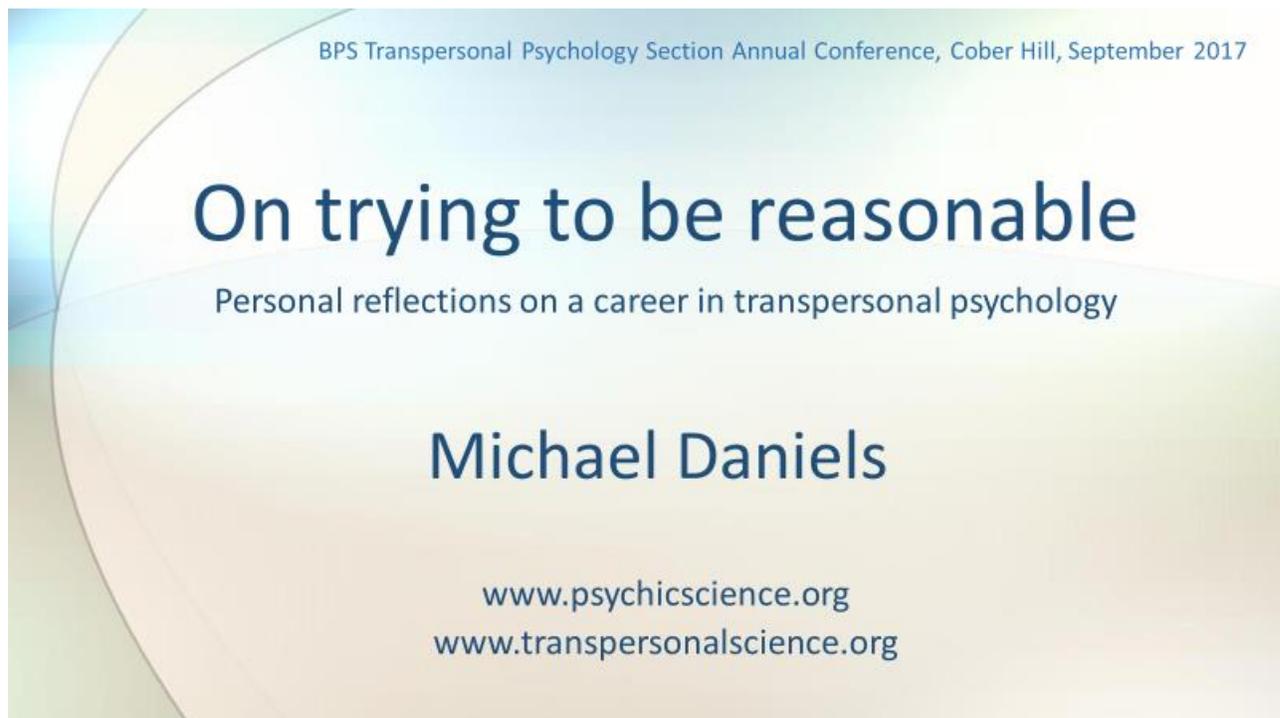


# On trying to be reasonable: Personal reflections on a career in transpersonal psychology

Michael Daniels

*A keynote address delivered at the British Psychological Society  
Transpersonal Psychology Section 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference,  
Cober Hill, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2017*



Good evening. It's wonderful to be back here at Cober Hill. And an honour to give this opening keynote, especially as we are marking such a significant milestone in the Section's history. This Section has played such an important role in promoting transpersonal psychology ever since it was established back in 1996. I remember those times so well, that it is quite hard to believe it was 21 years ago.

Over the years, the Section has also given *me* so much. Not only the friendship and joy I've found, especially at these conferences, but also many opportunities to develop – both professional and personal.



As you may know, most of my articles on transpersonal psychology were originally published in this Section's journal, *Transpersonal Psychology Review*. And, with the permission and encouragement of the editors, many of these later found their way into my book *Shadow, Self, Spirit*.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Daniels, M. (2005). *Shadow, Self, Spirit: Essays in Transpersonal Psychology*. Exeter: Imprint Academic.

I was also delighted when I was invited to take over the editorship of *Transpersonal Psychology Review* in 2008 – a role I held until 2013. By that time, I had been officially retired for more than two years and, having moved to the Isle of Man, had made the decision to step back from academic life to pursue my other interests.

My last contribution to transpersonal psychology also appeared in 2013, as a chapter in the *Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Transpersonal Psychology*.<sup>2</sup> I had thought that chapter would be my transpersonal swan song, feeling that I didn't have much more to say about the subject that I hadn't said already, and that there were plenty of others in the field, many of whom are here this weekend, who could make a much better fist of it.

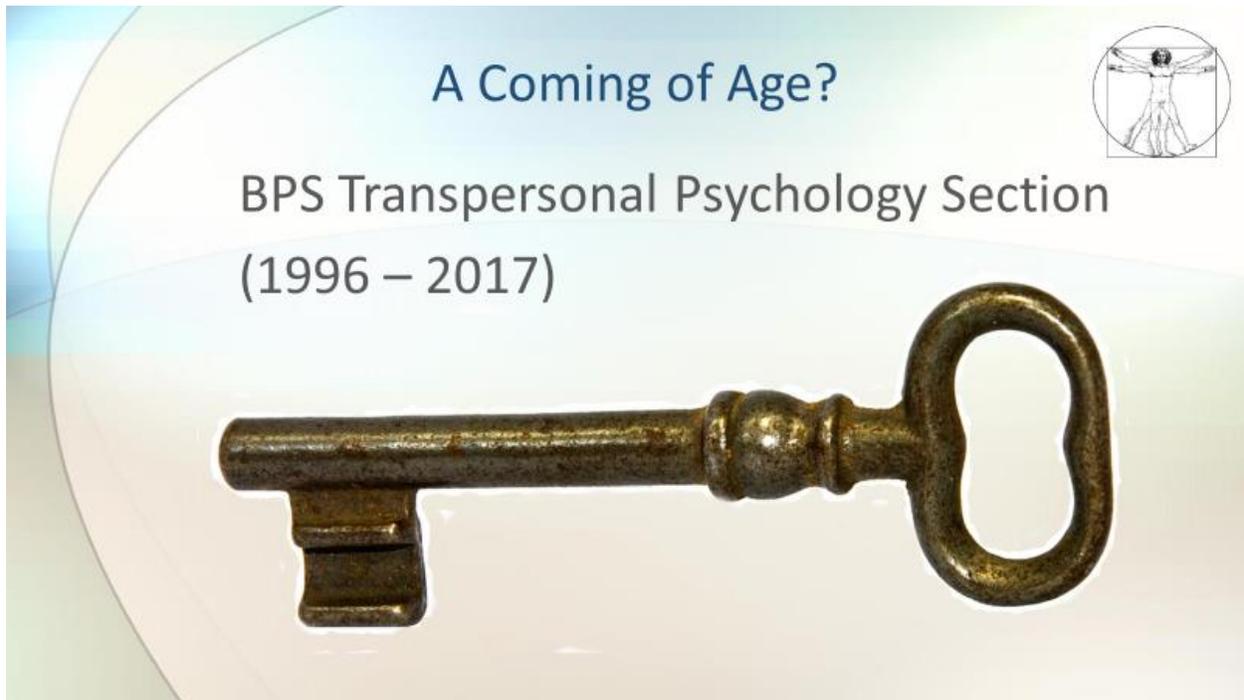
But then I was invited to give this keynote talk. It was the Section's 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary. The conference had returned to beautiful Cober Hill. It had been several years since I had met up with old friends, or had the opportunity to meet and learn from some of the new generation of transpersonal psychologists. And, if that wasn't enough, two of my transpersonal heroes – Jorge Ferrer and Stanley Krippner – were also giving keynotes. It was just too good an opportunity to miss. So, here I am.

