lack of books available on this subject, *Wisdom of the Senses* stands apart from others for several reasons. One is that it contextualizes the role of the five senses within the transpersonal domain, and second, it does so by acknowledging the perennial philosophy, which is neither of the East or West, but an embodiment of the timeless source of wisdom itself. The implications of this volume upon modern psychology are manifold, yet it is here where the traditional wisdom informs the reader of the inherent isthmus that exists between firsthand knowledge and that of secondhand knowledge, avowing that only those who travel the path may come to know directly for him or herself as the Sufi adage confirms: “Only the one who has tasted knows” (p. 112).

NOTES

¹ “In particular, it is ‘common sense’ that sees only the world of the senses as real, and that admits of no knowledge other than the one that comes from the senses...” [René Guénon, “A Material Civilization” in *The Crisis of the Modern World*, trans. Arthur Osborne, Marco Pallis and Richard C. Nicholson (Hillsdale, NY: Sophia Perennis, 2004), p. 86]; “[M]odern man has become quite impermeable to any influences other than such as impinge on his senses; not only have his faculties of comprehension become more limited, but also the field of his perception has become correspondingly restricted.” [René Guénon, “The Illusion of ‘Ordinary Life’” in *The Reign of Quantity and the Signs of the Times*, trans. Lord Northbourne (Hillsdale, NY: Sophia Perennis, 2004), p. 101].

² For an interesting discussion contrasting the distinctions between modern psychology and sacred psychology see, Samuel Bendeck Sotillos, “The Spiritual Psychology of the *Religio Perennis*: Interview with John Herlihy,” *AHP Perspective*, December 2009/January 2010, pp. 8–12.

³Frederick S. Perls, *Gestalt Therapy Verbatim*, ed. John O. Stevens (Lafayette, CA: Real People Press, 1969), p. 69. See also Wilhelm Reich, *Character-Analysis: Principles and Techniques for Psychoanalysts in Practice and Training*, trans. Theodore P. Wolfe (Rangeley, ME: Orgone Institute Press, 1945); Harris L. Friedman and Robert Glazer, "The Body Never Lies: In Memory of Alexander Lowen," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (July 2009), pp. 376–379; Alexander Lowen, *The Language of the Body* (New York: Collier Books, 1958); Ron Kurtz and Hector Presteria, *The Body Reveals: An Illustrated Guide to the Psychology of the Body* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976).

⁴This is more than apparent in the following statement: "Intellect is the whore of intelligence" [Frederick S. Perls, *Gestalt Therapy Verbatim*, ed. John O. Stevens (Lafayette, CA: Real People Press, 1969), p. 22]

⁵René Guénon, "Fundamental Distinction between 'Self' and 'ego'," in *Man and His Becoming According to the Vedānta*, trans. Richard C. Nicholson (Hillsdale, NY: Sophia Perennis, 2004), pp. 21–30.

⁶"With the light of the intellect we can see things which are invisible to our bodily senses." [E.F. Schumacher, "Adequatio": I" in *A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), p. 46]

⁷The following diagram is found in William Stoddart, "What is the Intellect?" in *Remembering in a World of Forgetting: Thoughts on Tradition and Postmodernism*, eds. Mateus Soares de Azevedo and Alberto Vasconcellos Queiroz (Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom, 2008), p. 46; This spiritual organ, also known as the "Eye of the Heart" is illuminated by Hehaka Sapa or Black Elk (1863–1950), a remarkable sage of the Lakota Sioux: "I am blind and do not see the things of this world; but when the Light comes from Above, it enlightens my heart and I can see, for the Eye of my heart (*Chante Ista*) sees everything. The heart is a sanctuary at the center of which there is a little space, wherein the Great Spirit dwells, and this is the Eye (*Ista*). This is the Eye of the Great Spirit by which He sees all things and through which we see Him. If the heart is not pure, the Great Spirit cannot be seen, and if you should die in this ignorance, your soul cannot return immediately to the Great Spirit, but it must be purified by wandering about in the world. In order to know the center of the heart where the Great Spirit dwells you must be pure and good, and live in the manner that the Great Spirit has taught us. The man who is thus pure contains the Universe in the pocket of his heart (*Chante Ognaka*)." [Frithjof Schuon, "The Sacred Pipe," in *The Feathered Sun: Plains Indians in Art and Philosophy* (Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom Books, 1990), p. 51]; See also Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "The Wisdom of the Body," in *Religion and the Order of Nature* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 235–269; Frithjof Schuon, "The Message of the Human Body," in *From the Divine to the Human*, trans. Gustavo Polit and Deborah Lambert (Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom Books, 1982), pp. 87–101; Frithjof Schuon, "Survey of Integral Anthropology," in *To Have A Center* (Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom Books, 1990), pp. 39–52; René Guénon, "The Limits of the Mental" in *Perspectives on Initiation*, trans. Henry D. Fohr, ed. Samuel D. Fohr (Hillsdale, NY: Sophia Perennis, 2001), pp. 205–210.

