

EDITOR'S NOTE: As a follow-up from their first article published in this journal of an 84-item scale (Goretzki, Thalbourne, & Storm, 2009), the authors developed a 30-item Spiritual Emergency Scale (SES) as a test instrument for researching spiritual emergency and related factors (Goretzki, Thalbourne, & Storm, 2013). The reader is referred to those articles for a fuller understanding. Since then, they have made a minor improvement to the Scale that they would like to offer to the readers of the *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*. The following addendum includes the rationale and nuances of the update from the authors. Although Thalbourne passed away in May 2010, colleagues Goretzki and Storm opted to include him posthumously as he was an integral part of the original research.

### Research Note: Updating the Spiritual Emergency Scale

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As we said in Goretzki, Thalbourne, & Storm (2009),

psychosis ... might be seen as the brain's attempt to heal itself. It seems to us that the clinician's role is to help that attempt to heal, and not simply by administering medication but also by trying to descry whether there is a pattern to the psychosis, which, once discerned, may respond rather better to talk therapy than it does at present. (p. 91)

We argue that our Spiritual Emergency Scale (SES) is a useful measure that will guide the clinician and the client through the therapeutic process. For example, Harris (2010) has found that supportive helpers, who were able to provide knowledge and/or understanding about the sufferers' more spiritual experiences, provided a buffer to psychosis. Generally, we have found thus far that empirical studies using the SES (e.g., Bronn & McIlwain, 2014; Harris, 2010; Rooijackers, 2013) indicate a positive movement towards greater understanding of spiritual emergency.

With a view to improving the SES, we point out that two items (item #10 and item #14—see Goretzki et al. 2013, p. 115) correlate very highly,  $r(107) = .74$ ,  $p < .001$ —higher than any other pair of items. Clearly one or the other item is redundant. In the original 108-item Questionnaire (Goretzki, 2007), item #10 (i.e., Q50) and item #14 (i.e., Q85) were highly relevant to both the Unitative

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Experiences subscale (Q50) and the Shamanic Crisis subscale (Q85), but no psychometric issues to do with item duplication arose because the Questionnaire was never a 'stand-alone' test instrument; we were only interested in the separate performance of each subscale and the predictive capability of each. This situation gives us opportunity to update the SES by removing item #10 and replacing it with the next highest factor-scoring item on our list in order to maintain the SES as a 30-item scale. The next highest item on our factor-score list is Q62 ("Have you ever felt that you were in the centre of huge events that had cosmic relevance and were important for the future of the world?"). This question is from the Central Archetype subscale. The revised 30-item SES is presented in Appendix A. Note that Q62 is re-numbered and listed as item #27 in order to maintain the same randomized order of the original questions as listed in Goretzki et al. (2013, pp. 113–115).

The Shamanic Crisis and Psychic Opening subscales both contribute six items to the SES; five items are from Peak Experiences; Central Archetype now contributes five; there are three from Kundalini, three from 'Past Life' Experience, one from Dark Night, and one from Possession. As before, there are no item contributions from the Near-Death Experience and UFO Encounter subscales. Corrected inter-item correlations ranged from .48 (an increase from .47) to .71 (a decrease from .74)—all items contributed to the Scale. Cronbach's alpha is still a very high .94.

The theoretical range of SES scores is 0 to 30, but the actual range is 0 to 29 (as before). The mean score is 14.50 ( $SD = 8.47$ ), previously 14.72 ( $SD = 8.52$ ) (halfway between minimum and maximum), the median is still 16.00. Again skewness is normal, and again there is a significantly negative (low) kurtosis,  $z = -2.48$ ,  $p = .012$  (two-tailed), indicating a relatively uniform (flat) distribution.

It was again 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 authors' 15-item Experience of Psychotic Symptoms Scale (EPSS), to measure psychosis, was slightly stronger, and still positive and significant,  $r_s(106) = .72$ ,  $p < .001$  (two-tailed). Again, some researchers may conclude that the two scales are measuring essentially the same thing (either psychosis or spiritual emergency). 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 ( $n = 19$ ) scored significantly higher on the SES than people who did not report having experienced psychosis ( $n = 80$ ). Also evident is the observation that persons

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>	$\eta^2$
Reported psychosis	19	21.26	6.02			
Did not report psychosis	80	13.23	8.22	16.06 <sup>a</sup>	< .001	.14
Prescribed medication	15	18.20	7.42			
Not prescribed medication	90	13.66	8.58	3.73 <sup>b</sup>	.056	.04
Took medication	20	18.35	7.80			
Took no medication	89	13.63	8.46	5.22 <sup>c</sup>	.024	.05

<sup>a</sup> *df* = 1, 97; <sup>b</sup> *df* = 1, 103; <sup>c</sup> *df* = 1, 107.

prescribed medication (*n* = 15) scored marginally higher on the SES than persons not so prescribed (*n* = 90), 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 is highly correlated, as indicated in the previous paragraph), inasmuch as persons who score high on the former tend also to report experience of psychosis, as well as the taking of medication. Once again we encourage interested researchers to adopt the SES in their studies.

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APPENDIX  
THE SPIRITUAL EMERGENCY SCALE  
(Updated with minor adjustment)

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 or alcohol.

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 experienced an increased connection with animals and plants and the elemental forces of nature?	Yes / No
11.	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
12.	Have you ever experienced the sense of becoming one with humanity, nature, the creative energy of the universe and/or God?	Yes / No
13.	Have you ever spontaneously attained profound insights into the nature of reality?	Yes / No
14.	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
15.	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
16.	Have you ever been aware of the presence of spiritual entities?	Yes / No
17.	Have you ever spontaneously received accurate information about things in the past, present or future, by extra-sensory means?	Yes / No
18.	Have you ever spontaneously gained a greater understanding of the cosmos?	Yes / No
19.	Have you ever spontaneously lost your sense of identity?	Yes / No
20.	Have you ever been able to see auras around people, animals, plants or other living things?	Yes / No
21.	Have you ever experienced a greater awareness of the interconnectedness of all things?	Yes / No
22.	Have you ever been overwhelmed by powerful emotions and physical sensations, concerning yourself and others in various circumstances and historical settings?	Yes / No
23.	Have you ever experienced living what seemed to be another life, in another time and place, in great detail?	Yes / No

APPENDIX CONTINUED

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24.	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
25.	Have you ever had the need to fight off or try to control the actions of a negative being or entity?	Yes / No
26.	Have you ever experienced rich connections with mythological symbols from ancient history?	Yes / No
27.	Have you ever felt that you were in the centre of huge events that had cosmic relevance and were important for the future of the world?	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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