But I had hesitated at first, wondering what I could talk about that might be relevant, especially since I had largely stepped back from active involvement in the transpersonal field several years earlier. After some thought, I decided it might be interesting to reflect on my career in transpersonal psychology and to offer some personal observations on the state of the discipline today – 21 years after it was first officially recognized by the British Psychological Society.

---

<sup>2</sup> Daniels, M. (2013). 'Traditional Roots, History, and Evolution of the Transpersonal Perspective'. In H.L. Friedman & G. Hartelius (eds.), *Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Transpersonal Psychology* (pp.23-43). Chichester, West Sussex: John Wiley.

This conference is titled 'Coming of Age' – intended, perhaps, to imply that transpersonal psychology in the UK has reached a maturity that we should rightly congratulate ourselves upon and celebrate.



Now, I don't particularly relish being cast in the role of party-pooper, but I would utter a note of caution. While twenty-one traditionally marks the transition to adulthood, I am not convinced that this necessarily applies to an organization or academic discipline. So, I'll start, controversially, by throwing out a challenging question: *Has transpersonal psychology really grown up over the last 21 years, or is our self-congratulation merely a childish conceit?*

While you ponder that, I thought it might be interesting to compare the situation of the BPS Transpersonal Section after 21 years with that of the Society for Psychical Research at its own 'coming of age' in 1903.

## Society for Psychical Research

Founded London, 1882

*"to examine **without prejudice or prepossession and in a scientific spirit** those faculties of man, real or supposed, which appear to be inexplicable on any generally recognized hypothesis."*

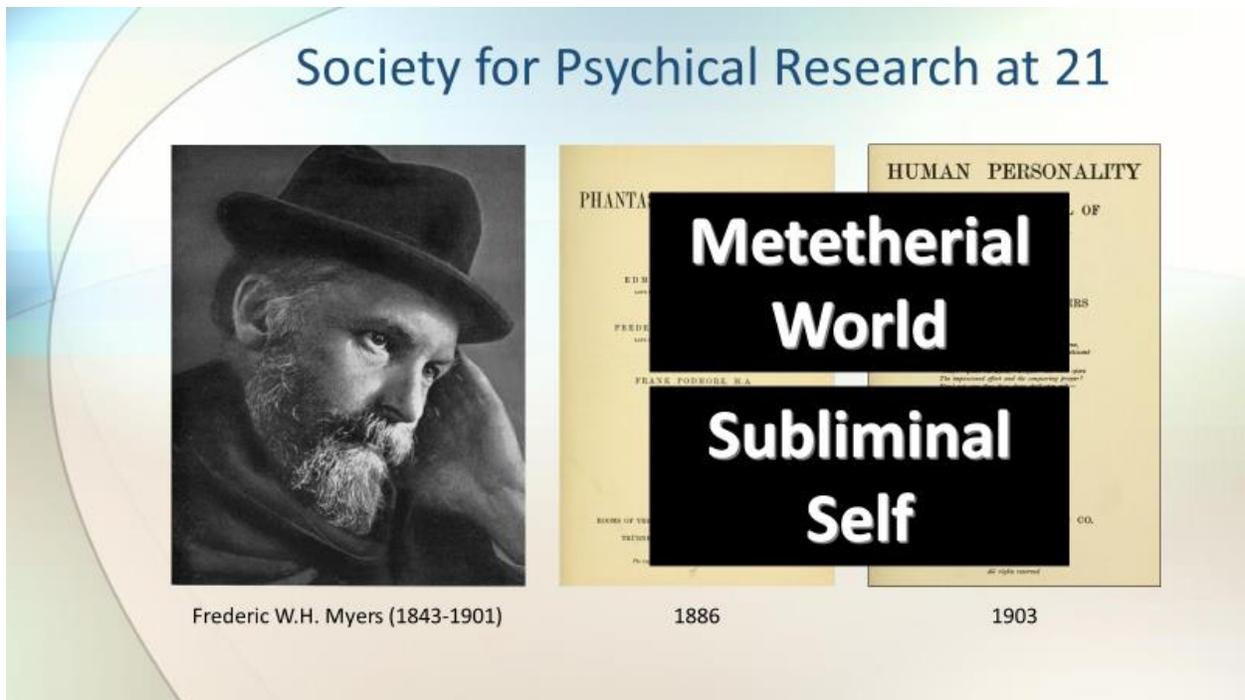


The SPR was founded in 1882. Its stated mission is to examine apparently inexplicable faculties 'without prejudice or prepossession and in a scientific spirit'. At the time, interest in spiritualism was at its height, and many of the founder members of the SPR were themselves spiritualists – including 13 of the 19 members of its first Council. Even though much of the research was carried out by the Society's non-spiritualists, it was the phenomena of spiritualism that were the focus of attention. And, despite the claim that phenomena should be investigated 'without prejudice or prepossession' there is little doubt that the Society was formed with the specific intention of finding evidence to support spiritualist beliefs in life after death.

So, had much changed by 1903? Arguably the SPR's crowning achievement that year was the posthumous publication of Frederic Myers' mammoth two-volume compilation *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Myers, F.W.H. (1903). *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death* (2 vols.). London, New York & Bombay: Longmans, Green & Co.

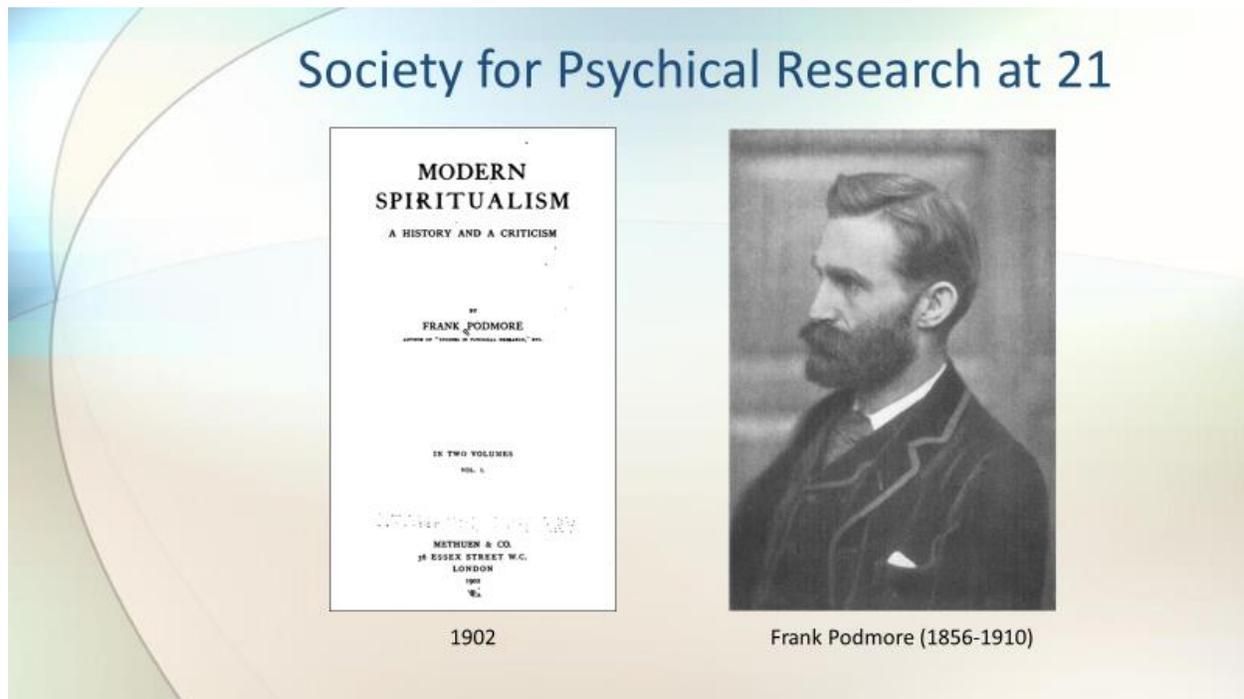


Myers had been a founder member of the SPR and became its President in 1900, the year before his death. He was also one of the co-authors of the two-volume *Phantasms of the Living* – the SPR’s seminal work on apparitions and telepathy – which had been published in 1886.<sup>4</sup>

Using extensive case material, *Human Personality* is Myers’ attempt to prove the reality of personal survival and to account for its phenomena in terms of what he calls a ‘metetherial world’ and a deep ‘subliminal self’ – rather than standard spiritualist conceptions. Although widely applauded at the time by spiritualists and psychical researchers, the book was also severely criticized by others for what was considered to be its empty metaphysical speculation.