⁸See Martin Lings, "Metaphysics and the Perennial Philosophy," lecture delivered at the Temenos Academy.

⁹While certain individuals within both humanistic and transpersonal psychology have attempted to rectify the imbalance of this organic epistemology, with much to their credit, they nonetheless still fall short from acknowledging the quintessential role of the Intellect as a transcendent mode of knowing, as is perceived by the spiritual traditions of the perennial philosophy, see John Rowan, "The Intellect," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Winter 1991), pp. 49–50; Walter Truett Anderson, *The Upstart Spring: Esalen and the American Awakening* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1983); Albert Ellis, *Reason and Emotion in Psychotherapy, Revised and Updated* (Secaucus, NJ: Carol Publishing Group, 1994); George Leonard, "Flesh, Spirit, and Emptiness" and "What the Senses Say" in *The Silent Pulse: A Search for the Perfect Rhythm That Exists in Each of Us* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1978), pp. 30–34, 35–52; Michael Murphy, *The Future of the Body: Explorations Into the Further Evolution of Human Nature* (Los Angeles, CA: Jeremy P. Tarcher, 1992); Eric Berne, "General Characteristics of Transactional Analysis," in *Principles of Group Treatment* (New York: Grove Press, 1966), p. 215; John B. Watson, "The Heart or the Intellect?", *Harper's Magazine*, (1928), February, pp. 345–352; Anna Freud, *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense*, trans. Cecil Baines (London: Hogarth Press, 1937); M. Scott Peck, "Thinking" in *The Roadless Travelled and Beyond: Spiritual Growth in an Age of Anxiety* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), p. 47; Stuart Sovatsky, "Questioning Words—Reviving Time," in *Words from the Soul: Time, East/West Spirituality, and Psychotherapeutic Narrative* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1998), p. 69; Ken Wilber, "Mind Module: The AQAL Framework," in *The Integral Vision: A Very Short Introduction to the Revolutionary Integral Approach to Life, God, the Universe, and Everything* (Boston, MA: Shambhala, 2007), pp. 178–187.

¹⁰See René Guénon, "The Confusion of the Psychic and the Spiritual" in *The Reign of Quantity and the Signs of the Times*, trans. Lord Northbourne (Hillsdale, NY: Sophia Perennis, 2004), pp. 235–240.

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John Herlihy was born in Boston, Massachusetts of Irish American origin. He has worked for over 40 years as an educator and professor of writing. He has written a number of books on travel and spirituality, with special emphasis on the integration of the traditional world within the modern world. His recent books included *Borderlands of the Spirit* and *Wisdom's Journey*. He now resides

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The Reviewer

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CARRERA, JAGANATH (2012). *Awaken inside yoga meditation*. Woodland Park, NJ: Yoga Life Publications. 198 pp. ISBN-13: 978-0692017302. \$15.95. *Reviewed by Chanell Jaramillo*.

Awaken Inside Yoga Meditation is a concise, comprehensible beginner's guide to understanding the importance and application of meditation as part of the yoga practice. With the Western mind-set opening more widely in the past several decades to Eastern experiences, yoga has made its way into mainstream health and wellness practices mainly focusing on asana (posture) and pranayama (breathing) of yoga practice and disregarding the importance of meditation. This book awakens the seventh limb (meditation) within the eight-limb practice of yoga. *Awaken* is a graspable and practical guide for anyone seeking to not only understand meditation through a yoga perspective, but also for those seeking to understand yoga as a mental, physical and possible spiritual practice.

