

# Metamorphosis through Conscious Living



# Metamorphosis through Conscious Living:

*A Transpersonal  
Psychology Perspective*

Edited by

Lindy McMullin, Regina U. Hess  
and Marcie Boucouvalas

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As a compilation of contributions by international authors who adhere to either American English or to British English, especially with regard to spelling, it was decided to retain the writer's original voice; therefore, the book contains chapters written in the respective spelling of each author.

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Including the readers, we understand that all together we have membership in a greater whole—*Ubuntu*—and aim to contribute to further community building with this volume.

Finally, we wholeheartedly welcome comments and dialogue from all.

## FOREWORD

ROSEMARIE ANDERSON AND LES LANCASTER

The theme of this book and the 2014 European Transpersonal Association (EUROTAS) Conference it represents is *metamorphosis*, an ancient Greek word meaning change (*meta*) in form (*morph*). The 2014 EUROTAS Conference organizers understood metamorphosis to mean the transformation of self, society, and world culture. In a stroke of brilliance, they organized the conference on the island of Crete near Knossos, the cradle of European civilization some 1500 years prior to the rise of the Indo-Europeans that later held sway in mainland Greece in Athens, Corinth, Sparta, and Troy. The Minoans (approximately 3000 B.C.E. to 1450 B.C.E.) were a peace-loving, goddess-based culture, composed largely of mixed-blood, dark-skinned people from the surrounding Mediterranean coastline, primarily from the north coast of Africa and the Near East. They crossed the Mediterranean Sea by ship first as traders and then as settlers, for the fertile land and available water in Crete were accommodating to crops and its relatively isolated location secure from the aggressive cultures along the great river beds of the ancient world.<sup>1, 2</sup> Locating a conference on metamorphosis in the cradle of European civilization, as well as beginning and ending the conference with rituals reminiscent of the ancient Greek mysteries, brought together the forces of sacred geography and transformation in one historic, international conference. This book offers chapters based on conference presentations by transpersonal psychologists from around the world and extends this metamorphosis to you, the readers.

At this juncture of our nearly fifty-year history as a field, transpersonal psychology is faced with a dilemma—and some think a crisis. Since the founding of *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* in 1969 by Anthony Sutich, transpersonal psychology has pioneered the study and personal exploration of alternative states of consciousness, parapsychological

phenomena, “ultimate values, unitive consciousness, peak experiences, B-values, ecstasy,” ... and “the sacralization of everyday life...”.<sup>3</sup> Sutich was supported by Abraham Maslow (1969) and others who often gathered in Sutich’s home in Palo Alto, California. Today, the study of consciousness, neurocontemplative science, and research into mindfulness, compassion, intuition, spiritual experience, and even *sunyata* have blossomed in psychology and throughout the human sciences, including medicine and the health sciences. As a field, our historic subject matter has “gone mainstream”. Given these developments, it is legitimate to ask about the role transpersonal psychology might play now and as it moves beyond its Golden Jubilee. Are others now doing what we hoped to do and perhaps even doing it better because of university and research foundation support and more adequate funding? Perhaps our mission is complete. Or, is our purpose as transpersonal researchers, therapists, healthcare specialists, and practitioners clearer than ever? We think the latter.

As we both have said on various occasions, including our own keynotes at this conference,<sup>4, 5</sup> the critical feature that makes research, scholarship, and practice *transpersonal is engagement with the Sacred*, the sacred other that lives both within and beyond us as individuals and unique cultures. Our research practice, professional practice, and contemplative practice are embedded in that Sacred whether we like it or not. What makes transpersonalists different from others is that we affirm the sacred mystery at the core of our world and our experience, and strive to incorporate it into our scholarly work and professional practice. Our approach differs in this critical regard from most of those studying spiritual topics in other branches of psychology and the human sciences, for whom explanations tend towards the biological and who employ methods that emphasize detachment. Indeed, the study of topics firmly embedded in sacred paths for centuries, such as compassion, mindfulness, and unitive states, has become a Trojan horse for those who would see these expressions of human endeavor locked into a reductive framework. Therefore, these developments actually serve to sharpen the delineation between the discipline of transpersonal psychology and other approaches. Our discipline eschews explanations that package the Sacred in, for example, neo-phrenological visions of the brain. Instead, transpersonal psychology insists that the very way in which the researcher frames a research question and chooses a methodology determines whether or not the research journey becomes a sacred encounter.