<sup>4</sup> Gurney, E., Myers, F.W.H., & Podmore, F. (1886). *Phantasms of the Living* (2 vols.). London: SPR / Trubner & Co.

There were also skeptical voices within the SPR. Notable among these was Frank Podmore, another co-author of *Phantasms of the Living*, whose own *Modern Spiritualism*,<sup>5</sup> a two-volume review and critique of Spiritualism and fraudulent mediums was published in 1902.



Yet, whether one was *for* spiritualism, or *against*, it was spiritualist phenomena that remained the dominant focus of psychical research until laboratory studies of ESP and psychokinesis were developed in the 1930s – in other words, fully 50 years after the SPR was founded.

Even today, within the SPR, there is still a sizeable ‘old guard’ of spiritualists and other believers in the afterlife who continue to seek case evidence to support their beliefs. As you might imagine, they have a rather uneasy relationship with the newer breed of experimental parapsychologists.

---

<sup>5</sup> Podmore, F. (1902). *Modern Spiritualism: A History and a Criticism* (2 vols.). London: Methuen.

Thankfully, there are some prominent paranormal researchers who manage to straddle both camps – open-minded about life after death and mediumistic phenomena, while remaining committed to strictly scientific procedures. Among these I would include Charles Tart, Stanley Krippner, and this Section's much-missed founder and friend, David Fontana.

So, what exactly has all this to do with transpersonal psychology?

Well, I suppose I'm questioning whether, in 2017, transpersonal psychology is in a similar position to psychical research in 1903. Not to mince words: Is transpersonal psychology today still dominated by those who have prepossessed spiritual or metaphysical beliefs and who seek to promote these beliefs, whether through talks and writings, spiritual or therapeutic practice, or research activity?

Now, even if this is the case, I'm not saying that there is anything necessarily wrong or dishonourable about it. Indeed, by any standard, much transpersonal activity is entirely laudable. But, as transpersonal *psychologists*, especially if we are members of a professional scientific body such as the BPS, perhaps we do sometimes need to be more honest about the ideological rather than scientific foundations of what we do.

Of course, transpersonal psychology isn't just one thing. Despite some attempts to promote the discipline as a modern expression of the 'perennial philosophy', there actually exist many different *transpersonal psychologies*. Often these have very little in common, either in ideology or practice, other than a general belief in a spiritual reality and in the possibility of spiritual improvement.



Transpersonal Psychologies	
Theosophy	Psychical Research
Scientology	Psychology of Religion
Gurdjieff	Analytical Psychology
Transcendental Meditation	Psychosynthesis
Eckhart Tolle	Humanistic Psychology
Cabala	Eastern Psychologies
Western Magic	Psychedelic-Holotropic
Sufism	Transpersonal Ecology
Christian mysticism	Feminist Spirituality
Shamanism	Relational Spiritualities
Neopaganism	Integral Theory
A Course in Miracles	Diamond Approach
New Ageism	Participatory Spirituality

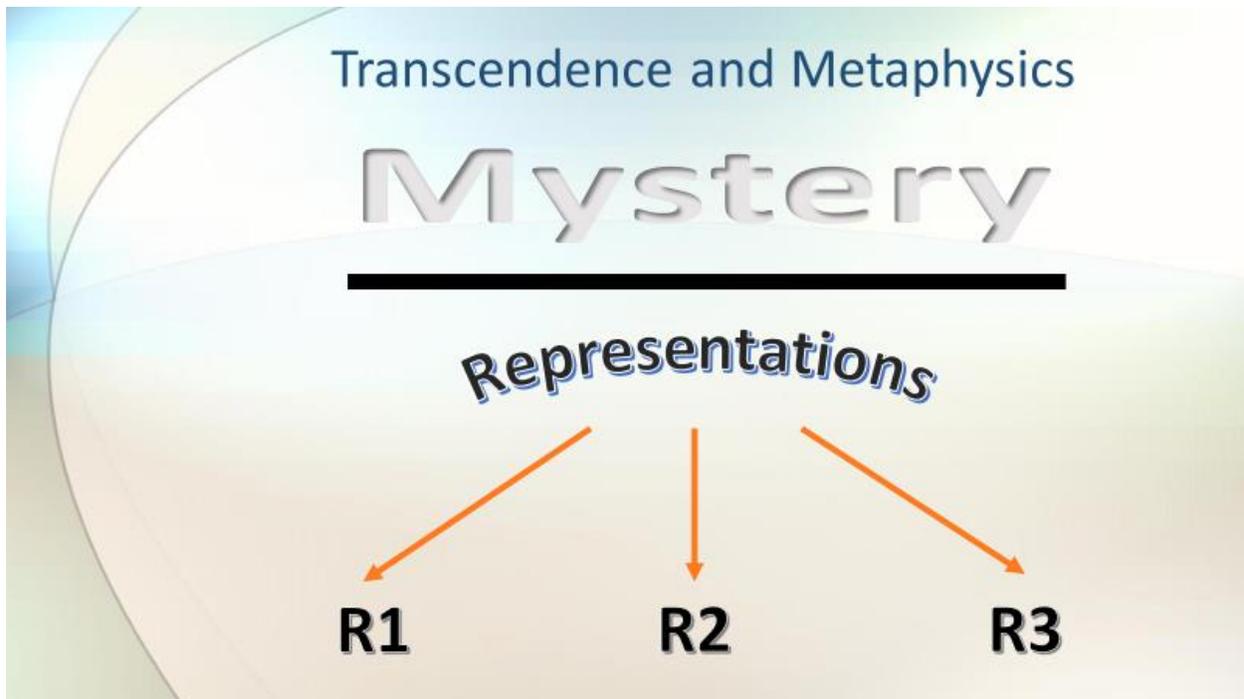
Some of these approaches (those on the left) have a relatively peripheral relationship to academic transpersonal psychology. Others, however, (those on the right) are more central. Yet even the central approaches often disagree fundamentally on the nature of the transpersonal, and on the goals and methods of transpersonal practice. Jung had little truck with Buddhism, for example, and the clash of ideologies between the Integral and Participatory theories of Wilber and Ferrer is well known.

People have sometimes been confused by my own stance on the transpersonal, and some have been openly critical. Mostly, the confusion and criticism relates to my seemingly agnostic, or what has been called 'mealy-mouthed' approach and, especially, to my rejection or questioning of the use of metaphysical concepts within transpersonal psychology.

The main criticism seems to boil down to the charge that I cannot legitimately claim to be a transpersonal psychologist if I don't accept the reality of a transcendental or metaphysical realm of existence.

In fact – but perhaps I have been unclear about this – I DO accept the existence of a transcendent, metaphysical reality. What I DON'T accept, however, are attempts to commit transpersonal psychology to any particular set of metaphysical beliefs or concepts. I become very uncomfortable, for example, when transpersonal psychologists uncritically bandy around new-age terms such as chakras, subtle bodies, the 'Higher Self', guardian angels, or the Akashic records.

Of course, it goes without saying that we can only think meaningfully about the transcendent if we concretize it in some way – with images, symbols, concepts, and so on. And such thinking can be very useful in all sorts of ways. It can, for example, help us to communicate with each other, or open us up to wider human or transpersonal experiences, or guide us on a psychological and spiritual journey.