The book is divided into nine brief sections, each walking the reader through step-by-step information to successfully begin a meditation practice or determine if meditation via the yoga path is right for them. Within the first three sections, Reverend Carrera has provided the reader with an opportunity to investigate the philosophies, purpose, ways and tools used in meditation, as well as a knowledgeable example of why the practice of meditation has survived for five thousand years. Section 1- Is Meditation for Me - provides a Q & A and highlights the benefit of meditation. Section 2- How to Meditate - provides a quick, yet pointed outline of the three basic elements of meditation as well as other commonly used techniques, and Section 3- Building Blocks for Success in Meditation - guides the reader through a meditation practice from start to finish. Later, in Section 6 – Success in the Details: Hints and Suggestions that Work - Carrera provides details, suggestions and hints to furthering one's success in meditation.

The subsequent sections continue to carry the focus of meditation by way of yoga while also giving explanation and clarity to many Sanskrit words, yogic

terms and philosophies, and the history and root of Hatha Yoga. These clarifications may provide the yoga practitioner and beginning meditation student with more familiarity with this multifaceted discipline beyond asana. Reverend Carrera has successfully integrated the complexity of ancient wisdoms with the necessary practicality today's society requires to produce a basic, yet multifaceted handbook for the beginning practitioner.

I recommend this guidebook to all yoga students interested in expanding their understanding of the importance of meditation as part of their yoga practice, and especially to the yoga teacher who is in need of clear, simple and concise training materials for their students.

The Author

Reverend Jaganath Carrera, M.A., developed Integral Yoga Meditation and Raja Yoga Teacher Training programs and was the principal instructor of both Hatha and Raja Yoga for over 20 years. Reverend Carrera is the founder and spiritual head of Yoga Life Society and author of *Inside the Yoga Sutras: A Comprehensive Sourcebook for the Study and Practice of Patanjali Yoga Sutras*. Reverend Carrera has been teaching yoga since 1973 and has provided universities, prisons and yoga centers nationally and abroad with instruction.

The Reviewer

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LE GRICE, KEIRON (2013). *The rebirth of the hero: Mythology as a guide to spiritual transformation*. London, UK: Muswell Hill Press. xvii + 284 pp. ISBN-13: 9781908995056. Paperback, \$18.21. *Reviewed by Jay Dufrechou.*

“If you can live comfortably within the bounds of an old mythic-religious tradition,” writes Keiron Le Grice in the spirit of Joseph Campbell, “then all well and good. But if for you the old religious signs and symbols no longer have the authentic credibility they used to have, you are forced to find your own way through life, to find your own life meanings, your own personal myth” (p. 59).

Drawing upon the work and lives of Campbell, C. G. Jung, and Friedrich Nietzsche, Le Grice offers an intellectual and emotional grounding for the

heroic journey of individuation some of us feel compelled to take. Eminent explorers of the depths of human experience, whose ideas form background for the emergence of transpersonal psychology, Jung, Nietzsche and Campbell appear in *The Rebirth of the Hero* not only through their work, but also through their personal histories. This is part of the sense of reality conveyed in the book – and reality is important because heroes are reborn psychologically in our time not in theory, but courageously through actual, and typically very imperfect, even chaotic, lives.

For those familiar with the work of Campbell, most importantly *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949/2008) and his other articulations of the cross-cultural heroic monomyth, a psychological understanding of the heroic journey is not new. The understanding of the psyche and individuation process in *The Rebirth of the Hero* is essentially Jungian, also familiar to those in the transpersonal field. But even if many of the concepts are familiar, Le Grice writes in a way that feels as though he is talking personally right now to those of us on “a spiritual path.” Le Grice situates the hero’s rebirth, as a symbolic model of the psychological death-rebirth process, within a wide range of prior wisdom and examples of contemporary culture. This is helpful experientially by broadening one’s sense of personal participation in a human adventure undertaken by many before us.

On the contemporary hero’s call to adventure, Le Grice observes, “Sometimes there is one decisive moment,” but often “the call is ongoing; you are invited to continually respond to your own calling and remain true to your own path” (p. 114). For instance, “when following synchronicities, those uncanny ‘meaningful coincidences,’ as Jung described them...” (p. 114).