The transpersonal approach is distinctive in placing the potential metamorphosis of all those involved in scholarship, research, and professional practice as a core value. Of course, we will always be in need of clearer and more astute methods and models that embed the Sacred in our professional and personal practice. Over time, how we discern and integrate the Sacred in our professional and personal lives is inevitably a matter of choice and we will no doubt differ in our choices and practices now and in the future. What would it mean for transpersonal researchers with differing epistemological stances to recognize the sacred other in the conduct of research? What would it mean for transpersonal therapists and other healthcare specialists to safeguard the impulse of the sacred other in their clients and themselves in the conduct of treatment without jeopardizing their professional licensure to practice? To answer these questions and many others, we are all in this together – and hopefully in dialogue together. This book represents a critical phase of that dialogue.

There are many contrary positions and opinions taken in this book. Some of them differ from ours or represent topics or interests we might not have thought imaginable. All this is good, showing healthy levels of discussion and debate. The very nature of the field is diverse. The imaginative, radical people drawn to the field in the past, present, and future will ensure diversity and future thinking. No one needs to worry that we transpersonalists are going to run out of ideas or start agreeing with each other soon. Radical thinking and creativity are “signatures” of the field. This book follows in the now long-standing tradition set in motion by Anthony Sutich<sup>6, 7</sup> and Abraham Maslow<sup>8</sup> of proposing courageous and creative ideas.

In dialogue with others, let the crescendo towards new paradigm scientific and professional methods and models that honor the Sacred begin within transpersonal psychology. This book leads the way forward.

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# INTRODUCTION

## THE XVI EUROTAS CONFERENCE

LINDY McMULLIN

Crete is the island of the cave, the palace temple and the labyrinth and by tradition the birthplace of Nikos Kazantzakis, El Greco and Eleftherios Venizelos. Crete has always retained its radiance in its belief of the unity of life. Mycenaean art renders this experience of unity in the seal of c.1500 BC, in which the goddess holds the double-bladed axe next to the tree of life. Maria Gimbutas<sup>1</sup> (2001) suggests the axe evolved from the double wings of the Neolithic butterfly with the soul and butterfly as *psyche*.

The butterfly is the transformed figure of the caterpillar that has gone through its process of metamorphosis. From crawling on the earth to flying through the air, nature gives a perfect picture of harmony and balance that comes through unity, in the form of the butterfly. The process of metamorphosis is not an easy process or to be taken lightly. The butterfly lays eggs on a leaf. When the egg hatches, a caterpillar emerges that begins to eat the specific leaf on which it was born, eating and eating until it grows, shedding its outside skin numerous times. When the caterpillar ceases growing, it forms itself into a chrysalis and begins to undergo major changes; dormant cells called imaginal cells in the body of the caterpillar begin a process of creating new form and structure. At first the caterpillar's immune system attacks these imaginal cells, regarded as threats. The cells continue to multiply, however, and connect with each other until they start forming clusters and clumps. As they resonate at the same frequency, passing information back and forth, they no longer act as discrete individual cells but as a multi-cell organism that eventually emerges as a butterfly. The pattern inherent in the process of metamorphosis is a process of disintegration. The caterpillar grows its imaginal discs whilst developing inside its egg, portraying evolution as a predetermined certainty. Whilst disintegration is in process, so is transformation unseen to the naked eye. The re-integration of order within

chaos is a guarantee before the birth of the butterfly taken to symbolize a different state.