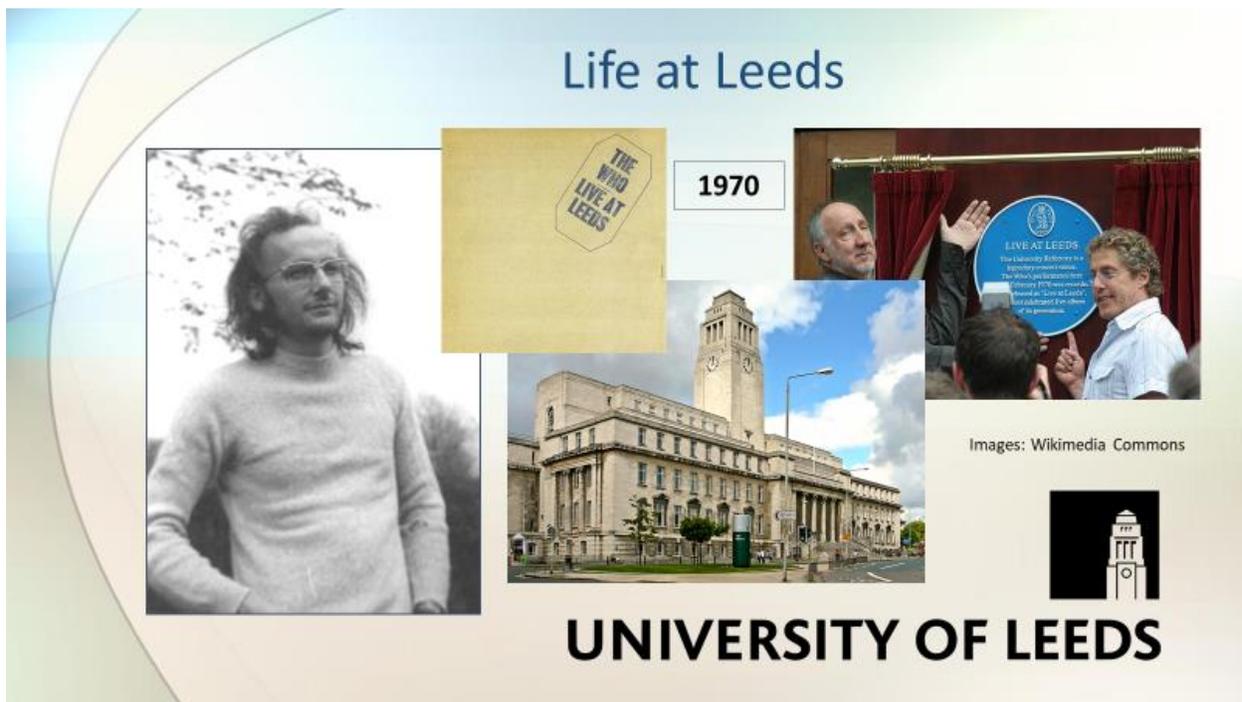


Now, I like to think I am fairly open minded and tolerant, and I don't much care what people privately believe and practice, so long as they aren't doing any harm. But let's never pretend that our *thinking* about the transcendental is the same as the reality itself – which will always remain *ineffable* – an eternal Mystery (as Jorge Ferrer puts it) that

we can creatively *represent* in various ways but can never pin down or define in absolute terms.

Also, I do think that, as *transpersonal psychologists*, we carry additional responsibilities, especially if we claim to be researchers or researcher-practitioners. These include a duty to question assumptions, and to examine carefully all available evidence before jumping to theoretical or metaphysical conclusions or promoting particular spiritual practices.

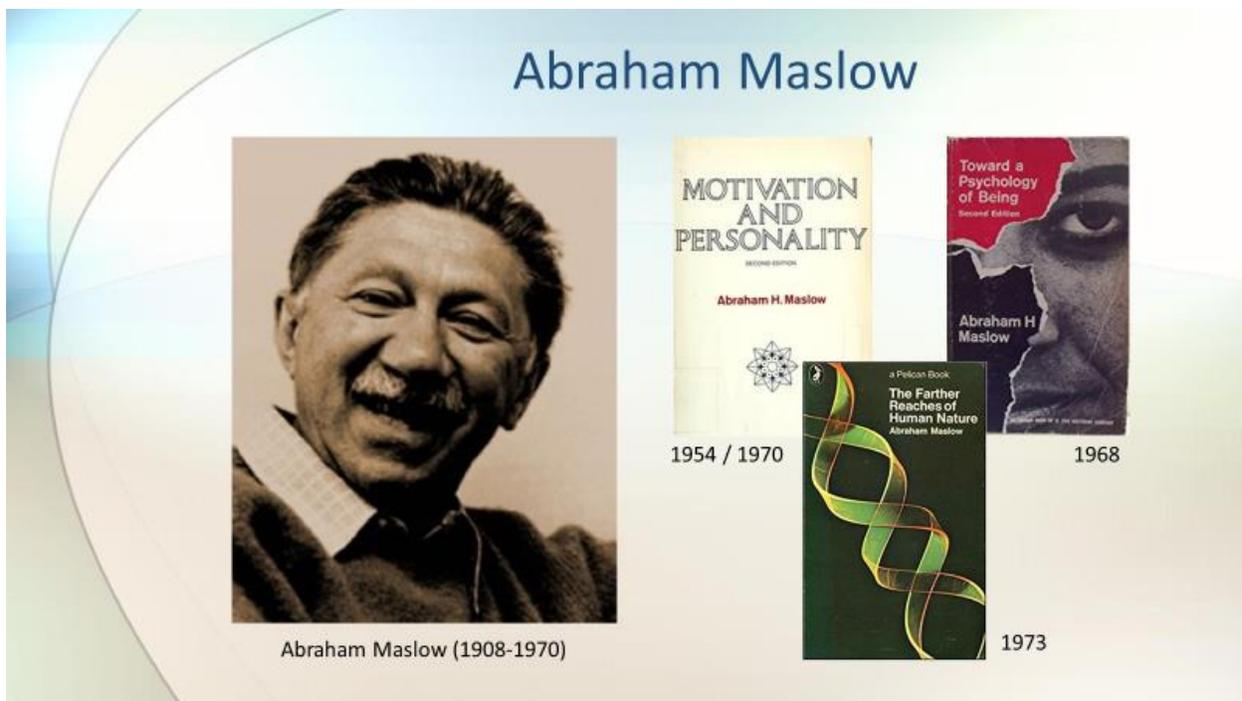
At this juncture, with your indulgence, I'd like to interject a little personal history.



In 1970, age 20, I went to Leeds University to study Psychology. I was a bit of a hippie, and Leeds was considered *very cool* following the release in May that year of The Who's album 'Live at Leeds' which had been recorded in the Student Union Refectory in February. It is still considered by many to be the best live rock album ever.

Unfortunately, the psychology syllabus at Leeds was not very cool. Academic psychology was, at that time, still dominated by behavioural analysis and social experimentation. The cognitive approach was in its infancy and there was almost no attempt to investigate inner experience.

Since my early teens I had been fascinated by psychic phenomena and Eastern philosophies and, in the two years between finishing A levels and moving to Leeds, I had taken up serious meditation practice. I was also studying western occultism and this had led me to discover Jung. So, I was deeply disappointed that there was none of this in my psychology degree. There was no parapsychology. Jung was mentioned once or twice, but only to be immediately dismissed as unscientific, abstruse and mystical. And there was no consideration of Eastern psychological perspectives – or, indeed, those of any other culture. But, thankfully, in those days, the BSc at Leeds was a leisurely four years, and this gave me plenty of time to carry on with my own spiritual interests and pursuits.