If you are able to follow one synchronicity, another will come along in due course, and then another, and another. On each occasion you must choose if you are to follow the promptings of the spirit within the universe – a response that always requires a leap of faith, the willingness to take a step into the unknown. With each step, future possibilities open, drawing you further and further along your own life path. You are invited at each life juncture to put your trust in the transrational life direction suggested by the synchronicity. Goethe said that if you dare to follow your highest destiny, to attempt to do something great, the whole universe will bend to your aid. But to do this requires placing your trust in life, and accepting and embracing your own life journey with all the challenges and suffering it entails. It will ask of you everything that you have got. It will take you past all of your existing limits. It will force you to face everything in your psyche, good and bad, for on the path of spiritual transformation, as we read in the words of Jesus (Matthew 10:26), “there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known.” (p. 114)

As illustrated by the above passage, Le Grice draws not only upon Jung, Campbell, and Nietzsche, but also from a wide range of recorded human wisdom, including that mesmerizing source of contemporary mythology – movies. Most of us, like it or not, have images living in our hearts and minds from classic cinematic journeys – such as Star Wars, The Lord of the Rings, and

Jason and the Argonauts. Le Grice draws on those images to bring to life many aspects of the psychological heroic journey that we may previously have encountered only conceptually. As many times as I have thought about various elements of the individuation trajectory, experiencing one or two scenes from a movie as interpreted by Le Grice makes a world of difference in embodied understanding – and, frankly, in evocation of the archetypes within me. As a whole, *The Rebirth of the Hero* teaches ways to see and feel mythologically – with mythology understood as stories or artistic creations illuminating the powerful forces of the human psyche, and suggesting possibilities for navigating them. This allows us to realize that myths are living and constantly arising all around us – and offering us support and guidance. Just like myths did for our ancestors.

Part I of *The Rebirth of the Hero* suggests how one might understand human history, both Western and Eastern, as leading to the present moment wherein each of us has the opportunity to undertake our unique heroic journey. Le Grice understands the Western collective journey as producing an ego consciousness separated from body and nature – which for many of us is bad news, yet, as Le Grice explains, allowed an emergence of individuality. Le Grice understands East and West as different but complementary paths that are now coming together. Unlike the West, the East, as articulated by Campbell, has remained closer to an ideal of collective experience or the Ground of Being, with spirituality offering the means to relinquish individuality into the (more collective) flow of what is. Le Grice writes:

The spiritual emphasis of the East is not on the fulfillment or realization of the self, but on liberation from the self and the limitations of egoic existence.

The notion of seeking to gratify one's personal desires by exercising one's own individual will – the ideal of modern life in the West – has been largely alien to Eastern traditions. For it is the essence of the Western attitude to life, emerging particularly out of the Greek ideal of the rational self-determining individual, to place high value on individual choice, and to affirm the validity of the individual's own impulses and desire to live life as he or she sees fit. (p. 31)

Le Grice portrays Nietzsche, one of my personal existential heroes, as embodying – tragically in terms of his personal life – a turning point in Western Civilization, when Nietzsche was the first to realize “God is dead.” Le Grice asks:

What happens when, as a culture, we break out of the traditional Christian world view into a period of history shaped by the dawning realization that “God is dead”? What happens when the primary source of life meaning passes away? The answers and consequences are plainly evident all around us: Secular and political ideologies assume quasi-religious status; materialism, economics, and consumerism are pursued with religious fervor; science, in the service of the state, becomes the new moral authority; higher purpose and aspirations are lost as many people live for exclusively secular values. Meanwhile, others – the creative spiritual minority – are forced to confront

the reality of nihilism. For when the old belief systems and the old collective mythology that gave meaning to experience are taken away, the metaphysical and cosmological frameworks that supported human life are shaken to their foundations and begin to crumble. (p. 58)

For many of us living now, in our particular historical moment, the call begins with – or at least takes place within – a realization of the heartbreakingly painful spiritual wasteland in which we find ourselves. The pain of the realization is worse when you feel no one else knows but you. What does one do?

