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Editors' Introduction

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Editors' Introduction

We are pleased to publish this 2008 issue of the *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*. The issue begins with topics that range from embodied spirituality, to the nature of shamanic journey imagery, to a philosophy that offers a unified view of mind, matter, and consciousness. The next two articles offer, respectively, a brief history of transpersonal psychology and of the recently revived International Transpersonal Association. Finally, our special topic section offers a stimulating variety of approaches to transpersonal psychotherapy.

The first paper, by Jorge N. Ferrer, is titled, "What Does it Mean to Live a Fully Embodied Spiritual Life?" This insightful and refreshing piece notes that many religions have disparaged the physical body and separated spirituality from important aspects of embodied life, such as sensuality and sexuality. In contrast, Ferrer offers a vision of spirituality that embraces the wholeness of bodily existence and views the body as essential for spiritual transformation; his vision of spirituality is profoundly participatory, *connecting across* rather than *rising above* the world, including the person embodied within the world. To ground his participatory vision, Ferrer offers ten features of embodied spirituality, including an awakening of the body, a resacralization of the body, of nature, and of matter, and an attendant urge to create, to bring spiritual vision to the world, and to work for social, political, and ecological transformation.

This is followed by a paper co-authored by Adam Rock and Stan Krippner that furthers their earlier study, "Does the Concept of 'Altered States of Consciousness' Rest on a Mistake?" published in the 2007 volume of *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*. This 2007 paper suggested that the concept of altered states of consciousness represents an objectification of

consciousness that conflates consciousness itself with its contents. As a further explication for this insight, Rock and Krippner proposed that the term more accurately refers to an altered pattern of phenomenal properties, thus situating the change within the phenomenal field that consciousness contemplates, rather than within consciousness itself. Their article in the current volume, "Some Rudimentary Problems Pertaining to the Construction of an Ontology and Epistemology of Shamanic Journeying Imagery," takes a further step. It assumes, in line with the prior paper, that a shamanic state of consciousness should properly be referred to as a shamanic pattern of phenomenal properties, and then goes on to inquire into the ontological and epistemological status of "things" that appear as part of that phenomenal pattern.

The next paper, "A Peircian Panentheist Scientific Mysticism" by Søren Brier, is a substantive exploration of the interface between science and spirituality as seen through the work of Charles Sanders Peirce. Peirce, an eminent and forward-thinking mathematician, scientist, and philosopher of the late 19th - early 20th centuries, formulated a post-Cartesian evolutionary philosophy in which psyche and physical matter are not separate. Brier sees Peirce as a panentheist, "a mystic whose path to enlightenment is science as a social activity" (this volume, p. 20). For readers who are not acquainted with Peirce's philosophy, this article provides a substantial yet wholly accessible introduction to his remarkable and complex body of thought. For those who already know Peirce, Brier excavates his work for explicit and enriching connections with the transpersonal field.

Together, the next two works comprise a historical mini-section on transpersonal psychology. The first of these, "Brief History of Transpersonal Psychology,"

by Stanislav Grof, offers personal glimpses into the early history of the field, as well as a broader analysis of the cultural backdrop against which it emerged. These accounts are particularly valuable in that they are informed by the personal experience of one of the founders and primary theoreticians of transpersonal psychology. In this introduction, Grof traces some of the major streams of thought within transpersonal psychology and points to promising directions for the future. In the paper that follows, "The Past and Future of the International Transpersonal Association," by Grof, Harris Friedman, David Lukoff, and Glenn Hartelius, the history of this international institution serves as background for the announcement that it has recently been revived and is currently in the process of being reconstituted and revitalized. In addition, we are pleased to note that the International Transpersonal Association will forge a close relationship with the *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, with details yet to be worked out.

Last, our special topic section, "Transpersonal Psychotherapy," is introduced separately prior to the five papers that constitute it. These pieces represent diversity not only in their approaches, but also in their gender, geographical, and cultural distribution. Four women and three men from the Middle East, Europe, the North Atlantic, North America, and South America offer a stimulating variety of perspectives related to the topic's theme. As an international journal in name, we are particularly pleased to offer such a degree of diversity within this special section.

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