However, in my second year, we were briefly introduced to Abraham Maslow and Humanistic Psychology. This came as quite a revelation. At last, we were studying something that I could relate to – self-actualization, the real self, human potential, spiritual values, peak experiences and transcendence.

It was then that I decided my future career should, if possible, be as a humanistic psychologist. If I had known there was also something just starting up in the States calling itself *Transpersonal Psychology*, then I'd have jumped at that. But, apart from a few pioneering individuals such as John Heron, John Rowan, Ian Gordon-Brown and Barbara Somers (none of whose work I knew about) transpersonal psychology hadn't reached the UK at that time and certainly was not represented in mainstream academic psychology.

Now, while inwardly defining myself as a humanistic psychologist, I was savvy enough to realize that this wasn't going to cut it if I wanted to follow an academic career. Humanistic psychology was just too 'far out' and I needed a more traditional hook on which to hang my interests.

I discovered this hook in developmental psychology and personality theory. At the time, Lawrence Kohlberg's six-stage theory of moral development was a big thing. I also saw much common ground between Maslow's and Kohlberg's models, particularly when Kohlberg talked about a mystical seventh stage of morality, based on faith.



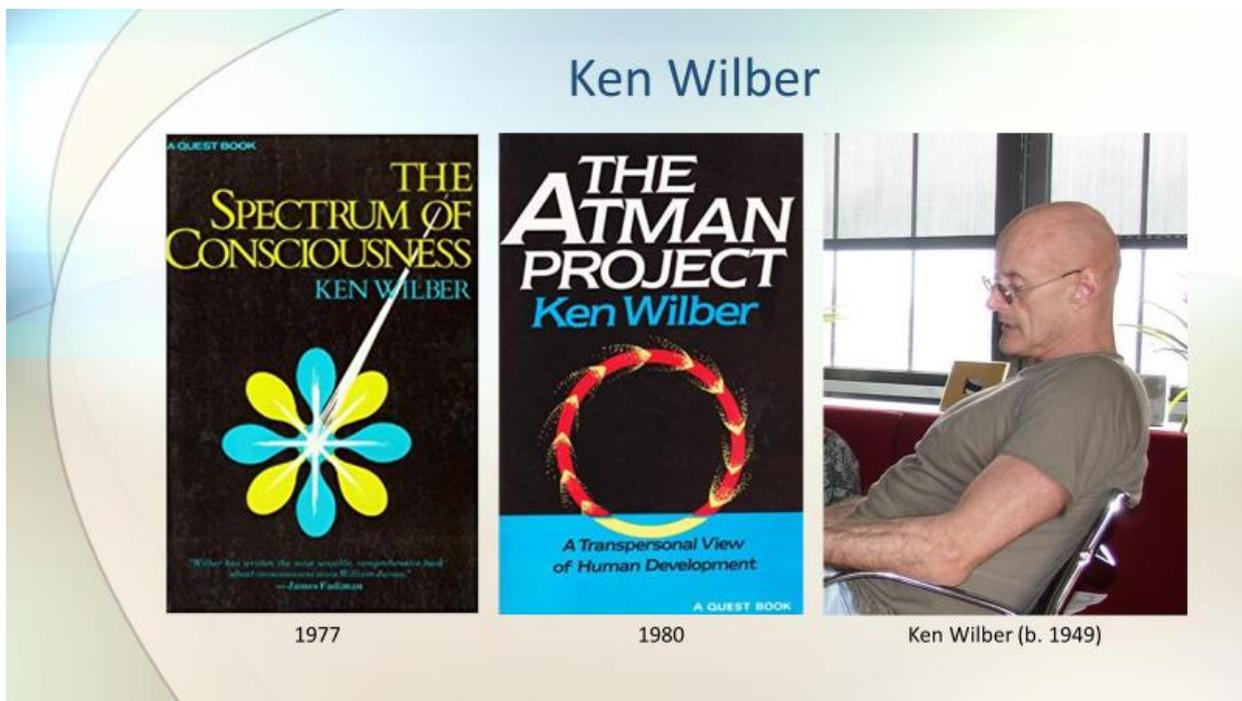
So, on completing my degree in 1974, I immediately embarked on a full-time PhD at Leeds, exploring the relationship between self-actualization, moral development and personality.<sup>6</sup> And, as part of my PhD studies, I was privileged to meet and train with Lawrence Kohlberg and his team. Sadly, by then, he was in poor health, having contracted a serious parasitic infection in 1971 that contributed to his later depression and eventual suicide in 1987.

In 1979, still struggling to complete my PhD thesis, I was lucky enough to land a full-time lectureship in psychology at the City of Liverpool College of Higher Education – COLCHE as it was generally known – which was an associate college of the University of Lancaster. Most of my undergraduate teaching at COLCHE initially involved traditional developmental psychology, personality theory, research methods and statistics.

---

<sup>6</sup> Daniels, M. (1981). *Morality and the Person: An Examination of the Relationship of Moral Development to Self-actualization, Mental Disorder, and Personality*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Leeds.

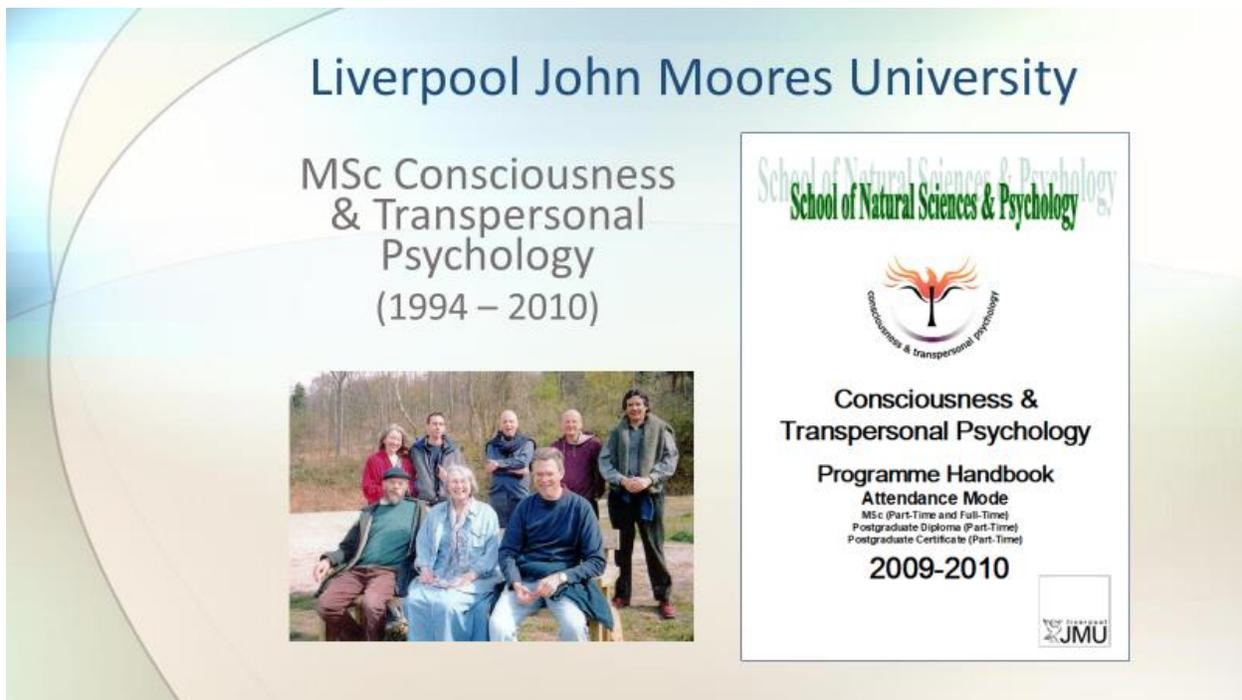
However, I was soon encouraged by the Head of Department to develop new optional modules and this gave me the opportunity to introduce the things I was really interested in. I began with a module on humanistic psychology and, by 1982, had followed up with two others – on parapsychology and transpersonal psychology. I particularly remember that the latter had difficulty getting through the Lancaster University validation because one board member was concerned that I would be indoctrinating students with some kind of new age religion. But, he had a point – and perhaps that is one reason I have always tried to be as non-ideological as I can when discussing the transpersonal, and to encourage students to question the foundational assumptions of our discipline.