Le Grice writes, “If, as [Oswald] Spengler believed, we are indeed in the terminal decay and subsequent death phase of modern industrial civilization, what, we might wonder, will come next? Where do we go from here?” (p. 97). The answer involves turning within: looking for salvation through our own despair – and hope – and commencing a personal heroic journey toward spirit that can now be found only through our own psyches. Oddly enough, as Le Grice articulates, this is both necessary and possible because of our separate sense of self. That separate sense of self must be developed (individuation) through conscious experience of all that exists within us, including all that we have introjected from contemporary culture, which to some of us, after we have begun to awaken, may feel like a wasteland.

Ultimately, the wasteland involves personal wounding, and paradoxically that very wounding is the source of salvation. As Le Grice writes:

The wasteland is an important motif in Campbell’s analysis of the contemporary spiritual and mythological situation. The concept originates in the Arthurian legend of the Fisher King who is wounded in the groin by a “spear of destiny” (the so-called Dolorous Stroke), and his kingdom becomes barren – a condition symbolically suggested by the king’s wound. The healing of the king and the renewal of the wasteland can only be effected by the successful fulfillment of the quest for the Holy Grail. (p. 96)

The quest for the Grail, even though individual in our times, is not selfish. Even contemporary heroes seek rebirth not just for themselves, but also for their people (and in our times, we are all one people, one global community). Le Grice writes, “Campbell believed that the creative individual can bring a new flow of life to the wasteland of modernity, to reconnect the culture to the vital springs of life energy that reside in the unconscious. He sees this as the central sociological task of the hero” (p. 97). While the journey may have sociological ramifications, it is necessarily intensely personal.

In Part II of *The Rebirth of the Hero*, we find Le Grice even more personally present as he considers aspects of the heroic journey as actually lived. While ancient heroes fought external battles, we contemporary heroes must go inside, into our own psyches. This requires no less courage, perhaps more. Having undertaken his own particular journey, Le Grice writes from a depth of experience about the actual psychological and sociological perils of finding one’s way to an individuality infused with spirit while living within

contemporary culture. Le Grice's personal voice carries the thread of the Part II narrative, yet supported by an impressive range of references to poetry, sacred texts, film, art, and many other manifestations of culture. It is evident Le Grice has been reading and watching and following his call into finding affirmations and guidance for the journey all around us – and we learn from this example how to watch for and gather modern mythological support for our own response to the call.

As Le Grice explores, if we follow the call, we can expect various obstacles. While ordeals in the outer world challenged ancient heroes, we must face our own psychological reactions as we leave the comforts of home, the assumptions of others and consensus reality in a materialist culture. For instance, what felt like certain knowledge or implicit assumptions about ways of being and knowing may start to fall apart. The old structures of the ego may start to fall apart. For Le Grice, this is moving beyond the threshold and encountering “the opposites.” Remember Jason and the Argonauts sailing through that narrow Aegean Sea passage that had just destroyed another ship, boulders crashing down all around them? That scene has been burned on my consciousness since I was a kid. As an example of how Le Grice uses such memorable film moments:

Breaking down the psychology of this scene: the boat represents the vehicle of life and consciousness, Jason is the hero representing ego-consciousness (or the heroic part of the ego), and the crew members represent other parts of the psyche that Jason is trying to control and direct. The narrow passage leads between the opposites, the rocks representing the crumbling old psychological structures that crash into the water (representing the unconscious). At the same time, the collapsing rocks cause the water to whip up, lashing the Argo, tossing it from side to side, suggesting the turbulence of the desire nature and instincts when the old psychological structure starts to collapse and long-repressed drives, fears, and passions are violently released into consciousness. (p. 152)

Without the structure of a psychologically-useful religious or spiritual system in our culture, in a time when following the heroic call to spirituality requires us to negotiate falling rocks in our psyches and external lives, many of us need to develop the strength and courage to negotiate the passages on our own, at least in early stages. In real life, as Le Grice and many of us know:

Usually, when a person experiences deep psychological transformation of the kind described by Jung or Stanislav Grof or John Weir Perry, he or she just simply does not know what is happening, and there is nothing in the immediate environment that will help. Perhaps this isolation is itself part of the evolutionary strengthening that has to take place. On the heroic journey, you must be able to handle the incredulity and judgment of people close at hand who have no understanding of what is happening or what you are experiencing. You must learn to control your emotions and instincts yourself, develop confidence in your own judgment, trust your deeper sense of what is happening. (p. 154)