Accordingly, conscious of the impending global crisis and with symbolic intention, the organization of the XVI EUROTAS conference was undertaken by SYNTHESIS, the Hellenic Association for Transpersonal Psychology and Research. Focus was on uniting the world of transpersonal psychology and for the first time in history, three main transpersonal organizations ATP, EUROTAS, and ITA came together in Crete in October 2014. SYNTHESIS closed in 2015 but the vision that maintained the flame lit during the EUROTAS conference is still in process. Metamorphosis never ends as it is an ongoing process, that brings with it reflective understanding, hope, compassion and a desire to build strong foundations for a global renaissance.

The mission of the conference was to help facilitate a metamorphosis both for the country of Greece and the field of transpersonal psychology through the coming together of transpersonal professionals and interested people from around the world in community and open sharing. Evident was a deep desire to contribute to a healthy renewal, regeneration, and transformation of the state of being in the world. At the core of this transpersonal vision was the idea of metamorphosis, the ability of individuals and organizations to transcend the limited sphere of mind associated with the ego and to learn to live in ways that incorporate a richer and more interconnected consciousness.

Transpersonal psychology brings together profound lessons from mythic and mystical systems of thought with the rigor of psychological science to address these issues, re-visioning what has been taken for granted. Transpersonal Psychology suggests both an ancient and new vision of reality that honors all spiritual and religious traditions. It also acknowledges the possibility of going beyond a limited awareness of everyday life to enable some to experience reality in ways that transcend the human perspective<sup>2</sup>.

Michael Washburn<sup>3</sup> describes the dangerous odyssey of self-knowledge as an essential part of attaining humanness. Through building, developing and expanding self-capacities for spirituality, wisdom, creativity, connectedness, love and compassion, there is an implicit value in human experience. This process in turn connects experience to existential meaning, purpose, identity, narrative, spirituality, relationships and participatory action<sup>4</sup>. There are assumptions underpinning Transpersonal

Psychology that realities of human experience transcend the material and personal, complementing the idea that a higher state of being will incorporate a transformation of humanity and the world. This system of belief in human potential brought the organization of the XVI EUROTAS conference into a transpersonal field of potentiality and possibility. Drawing on ritual and symbolic significance, a very particular conference symbol (the emblem of a bird in flight on the disc of Phaistos) was chosen that would demonstrate the essence of unity and collaborative learning to take place at the Pilot Beach Hotel in Chania.

The disc of Phaistos, discovered in 1908 in southern Crete, apparently dating from about ca.1700-1500BC, provided a foundation from which to extract the essential aspects of being. Found by the Italian archaeologist Luigi Pernier in the treasure room of the ruins of the palace in Phaistos, it is a two-sided, circular clay tablet, imprinted on both sides, with symbols in spiral pattern that have been named Linear A. The disk containing a total of 242 distinct symbols broken into 61 groups is made of high quality clay, like that used for Minoan “egg-shell” cups. Both faces of the disc have a spiral line incised from the periphery to the center, with a regularity of the spiral on side A missing from that of side B. Many of the symbols are pictures of clearly recognizable objects, imprinted with stamps. Three basic scripts were used in ancient Crete between the third and the late second millennium BCE: Hieroglyphic, Linear A and Linear B. All Linear A texts from the Protopalatial period come from the ruins of the first palace at Phaistos and have not been deciphered until recently. Dr Gareth Owens, a linguist researcher with the Technological Educational Institute of Crete, recently proposed that the disk be read in a spiral direction from the outside rim to the inside. Using scripts from Minoan Linear A and Mycenaean Linear B from ancient Greece, he claims that some words could mean pregnant mother or goddess, concluding that the disk may render a prayer to a Minoan goddess.<sup>5</sup>

On side A, a total of five cases depict a bird in flight, possibly an eagle apparently holding a snake in its talons. This emblem from the disc was extracted and chosen to convey the process of metamorphosis in the collaborative synthesis between The European Transpersonal Association (EUROTAS), the International Transpersonal Association (ITA), and the Association for Transpersonal Psychology (ATP). It signaled the beginning of a new cycle and metamorphosis within the associations and flight to new horizons. The conference brought two hundred and fifty people together from 35 countries from around the world, to follow lectures, seminars and workshops within the framework of empirical

science. In an endeavor to acknowledge the significance of the disc, a trip to the ruins of Phaistos was organized as well as an array of cultural events.