By 1992, COLCHE had merged with Liverpool Polytechnic and morphed into Liverpool John Moores University. Transpersonal psychology had also come a long way during this period. It had generated an extensive body of research, especially into meditation and altered states. It had developed and adapted important approaches to psychotherapeutic working and personal growth. And it had produced some promising

new theoretical models – most notably, perhaps, the early work of Ken Wilber on the *Spectrum of Consciousness*<sup>7</sup> and *Atman Project*<sup>8</sup>. It was an exciting time.

But transpersonal psychology had still not become fully accepted by the psychological establishment and there were very few opportunities for postgraduate study in the subject – and none in the UK. Things were about to change, however. At Liverpool John Moores, Les Lancaster and I developed what (after much to-ing and fro-ing) we decided to call an *MSc in the Psychology of Human Potential* (soon, more accurately, renamed the *MSc in Consciousness and Transpersonal Psychology*).



This took its first intake of students in 1994 with an academic and experiential syllabus that combined aspects of humanistic psychology, social psychology, transpersonal psychology, consciousness studies, parapsychology, and the psychology of religion.

<sup>7</sup> Wilber, K. (1977). *The Spectrum of Consciousness*. Wheaton, IL.: Quest Books.

<sup>8</sup> Wilber, K. (1980). *The Atman Project*. Wheaton, IL.: Quest Books.

The following year (1995), David Fontana, Ingrid Slack and Martin Treacy began the process of applying to the British Psychological Society to have Transpersonal Psychology formally established as a BPS Section. As we are celebrating here this weekend, this was successfully achieved a year later, in 1996, and was marked at the Section's first annual conference, held in Birmingham, and with the launch of the Section journal, *Transpersonal Psychology Review*, which was initially just a two-page newsletter.

## BPS Transpersonal Psychology Section

Established 1996

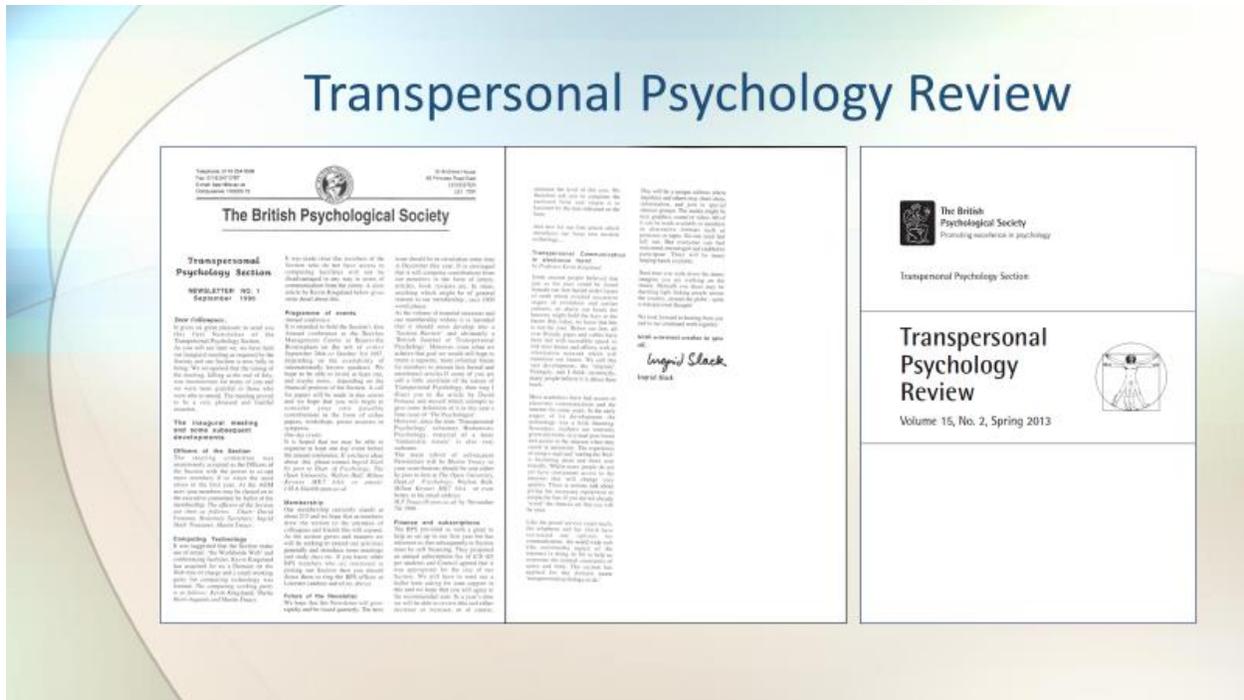
Founding Officers

- David Fontana (Chair)
- Ingrid Slack (Hon. Secretary)
- Martin Treacy (Treasurer)



David Fontana   Ingrid Slack   Martin Treacy

Founding the Section was an enormous coup for David, Ingrid and Martin because the BPS thereby became the first professional body of psychologists in the world to formally recognize and incorporate transpersonal psychology. The American Psychological Association still has no directly equivalent Division.

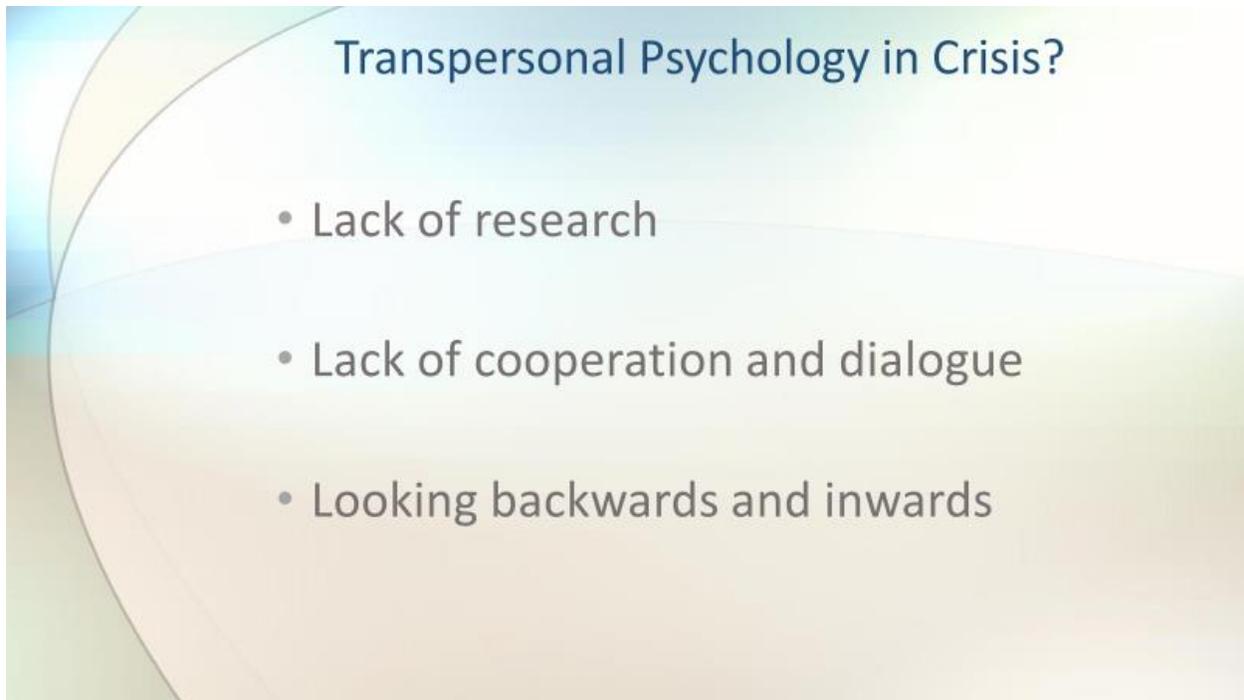


The MSc at Liverpool John Moores continued until the University decided to close the programme in 2010. During its 16-year run we must have taken close to 200 UK and international students. Some of these moved to the UK to study with us in Liverpool, while others enrolled on our popular Distance Learning programme. And, it is lovely to see so many of our former students here this weekend, with several giving papers or workshops. We must have been doing something right.