The growing trust in self – like the ancient hero’s growing confidence in his external abilities – is inevitably tested. As described by Le Grice, we may encounter the guardians of the “empire of the ego” (remember Darth Vader, and Luke Skywalker’s realization that to beat him, one needs to surrender to guidance from the force) or we may face “the beast within.” For instance, to slay a gorgon-beast like Medusa, who turns us to stone if we look at her directly, one needs a self-reflective shield, which, for Le Grice, “symbolically suggests the role of human self-reflective consciousness, making known the dark power of the unconscious...” (p. 189). The reflective shield can be understood as that primary tool of psycho-spiritual growth: self-observation. Continuing the shield analogy, Le Grice writes, “consciousness has to become detached both from the instincts and from the old structure of the personality [enabling you] to relate to your instincts as an object, outside of yourself, rather than unconsciously identifying with them...” (p. 191).

As the Self/spirit-infused ego passes the ordeals thrown up by our individual psychological structures and social circumstances, we become ready for the more direct encounter with the unconscious, which Le Grice, following Jung and Campbell, characterizes as feminine. Often an anima figure appears at this juncture, but we must discern between what manifests as a regressive pull back into pre-individuated unconscious mergers and the quite different individuated “unconditional acceptance of life as it is, exemplified by the mother’s love for her child [where] in the embrace of the Great Mother all the opposites are reconciled, recognized as aspects of a greater unity” (p. 198). We can feel the difficulty of this discernment through Le Grice’s description of a scene from the film *La Dolce Vita*:

As the film unfolds, we see Marcello [Mastroianni], in shock following the tragic suicide of his close friend Steiner, seemingly abandon himself to his lower instincts, spending his time in hedonistic, orgiastic parties in which his behavior becomes almost bestial. At the close of the film, Marcello wearily makes his way with a group of friends from a party to the beach. Here, in the distance, he catches sight of the young waitress Paola, known to him from an earlier scene in the film. Though Paola tries to speak to Marcello, amidst the roar of waves her voice cannot be heard. Her gestures to him, barely comprehensible, meet with a reluctant shrug of the shoulders, as if he were resigned to his fate. Although drawn by Paola, Marcello chooses to remain with the group, the herd, rather than heed the voice of his anima. Symbolically, that is, with the roaring waves of instinct active in his own life, Marcello fails to respond to the cries of his anima – and therein the soul and inner child – that might lead him beyond his life of hedonistic indifference. (pp. 203–204)

In one of my favorite lines of the book, Le Grice observes, “Individuation, as will be plainly evident, is not synonymous with happiness.” This is because following the call can be psychologically, inter-personally and socially treacherous (not to mention economically disastrous) – and also because on return we may feel drawn to expressing what we have learned creatively, a whole new form of challenge, and almost inevitably find ourselves facing many

of the same wasteland problems that caused, at least in part, our need for the journey. Yet now we must respond from a more mature and compassionate place – which typically takes patience, resilience, and a fair amount of energy. While the work sometimes called “chopping wood and carrying water” is not necessarily a picnic (I might personally rather be with Marcello Mastroianni in that life of hedonistic indifference), for the hero reborn, the world is nonetheless blessedly different. Le Grice writes:

To the triumphant spiritual hero, the enchanted world of childhood is known again: pristine, mysterious, familiar, thunderous, alive, wondrous, murmuring, promising, bubbling. An innocence, a simplicity, which once seemed gone and never to return, reveals itself anew, now wedded to learned wisdom, hard-earned self-knowledge, a concentrated consciousness, and resolute will.... For all the unavoidable suffering it entails, individuation brings with it the experience of deep life meaning that can sustain one through even the most arduous trials and tribulations. (pp. 235–236)