Marcie Boucouvalas<sup>6</sup> suggests that transpersonal development represents transformations or lasting changes of consciousness that restructure a world view or state of being in the world, and that an array of disciplines—including those at the macro level—are awakening to the call. Questing consciousness must journey into the depths of psyche where both masculine and feminine aspects of psyche must unite. The transition from the goddess in Crete to a masculine representation of god, suggests that the feminine archetypal figure was dealt a sharp blow in the past. Holding this thought in mind, the XVI conference paid homage to the balance between feminine and masculine, by choosing an equal number of key note speakers. Credit was given to ritual in the form of Lyre music, Hermes' gift to Apollo known to embody the *Cista Mystica*. The symbols of sacred marriage were present in the opening ceremony of the conference. These gifts were given back to the Mother Goddess of Crete, calling for a deeper commitment to the psycho-socio-cultural and spiritual dimensions of human experience. Homage was paid to Athena, Hermes, Phoebus Apollo, Phoebe Artemis and Hestia, goddess of the hearth in the inaugural speech that invited the flame of consciousness to be lit in service to humanity and science. In this unique way, the conference was given to the land of Greece and its peoples as well as to Gaia in the hope that humanity recognizes the need to counter balance and engage the scientific community.

The XVI EUROTAS conference aimed at raising consciousness and so it has fulfilled its goal with this book that highlights some of the work undertaken at the conference. It was a privilege to organize such a historic event and with great humility I honor the great voices that resound in the pages of this book. It is my sincere wish that this is just the beginning of an even greater cycle in re-visioning the future of the transpersonal, worldwide.

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VOICES OF THE EUROTAS  
COUNCIL OF ELDERS

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Note: These reflections do not represent all those who contributed their voices to the EUROTAS Council of Elders, but to those who responded to a request to forward their contribution in writing.

**Abstract**

We present here the first “Council of Elders” that took place in Crete during October 2014 at the Global XVI EUROTAS (European Transpersonal Association) Conference, held in collaboration with the Association for Transpersonal Psychology (ATP) and the International Transpersonal Association (ITA) and organized by Synthesis (the then-Greek Transpersonal Association), thus uniting all these organizations in the effort. Tanna Jakubowicz-Mount was the mother of this idea, supported by Vitor Rodrigues. In her words: “the Spirit of Times is calling on us all, to centre our wisdom and healing powers, to convey a message with powerful resonance that may contribute to global healing, and shift planetary awareness to a higher dimension. We are at a crucial point in modern history. We have never faced such a big Economic, Ecological,

Humanitarian, Geopolitical and Spiritual crisis. The global economy is in collapse and the ability of the planet to support life, is breaking down. We still have a choice! It is up to us to use this crisis as an opportunity to shift human consciousness and bring about global change". The Council of Elders is a step towards this direction, bringing together some of the most experienced professionals within EUROTAS and trying to benefit from their knowledge and wisdom. In so doing, we are in touch with the spiritual traditions of Humankind honouring its elders but also gathering their contributions to the enlarged society. The texts below are the product of this initiative.

**Keywords:** council, elders, EUROTAS, global, wisdom

## **The Role of an Elder**

***Motto: An Elder is the one who transforms  
life experiences into heart wisdom***

### **Vitor Rodrigues and Tanna Jakubowicz-Mount**

The Spiritual Traditions of our Planet do have a sense of respect for the Elders within communities. This is no surprise as for thousands of years, Elders have been both the keepers of memory and the guardians of wisdom; both their own and the product of generations before them. They knew about life, education and preserving harmony in society. They knew about the culture they belonged to, the relationship it had with the cycles in Nature and the way humans could dance with them. Keepers of the past and gatherers of experience were in the best position to also ponder about the future in at least two ways: what to do within their societies, and what their societies could and should do, within the greater Cosmos. In the Native American tradition, Elders are placed in the highest position of honour a tribe can offer its members. Traits generally associated with Elders are: knowledge, wisdom, counselling skills, a loving heart, compassion, willingness to teach, even temperedness, patience, and willingness to take on responsibility. The Elders hold communities together by making space for different, even opposing points of view. Also the wisdom of women and their eldership was once revered very highly within indigenous societies.