While the MSc at John Moores closed in 2010, it is also wonderful to see its legacy being continued by Les Lancaster, Jessica Bockler and others through their work with the Alef Trust.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> [www.aleftrust.org](http://www.aleftrust.org)

It is six years since I last addressed this conference. In the keynote I gave then, I ended by pointing to the crisis that I believed was affecting transpersonal psychology. I also made a few suggestions for how the discipline might look to change. While drafting today's talk, I listened again to the presentation I gave in 2011 – it's available on YouTube as an illustrated audio recording.<sup>10</sup>



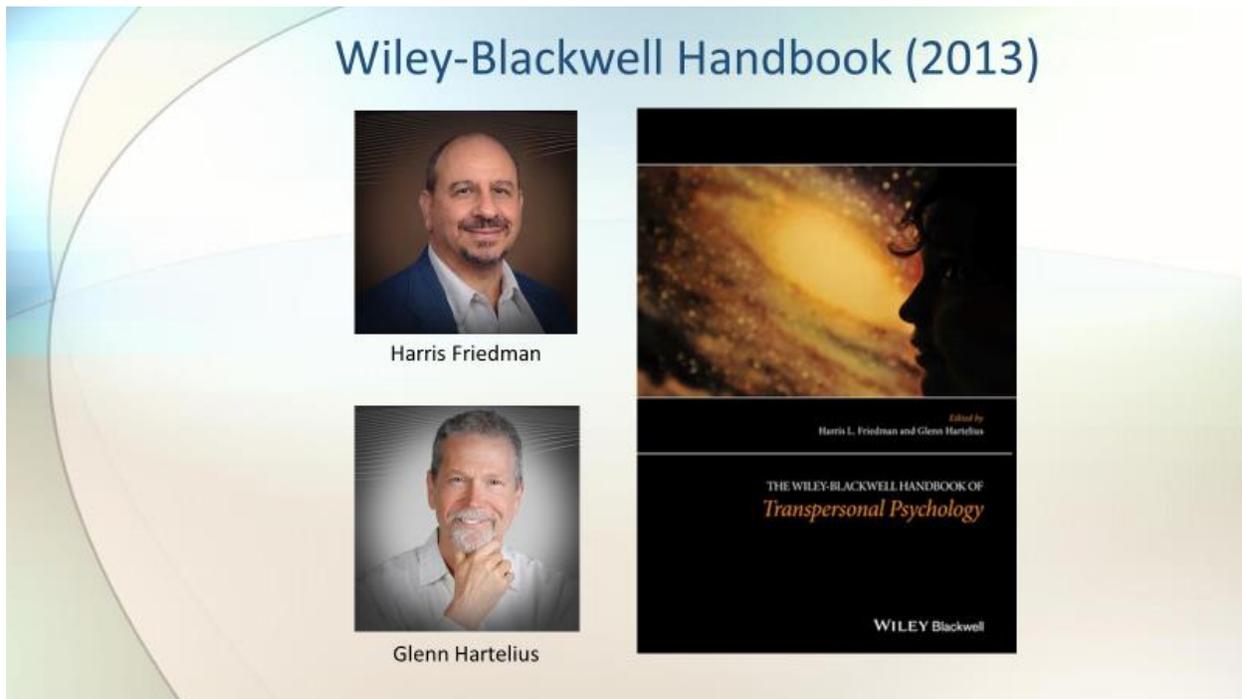
There were, I think, three main thrusts to my 2011 critique. Firstly, the lack of empirical research (and research funding) in transpersonal psychology. Secondly, the lack of effective dialogue or cooperation between different approaches within transpersonal psychology, as well as with other disciplines. Thirdly, a tendency to look backwards and inwards towards the wisdom of the past, especially meditative traditions, rather than creating genuinely innovative and socially relevant perspectives and practices.

---

<sup>10</sup> Daniels, M. (2011). 'Retrospective and Challenges for Transpersonal Psychology'. Keynote paper delivered at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the British Psychological Society Transpersonal Psychology Section, Cober Hill, September 2011. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBidI7xfHI8>

Looking at transpersonal psychology today, I am heartened to see the progress that has been made on several fronts.

Perhaps the most significant achievement in the last six years has been the publication of the wonderfully comprehensive 740-page *Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Transpersonal Psychology*, superbly edited by Harris Friedman and Glenn Hartelius. This was originally released as a very expensive hardback in 2013 but is now, I am pleased to say, available in paperback and Kindle editions, both very reasonably priced. The Handbook's 38 chapters, by more than 50 contributors, show the extraordinary richness, depth and diversity of transpersonal psychology, while the book is also unafraid to highlight its unresolved internal conflicts and controversies. Without doubt, it is the most important survey of transpersonal psychology ever published and it should certainly be on every student's shelf or ereader.



Thankfully, transpersonal research is managing to continue, though it remains poorly funded. Certain topics are especially active at the moment, including near-death experiences, dreamwork, psychedelics, and mindfulness. I was also very encouraged when I read the programme for this weekend's conference – which again demonstrates what a 'broad church' transpersonal psychology is, and should continue to be. Thus, we have presentations covering transpersonal theory, religion, psychedelics, awakening and altered states, lifespan development, nature mysticism, feminism, clinical issues, therapy, healing, parapsychology, and embodied spirituality. It promises to be both an education and a blast.

Also, transpersonal psychology is now engaging more with other disciplines, especially parapsychology. And I am delighted with the way that the BPS Section has sought to bridge the research divide between the two, largely inspired by Chris Roe and the Northampton team.

So, I would no longer say that transpersonal psychology is in crisis, although important challenges do remain. One of these challenges is how to make transpersonal psychology relevant beyond its traditional applied comfort zones of spiritual practice and psychotherapy.

You don't need me to point out how dangerous the world is at present. Can transpersonal psychology help at all? Possibly not. Perhaps we should ignore the world's problems, trust in our politicians, and just continue in our own transpersonal bubble – comforting ourselves with a Pollyanna-like belief that everything will turn out OK. Personally, however, I don't believe that we can really afford to just 'keep calm and carry on'.



Of course, many of the world's problems are economic, political and environmental. But there are also, I think, important *psychological* factors at play – and not simply within a few crazy world leaders. I suspect, in fact, that we are witnessing an unprecedented major collective psychosis that, if not skillfully addressed, will lead to further disaster.

Also, of course, *religion* (if not *spirituality*) is a central element in many global and regional conflicts, as well as localized acts of terrorism. And, if not religion as such, it is often personal or tribal grievances hiding under a banner of religion.

Now it seems to me that, if the world's problems have psychological, ideological, tribal and religious roots, then *transpersonal psychology*, of all disciplines, should have something important to contribute – even perhaps suggesting possible solutions.

One of the constant themes in my own approach to the transpersonal, and the thrust of much of my criticism of transpersonal psychology over the years, is the need for the

discipline to face its own shadow and to address the problem of evil – something that is still largely ignored in the transpersonal literature.