One way to assess a book on the archetypal hero’s journey involves what it does for one’s own archetypal passage. Last April, after visiting with Le Grice in Cardiff, Wales, I returned to London, where I started reading, interspersed with tourist activities, the copy of *The Rebirth of the Hero* he kindly gave me. After viewing British artifacts at the Victoria and Albert Museum, I had lunch at an Italian restaurant. Slicing through a Margherita pizza (cheapest thing on the menu), I read Le Grice’s description of Nietzsche’s experience that in the final stages of transformation, “the human spirit assumes the form of a child who represents ‘innocence and forgetfulness, a new beginning, a sport, a self-propelling wheel, a first motion, a sacred Yes’” (p. 75, quoting Nietzsche, 1968, p. 55). Le Grice continued with an example:

A process of this kind may be observed in the lives of many great artists, particularly those who became pioneers in their fields. To be proficient in any field of endeavor, it is first necessary to learn the rules and techniques of one’s craft, whatever that might be. To remain at this stage, however, one would simply be a craftsman, skilled perhaps at replicating and implementing established styles or regurgitating knowledge secondhand, but not yet able to bring forth anything original. To be genuinely creative, one must be willing to set aside a rigid adherence to learned techniques and the knowledge one has assimilated to allow the emergence of one’s own unique style of expression. Picasso was a master of his craft at a young age, but obviously Picasso only set himself apart after he developed his own new approaches to forms of representation in painting. To do this, he had to dare to leave behind more traditional styles, of which he was a master. In time, his painting exhibited a quality of childlike freedom of creative expression. He created as if he were a child, living out the spontaneity of his own center, unhindered by what was expected, without concern for what others thought. “It took me four years to paint like Raphael,” Picasso

remarked, “but a lifetime to paint like a child.” (pp. 75–76, citing Penrose, 1981, p. 307)

After lunch, I took the tube to St. Paul’s so I could walk across the Millennium Bridge. I wandered into the Tate Modern but none of the exhibits called to me, so I walked back across the bridge and along the Thames. Eventually, I saw a large building with a vertically hanging banner proclaiming Somerset House, which I vaguely recalled as the name of a museum. Interested, I crossed the Victoria Embankment and entered Somerset House, immediately noticing signs for a temporary exhibit called *Becoming Picasso: Paris 1901*. I made my way into the exhibit in the Courtauld Gallery and was astonished to find myself looking at paintings demonstrating the transition about which I had just read. As explained in the exhibit’s descriptions of the various paintings, and, as I could see for myself as a fan of European art, there was Picasso painting like Velasquez, Picasso painting like Toulouse Lautrec, Picasso painting like various other masters, and then apparently from nowhere emerges the Blue Period, when Picasso started painting like Picasso.

Interestingly, I learned from the exhibit that an encounter with death (sometimes part of the heroic journey) was part of Picasso’s transition. In 1901, his friend Carlos Casagemas shot himself in the head in a Parisian café in front of various friends (not including Picasso, who was in Spain), after taking an errant shot at a woman who did not return his obsessive love. Casagemas appears in several Blue Period paintings, including an arresting death portrait, as well as an El Greco-like ascension to heaven, both part of the exhibit. Understanding what I was witnessing mythologically, as I was learning to do through *The Rebirth of the Hero*, I saw and felt Picasso’s individuation into astounding creativity, contrasted with (although perhaps in some way assisted by) the failed individuation of his friend, who could be understood to have tragically followed the unconscious side of his anima into obsession and suicide.

After the exhibit, I dropped the day’s acquired accouterments (aka souvenirs) at my Covent Garden hotel and found a pub for a pint. I sat near the window, so I could continue reading. I read the part about the Fisher King quoted above regarding the so-called Dolorous Stroke, which was a spear to the King’s groin (referenced as his thigh in some texts, and considered a euphemism for a strike to the genitals). In myth and legend, the quest for the Holy Grail must be undertaken to heal the wound which will not close, symbolically coinciding with barrenness of the kingdom, a wasteland.

As I sat there reading, in dim light from the fading sun in the street, I vividly recalled the strange dream I had the night I spent in Cardiff, after dinner with Le Grice, before I even opened the book. I dreamt that I had a very large wound on my upper left thigh, gaping, like a funnel down through my muscle to the bone. In the dream, I tried but could not close the wound. I knew it was no use finding a doctor: no one could close that wound. I would have to walk on it. When I woke, there was that sensation of enormous relief upon realization “this was only a dream.” I actually felt my upper leg to make sure.