Moving into Eldership Time reminds one of the Hindu Sannyasa, which is a renunciation stage where people transcend limited identification with

self, family, race, religion, and nation and instead become citizens of the World and the Universe. This is a time for devotion to spiritual instruction and noble service.

This Stage of Integrity is a time for the altruistic community, where service often comes in the form of civic and environmental service; giving back to the family, clan, and community through mentoring and spiritual midwifery. The spiritual Elder heralds the next phase of human and global development.

### **Anne Baring**

I think that in the course of our lives we, as Elders, can clearly see that what is now taking place beneath the surface of our culture is a spiritual awakening on a planetary scale. This awakening is beginning to heal the long-established split in our psyche and in our culture between spirit and nature, between the Masculine and Feminine Archetypes. We are increasingly engaged in a process of transformation – of our values, our beliefs, our patterns of behaviour – that is connecting us with a deeper ground and creating a new vision or paradigm of reality utterly different from the old one. The recovery of the Feminine invites a reorientation of consciousness: receptivity not only to the events occurring in the external world but an inner receptivity to the long-ignored voice of the soul. It is helping us to relate to the deep cosmic source of our psychic life and draw up the living waters from those depths. It immeasurably deepens and broadens our perspective on our presence on this planet, giving deeper meaning to our lives. Slowly but surely, it is changing everything.

The focus of the Feminine is on relationships of all kinds. We can see the growing influence of the Feminine in the expansion of the environmental movement; in the determination of women in every culture to free themselves from their long oppression and subservience and encourage their increased participation in society; in many new approaches to healing both psyche and body. It is reflected in the mounting revulsion for our weapons of mass destruction; in compassion for the helpless victims of our addiction to war; in the engagement of hundreds of thousands of people in the work of helping both the planet and the victims of poverty, hunger and disease. These different channels of influence are creating new perspectives on life, new ways of connection that bring together body, soul, mind and spirit.

As part of this emerging process, the young desperately need help and support in developing new ways of thinking, new strategies for action. The future is in their hands. In my contribution to the meeting I spoke of an educational initiative started a few years ago by a friend in Scotland called “Inspire — Aspire: Global Citizens in the Making; Transforming Inspiration into Aspiration.” It was originally a programme designed for children aged 10-18 in the Commonwealth Nations to help them to develop their ideas about what kind of future they would like to see and what kind of contribution they would like to make to bringing it into being, choosing a mentor whose words and actions have inspired them. Hundreds of thousands of children have now completed this programme and it is now spreading to countries all over the world. This is an example of how change can come about and how ideas can inspire the next generation to value their lives and the contribution they can make to the wellbeing of all.

## **Why the TransPersonal awakening of our cultures is our highest priority!**

**Ashok Gangadean**

It is now clear that TransPersonal Literacy and Intelligence brings us to the Source of all our worldviews, cultures, religions and forms of life.

This Primal Source Field is named differently in our great philosophical, spiritual and religious traditions through the ages. Whether invoked through Tao, Aum, Yahweh, Allah, Brahman, Sunyata (Emptiness), Christ, God, Spirit or the Foundational Energy Field of all the Sciences...the collective wisdom of our planet through the ages has recognized that this Source Field is the generative Source of our diverse scriptures, worldviews, enlightenment teachings, indeed, of all worldviews, narratives, ideologies, religions and disciplinary forms of life.

This consensus teaching of our great wisdom endowment reveals that we humans become Whole Persons when we access the Source Code of Life and re-centre our lives and cultures in the Source Field which is the Sacred Space of ((Infinite Presence)). Our great planetary awakening teachings concur that the Fundamental Source Field is boundless, hence trans-finite, and as such this Infinite Presence must be the generative source of all possible worldviews, narratives, disciplines and forms of life.