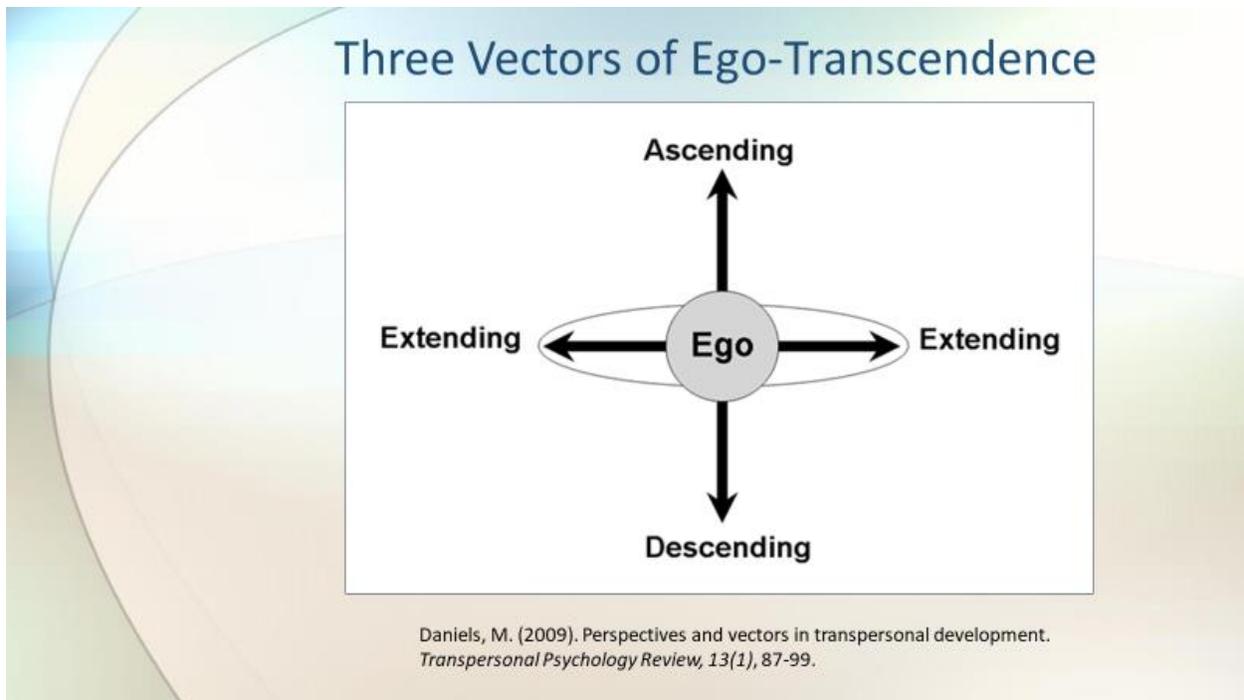
Another criticism I have made is transpersonal psychology's emphasis on states of consciousness, and on an *ascending* path of transformation that claims to lead to an ultimate state of bliss or enlightenment. Now, I don't doubt that ascending paths, such as Raja Yoga or Mahamudra, can lead to significant spiritual experiences. But such practices are not, in my opinion, the only route to spiritual transformation, or necessarily the best.

As well as turning *upward* toward God, or nirvana, or non-dual 'One Taste', we can also be spiritually transformed by turning *downward*, and *outward*. The *downward* path involves exploring unconscious processes to achieve greater self-understanding and psychological wholeness. It is essentially the method of depth psychology, Jungian analysis, or shamanic working. The *outward* path is that of active spiritual participation in the natural and social worlds. It is the path of service to the community, of Karma Yoga, of ecological engagement, and political action.

Yet, the danger with considering these as separate *paths* (or *streams* in Wilber's terminology) is that we may become so enamored of our own chosen path that we ignore the importance of the others, often to the detriment of ourselves or other people. So, rather than separate paths, I prefer to consider them as *dynamic vectors* – in other words, as directional forces that operate within an overall system of holistic or integral transformation. For convenience, I refer to these as the *ascending*, *descending* and *extending* vectors and all, I think, should be active if we are to engage in a truly integral spiritual journey.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Daniels, M. (2009). Perspectives and vectors in transpersonal development. *Transpersonal Psychology Review*, 13(1), 87-99.



Now I strongly suspect that the dangers of following only one approach are greater for people committed to an ascending practice – say, of meditation. This is because meditation can sometimes be used to suppress or dissociate from important aspects of the psyche or world – for example, to deny or avoid dealing with emotional, interpersonal or societal issues. It can also sometimes degenerate into an egocentric, narcissistic, or addictive pursuit of higher and better spiritual experiences. In contrast, descending and extending practices are themselves fundamentally grounded in the physical, psychological, or social worlds and, for that reason, I think, are inherently safer.

In my view, and as shown in the three-vector model, the common factor in transpersonal development is the move away from egocentric and narcissistic concerns. Indeed, ‘trans-egoic’ is probably a more accurate and useful term than ‘transpersonal’. Our journey beyond ego is one in which we become open to, and, as Ferrer puts it, *cocreatively participate* with a greater reality.<sup>12</sup> This greater reality can be a

<sup>12</sup> Ferrer, J.N. (2002). *Revisioning Transpersonal Theory: A Participatory Vision of Human Spirituality*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

transcendental realm of Spirit, or the deeper realms of the psyche, or the wider physical, natural and social worlds. Ideally, it involves all three.

Let me return, finally, to the comparison I made earlier, between psychical research and transpersonal psychology at their notional 'comings of age' in 1903 and 2017. I suggested that, after 21 years, the SPR was still dominated by a belief in spiritualism and had yet to fully embrace its stated aim to investigate 'without prejudice or prepossession and in a scientific spirit'.

Now, despite what I may have implied earlier, transpersonal psychology has never formally bound itself to such an unprejudiced, strictly scientific agenda. The aims of the BPS Section, for example, were cleverly drafted to commit it only 'to examine' a range of transpersonal topics. But *examination* does imply the collection and consideration of evidence, as well as critical reflection on possible interpretations. We can't do this successfully, in my opinion, if – either individually or collectively – we remain ideologically wedded to a particular system of belief or practice, whether this is Buddhism, or Theosophy, or Christianity, or Cabala, or Wilberism.

Of course, this is not to say that a transpersonal psychologist cannot also be a Buddhist or Theosophist, or Christian, or Cabalist, or Wilberite. Neither does it rule out our engaging in the spiritual practices of these systems. Indeed, our beliefs and practices can vitally inform the investigatory work we choose to undertake as transpersonal psychologists. But we should, I suggest, hold our beliefs lightly and avoid letting ideological commitments get in the way of dispassionate consideration of evidence, or of openness to other viewpoints, or of rational argument and debate.

And so, in a roundabout way, this brings me to the title of my talk. When identifying and working as transpersonal psychologists, we should, as best we can, *try to be reasonable*.

## Dr Michael Daniels



Michael Daniels PhD taught transpersonal psychology and parapsychology for more than 25 years at Liverpool John Moores University where, with Les Lancaster, he established the ground-breaking MSc in Consciousness and Transpersonal Psychology. He also practiced for six years as an Honorary Psychotherapist (psychodynamic) within the NHS. His academic publications include numerous journal articles and book chapters, mainly focusing on theoretical issues in transpersonal psychology and parapsychology. He is the author of two books: *Shadow, Self, Spirit: Essays in Transpersonal Psychology* (Imprint Academic, 2005) and *Self-Discovery the Jungian Way: The Watchword Technique* (Routledge, 1992 & 2015). A founder member and former Honorary Secretary of the BPS Transpersonal Psychology Section, he was also Editor of the Section's Journal *Transpersonal Psychology Review* from 2008 to 2013. He lives in retirement in the magical Isle of Man.

[www.transpersonalscience.org](http://www.transpersonalscience.org)

[www.psychicscience.org](http://www.psychicscience.org)