When I started my own journey, in the mid-90s, I read about the Fisher King and the “thigh wound.” But it had not come to mind in years, and was not mentioned in my conversations with Le Grice. When I read this passage in the pub, sitting near the window with my pint, alone, suddenly remembering the dream, I said aloud, “Oh, ****” Yet again, God bless me, I would have to descend into my woundedness, much of which was currently up for consideration given life events. I was also aware that I might have to finish various creative endeavors my woundedness had drawn me into beginning. The light waned beyond reading and I took the plane back to the States the next day, finishing the book over the Atlantic. Then, strangely, upon returning home, I was hired in my law practice to conduct a mediation involving medical coverage for a large thigh wound (after a surgery) that would not heal. My preparation involved looking at a number of graphic photographs. The following week, a new client hired me (an entirely separate matter) to fight for insurance coverage relating to unrelenting “pain in the right groin area.” I would like to hereby publicly assure the Universe that I have gotten the message. No need for more – I will keep going, keep walking on the wound, not just for myself but also for our barren wasteland.

With respect to *The Rebirth of the Hero*, I share these stories because the book, perhaps even before I started reading, managed to activate archetypes within me. This is likely because Le Grice drew from his own encounter with the archetypes in creating this work. As I write this review, it occurs to me that part of the significance of the Picasso synchronicity involves my awareness that Le Grice, through *The Rebirth of the Hero*, is stepping into his own voice. The scaffolding on which he builds – primarily Jung, Campbell, and Nietzsche – provides initial structure for the book, but emerging is Le Grice’s ability to describe the actual perils and ecstasies (and they are entwined like lovers) of individuation – and to provide a measure of guidance. I have read plenty about individuation, much of it encouraging, inspirational and hopeful. I would suggest that we could use more guidance for the trenches of those moments when one wonders whether one is sane, when one cannot sleep and has perhaps drank way too much coffee or alcohol, when one sees disbelief and disavowal in the eyes of one’s friends and lovers after trying to explain, when one is about to quit one’s job without other prospects, or when one is unconsciously off on one of those psychological and/or behavioral side-shows that so many of us in the spiritual movements manifest, perhaps harmlessly, perhaps not, sometimes for the rest of our lives. When reading *The Rebirth of the Hero*, one becomes convinced that Le Grice has some experience in these territories and that he, unlike many of us, has the capacity to discern and explain. Awareness that he knows is the main reason that I trust the voice in the book.

I find *The Rebirth of the Hero* an excellent read for those of us who have been “on a path” for many years. Wisdom that was previously primarily conceptual comes alive through Le Grice’s experientially relevant explanations of the teachings of many masters – and through the mythology of film and culture. The book may also be particularly instructive for people only recently hearing “a call.” I showed my copy of *The Rebirth of the Hero* to a man who recently joined the dream group in which I have participated for several years. After

reading the back of the book, and leafing through it, he put it under his dream journal on the lamp table next to him, already taking possession. I had to tell him I still needed it to write this review. He looked at me blankly for a few moments before it sunk in that he had to give it back.

The next morning I ordered a few copies for sharing with those brave souls I happen to meet who seem willing to enter the depths. Interestingly enough, just last week, the dream shared by my new dream group friend suggested his awareness of a need for separation from some army-camouflage types who had been marshalling him along (led by Brad Pitt – and the man is from Pittsburgh). In the copy of the book I give him, I will highlight the following words written by my friend Keiron Le Grice: “To attain the Grail, that is, you must become who you are, realize your unique potentiality, become a type until yourself. For no one else exactly like you has ever lived before, and no one exactly like you will ever live in the future” (p. 47). Being willing to accept the challenge of becoming this person, a terrifying idea indeed, is how the post-modern hero is reborn.

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Author is a Navajo medicine man: ““They kept showing me the date 2020 and they said it's a date when the earth is natural again. It is when mankind will be living in harmony with the earth... ‘The year 2020 is when the whole process will be complete. Then will come the Golden Age when man will live in harmony with Nature. The world you now know will be gone.’”” Previous book (1994), *Spirit Visions: The Old Ones Speak*.

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