Furthermore, our Wisdom Endowment is the sacred space of TransPersonal Intelligence and Cultural Life. This global Source Intelligence also recognizes that we humans are lodged in deep and chronically entrenched patterns of personal and cultural dysfunctions and pathologies when we are alienated from Infinite Source (Infinite Presence) which nevertheless surrounds us and sources our lives and cultures in every way. In this light our Source (TransPersonal) wisdom is clear that pre-Sourced mental and cultural patterns are the primary source of human dysfunctions, chronic fragmentation, polarization, and wide-ranging forms of human and cultural violence.

Our more awakened and evolved Self cannot come forth and blossom in such pre-Sourced cultures and worldviews which are dominated by ego-mental or monocentric mental practices and forms of life. This pre-Sourced “self” is not the mature Human and is lodged in cultures of monologue which are severed from Source Life. In this context the depth of “TransPersonal” awakening is our personal and inter-personal evolutionary shift from dysfunctional monologue to non-violent cultures of Deep Dialogue where we mature as awakened Persons.

Our global wisdom teaches that the awakened Human who lives the Source Intelligence is a Dialogue Person-- an (I===Thou) Human--who lives and experiences the deep connectivity of the Primal Field of Reality. This is the space of awakened Reason, moral consciousness, human compassion, love, respect across borders and the sacred meeting space of diverse worlds. This is where we find deep Unity in sacred Diversity. The awakened TransPersonal Human is a Dialogue Being.

Whether the Teachings of Buddha, or the Yoga Science of Krishna or the Logos-in-the Flesh Teachings of Jesus, to mention a few preeminent Source Code pioneers- it is clear that the Literacy of Global Wisdom reveals that we cannot mature as awakened Whole Humans within monocentric cultures where our mental patterns objectifies everything it touches and produces: cultural spaces of “I===It”. The “self” or “person” in such “I===It” cultures is not yet a fully evolved Person who embodies the highest Moral Law and Awakened Rational Life. The “ego-mental” self is thus a pre-Sourced self and the TransPersonal Self is the Human who has awakened and entered the TransPersonal Intelligence of Life in Presence. This is the TransPersonal Culture.

Our collective Wisdom is clear that our wide-ranging human dysfunctions, pathologies and forms of violence trace to our pre-Sourced forms of life and cultures. And our maturation to becoming Whole Persons, living the deep dialogical intelligence of TransPersonal Presence, is the highest form of human activism, which gets to the source of wide-ranging crises facing humanity today. This is why our personal and cultural evolution to the non-violent Dialogic and TransPersonal Intelligence is highest urgency for healing our cultures, our worlds, our personal lives.

## **Spiritual Warriors – A necessity for our time**

**Judith S. Miller**

Like most Elders in our circle, I believe that the beginning of the 21st century is a very challenging time for humanity. As advanced technology and jetliners make our world smaller, we are pushed to examine ourselves in relation to all that is around us – both near and far.

What form should such examination take? Many of us directly engage with individuals, activities, and energies in other parts of the world. We eagerly learn from indigenous peoples, shamanic cultures, and Eastern traditions.

An important question, however, has to do with the stance we take within our own culture, our own environment, our own tradition, and our own people? My experience is that many Westerners look beyond their own borders for inspiration. And once finding inspiration in some distant place, they then attempt to bring it home.

As a developmental, transpersonal psychologist, I believe that a healthy connection to our Western culture and mystical roots is exceedingly important. When you live out of your authentic self, your ground, your being, your identity, is penetrated by the sacred. Sociological cross-cultural research also tells us that erosion of a strong cultural and spiritual identity leads to a self-image that loses its definition and becomes more fragile. We become thwarted in our development if we deny an essential part of our being.

My message for this council is that I believe it is time to pay more attention to what is at “home.” Rather than totally dismissing our Judeo-Christian tradition as one that is mired only in hypocrisy, dualism, and

historical violence, we must open ourselves to the original mystical sacred ground that is the foundation of Western spirituality. Additionally, we must examine the Western core values and strengths of who we are individually and collectively, while exploring where our culture and tradition may have lost its way.

We are a mixture of light and shadow. The place and culture, in which we were born, where we now live, are mixtures of light and shadow. Only by thoroughly investigating these energies, will we gain authentic awareness of ourselves and the paradigm in which we function.

The prevailing worldview in Western culture during the early 21st century is postmodernism. This serves as a “super theory” or paradigm for interpreting human experience. Postmodernism holds the view that there is no absolute truth, because everything is relative and determined by individual perceptions.

Clearly, it has arisen as a reaction against pre-modernism when the church was the ultimate authority, governing every aspect of a person’s life. It also counters the modern worldview that holds that nothing is true unless it can be verified by the scientific method.

Many of us who are active in the transpersonal field have been significantly impacted by the Postmodern worldview. This is understandable – popular culture, academia, psychology and modern intellectual thought supports it. Postmodernism reflects our cultural norms and also the transpersonal values of multiculturalism and diversity.

At the same time, when we think about the postmodern concept of relativism (where the only things real are peoples’ perceptions), we must consider how this argues against the Absolute. And if there is no Absolute, then there is no God, there is no sacred, there is no spiritual ground.

Today, more than at any other time, it is critically important for us to understand that Western institutions and the postmodern worldview cannot eradicate darkness in people or in society. Opening one’s soul to the Divine is the only way.

At the same time, it is not easy to personally explore and confront the contradictions and splits in our own worldview, the worldview of popular

culture, and the worldview of our colleagues and friends in the transpersonal field.

If we are to become the spiritual warriors that I believe we are meant to be, we must do this. And in so doing, we will be able to lead lives that are God-directed rather than ego directed. Then and only then, will we know that living one's true nature means to be one with each other and God.

The monk and mystic Thomas Merton (1915-1968) said: "We stumble and fall constantly, even when we are enlightened. But when we are in true spiritual darkness, we do not even know that we have fallen."

## **It is a privilege to be part of the Council of Elders, a tapestry of Hope in the 21st Century**

**Lindy McMullin**

The Elders pave the way for change, and often this task is not easy. When global systems collapse, fear grows and this fear must be faced with the Wisdom of the Ages and the experiences we have, to ease the delivery of a new way of thinking. A Changing Perception is my new project, aimed at educating the young in Mindfulness Practice, Leadership and Communication Skills in Athens Greece.

If we address the needs of the new generation, aiming to bring about a balance between technology and spirituality, we can certainly offer our wisdom to birth Conscious Living. There is a great need to bring boundaries into place where we understand the complementarity of dualism, able to move beyond and into the union of diversity. The youth inherit the planet from us, but it is the solemn duty of the Council of Elders to bring back the sacred in this world of fast lane living that is threatening human existence.

Crisis is a challenge for breakthrough and the focus needs to be on the potential we have inside of us, to facilitate a balanced birth of new ideas. As science progresses, it gives us ways in which to truly ponder on the nature of existence and the Transpersonal Perspective needs to become part of Global Change. A new Education System needs to address problems parents are facing as well as incorporate the process of self-development within relationships and the dynamics involved in parenting. Children need to explore ways in which they can expand their awareness

of the environment, and understand that self-esteem can no longer be reliant only on the outside world but is an aspect of self-development, that incorporates looking at feelings and finding ways to face these feelings in a harmonious manner.

I believe firmly that it is not only the welfare of the planet that is at stake, but it is the welfare of Self that needs to be addressed, to bring about a new world view and paradigm shift. We need to become aware that as we evolve, we need to prepare the new generation to bring balance – the balance we could not bring but know of. It is our duty as Elders to give them hope for a new tomorrow. I am honoured to be a member of the Council of Elders.

### **Marcie Boucouvalas**

Transpersonal psychology can be thought of as the heartbeat and heartthrob of a greater transpersonal multi-disciplinary movement, especially since it focuses on the whole human species in all its nuances. What potential awaits, however, when we remember the importance of the transpersonal voices in disciplines that deal with the macro context—such as sociology, anthropology, ecology, business-entrepreneurship, and many others. In order to effect a transpersonal way of being on our planet the attention to group, organizational, and societal dynamics in which such disciplines are engaged is essential. Moreover, what about the extragalactic orientations as well as the micro worlds? Transcending any insularity becomes an imperative. I envision transpersonal efforts (including conferences) with such collaborative initiatives.

As others have also emphasized, from inception the transpersonal movement has been on the vanguard of initiatives that have now migrated to mainstream interests. Can we once again blaze trails? I think so. Staying vigilant with regard to the forthcoming second scientific revolution is worthy of pursuit, especially since embodied within is a worldview that the transpersonal orientation embraces. A key question to address becomes: For what areas of the transpersonal is the current scientific paradigm useful and for what might it be limiting? Just think of what it might be like to move beyond the concern that some academics face in working with mainstream psychology regarding the “respectability” of one’s research to initiating an epistemological and ontological orientation to inquiry catalysed and supported by a new scientific revolution.

## **Pier Luigi Lattuada**

First of all I hope that this one will not be “just one more Circle” but one that can send a real message and offer something real to the world.

Many of us here spoke about indigenous traditions or ancient traditions. Well, in Brazil the ancient traditional healer uses a specific word, which is AXÈ.

AXÈ is the sacred force of LIFE. There is something that you see in the eyes of the shaman...something that you see when you “avatar”, when you say: “I see you”...what you see and what you feel in that moment is the AXÈ.

I don't know why, but life brought me back to Brazil since 1982 and it's been a learning journey since that first moment when I was 27 years old. What I learned in Brazil working with shamans and in contact with all kind of ancient traditions – yes, because Brazil is like a planet where there are so many different traditions, including also the ones focused on the “plants of power” – what I've learned is that we can reduce all these realities to the word AXÈ.

And the AXÈ blossoms from the eyes, comes out from the gesture when we are in the Art. But to “be in the art” means to work in the Transpersonal field, to be in contact with the Essence, with the Oneness, it's easy to say but it's very hard to do, it's a work that must be done every day.

As I wish to share the word that I feel inside me with the people present at our conference and with our community, I say “Dare”; we have to dare more and more and more in order to be, to understand and be in contact with the circle of the ancient tradition.

We have to dare more and more. I experienced that this has a price, everything has a price, and I think that all of us here know what I mean.

In my case, in 30 years of living and experiencing Brazil, I have been in jail, I had an accident, my first marriage ended, and it was an actual struggle for many years; I observed all those things that happen to us and all the problems, are proportional to our awareness and to our compassion.

The more we dare to stay in the art and the more we dare to let the ego go, the least problems we have in our life, so: “to dare more”, is my witness.

## **Alchemy of Love**

### **Tanna Jakubowicz-Mount**

As far as I can see, we are at the most crucial point of modern history. We have never faced such a big economic, ecological, humanitarian, geopolitical and spiritual crisis. Global economy is in collapse and the ability of the planet to support life is breaking down.

We are in the midst of a real culmination of two world orders struggling- the old order of separation and violence with the new order of unity and love. The old order is breaking down because it was based on a wrong assumption: on Ego delusion of separation of men and Universe. The guards of the old order are mobilizing their forces to keep the division of the world and their spheres of influence and profit. The threat, armies and war are created to overcome economic crisis and depopulate mankind. Maybe we cannot take responsibility for political and economic changes, but surely we can assist people in times of transition. We can foster consciousness evolution towards a new level of existence- emergence of sustainable global civilization.

I believe the root cause of the world crises is what I call ‘the original sin of humanity’- the disconnection from the primordial ground of life. After ages of ignorance we have ended up with a large wound in heart and a huge vacuum in the soul of humankind.

The wounded heart and hole in our soul seek healing and replenishment from outside, through symbolic substitutes such as money, status and power- this fuels the politics of expansion and exploitation. Homo Separatus, deceived and disconnected, spiritually homeless and hungry, suffering from deep solitude, fear, despair, scarcity, greed and violence is devouring the Earth alive! My deepest concern is that so much human energy is turned against Life on this Earth. My burning question is: how can we reverse this process?

From ‘Many Pieces’ to ‘One Peace’